

Worlds Colliding

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Worlds Colliding

by [OikawaHajime13](#)

Summary

The Ottawa Centaurs try to figure out why the hell Ilya Rozanov signed with them and come to the erroneous conclusion that he's in love with their part-time athletic trainer, Iwaizumi Hajime.

Notes

Y'all, I don't even know. Something possessed me today, and here we are *insert shoulder shrug*

Thank you to Old Bay Coffee for suggesting this in the comments of The PDA Jar.

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

Chapter 1

The Ottawa Centaur players gather around Bood's kitchen table, trying to figure out what the hell had just happened to their team. It isn't every day that the reigning NHL MVP decided to sign with a team like there's when he could have gone anywhere, including staying with his current team. But no, Ilya Rozanov had decided to sign with the Ottawa Centaurs.

"Who the fuck does this guy think he is?" Bood says, taking a swig of beer from the bottle he's been nursing all evening.

Wyatt Hayes shrugs, "Fuck if I know, but there has to be a reason, right?"

Evan Dykstra nods, "He went from the top team to last place in the division. Who the hell does that?"

Cassie, Bood's wife, pulls back a chair, sliding into the seat next to her husband, and grabs his beer. She points it at all of them before saying, "Quit bitching. You literally gained one of the league's best hockey players. He's going to turn things around for your team, and maybe, just maybe, we won't finish last."

The three men nod.

Cassie continues, "So if you have to know why he came, just ask tomorrow during the workout."

"So why Ottawa?"

The question hangs in the humid air of the practice facility's gym. Ilya Rozanov pauses mid-rep on the bench press, the barbell suspended above his chest. Through the mirror, he can see Bood leaning against the squat rack, arms crossed, genuinely curious. Wyatt's stopped his stretching routine. Even Evan has looked up from his phone.

It's a fair question. Ilya Rozanov, three-time league MVP, perennial All-Star, could have signed anywhere. Instead, he chose Ottawa. The Centaurs. A team that hasn't made the playoffs in years.

"Good opportunity," Ilya says, completing the rep and racking the weight with a controlled clang.

"Bullshit," Bood says, but he's grinning. "Come on, Rozanov. You took less money to come here. There's got to be a reason."

Ilya sits up, reaching for his water bottle. The truth sits heavy in his chest, seven years of secrets and hotel rooms and stolen moments. Shane. It's always been Shane. Montreal is two

hours away now instead of half a continent. They can have weekends. They can have mornings.

"Maybe I like the city," he tries.

Wyatt snorts. "You've been here three weeks, and you've seen what? The practice facility and your apartment?"

"And that coffee place Bood took you to," Evan adds helpfully.

"Okay, okay." Ilya holds up his hands in surrender. The lie comes easier than he expects. "Maybe I move here for someone."

The gym goes silent. Then erupts.

"Holy shit!"

"I knew it!"

"Rozanov's got a secret girlfriend!"

"Or boyfriend," Wyatt adds, and Ilya appreciates that, even as his heart rate kicks up. These are good guys. He knew that when he signed. But still.

"Tell us about them," Bood says, settling onto the bench next to Ilya. "Come on, man. We're teammates now. We've got your back."

Ilya thinks about Shane. About dark hair falling across darker eyes. About the way French rolls off his tongue, smooth and perfect. About watching Shane's game tape, studying the way he moves on the ice with that singular focus that makes him one of the best in the league. About Shane's obsessive meal prep, his detailed training regimen, his absolute refusal to let anything interfere with his performance.

About how Shane is exactly four inches shorter than Ilya's six-foot-three frame.

"They are..." Ilya starts, and finds he wants to talk about Shane, even if he can't say the name. "Bilingual. Very smart. Dark hair, dark eyes. Beautiful."

"Okay, okay," Evan says, pulling up a chair. "What else?"

"Involved in sports. Very serious about it. Works so hard." Ilya can feel himself smiling, the real smile he usually keeps locked away. "Always thinking about health, nutrition. Meal prep on Sundays. Very organized."

"Shorter than you?" Wyatt asks.

"Yes. But perfect height." The words slip out before Ilya can stop them, and he feels heat creep up his neck.

Bood and Wyatt exchange a look. Then another. Evan's eyes go wide.

"Oh my god," Bood says slowly. "You're talking about Iwaizumi."

"What?" Ilya's brain short-circuits. "No, I—"

"Holy shit, he is!" Wyatt's grinning now. "Dude, that's literally a perfect description of our athletic trainer."

Ilya opens his mouth. Closes it. Hajime Iwaizumi is their part-time athletic trainer, the one who's been putting Ilya through his paces for the last three weeks. Dark hair, dark eyes, bilingual in English and Japanese, completely focused on health and performance. And yes, shorter than Ilya.

"I don't think—" Ilya tries.

"No, no, this is perfect," Bood says, standing up with the energy of a man on a mission. "Iwaizumi's great. Single, as far as I know. And you two already have that rapport going."

"Wait," Ilya says, his mind racing, trying to stop whatever was happening.

"This is happening," Evan declares. "We're making this happen."

"Guys, please," Ilya tries to say but the team is already moving, already planning. Ilya watches with a growing sense of horrified amusement as they pull out their phones, as Bood starts texting someone—probably Harris, their social media manager who seems to know everything about everyone.

This is a disaster.

This is also, Ilya realizes, absolutely hilarious.

Hajime Iwaizumi is reviewing injury reports in his office when Bood knocks on the doorframe.

"Hey, Iwa. Got a minute?"

Hajime looks up, noting the slightly sheepish expression on his captain's face. In his experience, that expression means someone's about to ask him to clear them for practice when they absolutely should not be cleared for practice.

"If this is about your shoulder—"

"No, no, shoulder's good. Following your protocol exactly." Bood steps inside, closing the door behind him. "This is about something else."

Hajime leans back in his chair, waiting.

"So, you know Rozanov?"

"Your new center? Yes, I know him. I've been working with him for a few weeks."

"Right. So." Bood sits down across from Hajime, and there's something almost nervous in the way he's fidgeting. "We found out why he signed with us."

Hajime raises an eyebrow. He's heard the speculation, of course. Everyone has. Rozanov could have gone anywhere.

"He moved here for someone," Bood continues. "Someone he's really into. And, uh, we think it might be you."

The words take a moment to process. Then another moment. Hajime blinks.

"What?"

"I know, I know, it sounds crazy. But hear me out." Bood leans forward. "He described this person, right? Bilingual, dark hair, dark eyes, involved in sports, super focused on health and nutrition, shorter than him. That's literally you, Iwa."

Hajime's brain is trying to catch up. Ilya Rozanov, the Ilya Rozanov, moved to Ottawa for someone. Someone who sounds like... okay, yes, that does sound like him. But...

"I'm sure he didn't move here for me," Hajime says carefully.

"But the description—"

"Could fit a lot of people in Ottawa. It's a Canadian city, Bood. And there are plenty of people involved in sports." Hajime keeps his voice level, professional. "I think you're reading too much into this."

"Come on, Iwa. You're perfect for him. You're both serious about fitness, you both speak multiple languages, you're both—"

"Not interested," Hajime interrupts. "I'm not interested in dating anyone right now. I'm focused on my work."

Bood's face falls slightly. "Not even coffee? Just to welcome him to the city? He's new here, and you're one of the few people at the facility who isn't a player. You're doing the living away from home thing, too. Might be good for him to have someone to talk to who understands the sports world but isn't part of the team dynamic."

Hajime considers this. Framed that way, it's harder to refuse without raising questions. And if Rozanov really did move here for someone, Hajime is curious about who it might be. The description is oddly specific.

"Fine," Hajime says. "One coffee. To welcome him to Ottawa. But I'm not interested in anything beyond that."

Bood's face lights up. "Great! I'll set it up. And hey, you never know. Maybe you'll change your mind."

"I won't."

As Bood leaves, Hajime pulls out his phone and opens his message thread with Tooru.

Hajime: You're not going to believe what just happened.

The response is almost immediate. It's 9 PM in Argentina, which means Tooru's probably finished dinner and is getting ready for bed, going through his multi-step skin care routine.

Tooru: Try me, Iwa-chan.

Hajime: The team thinks one of the new players moved here for me.

Tooru: WHAT

Tooru: Iwa-chan, are you telling me you have a secret admirer???

Tooru: This is the best thing I've heard all week

Tooru: Who is it? Is he cute? Does he have good taste?

Hajime: It's Ilya Rozanov.

There's a longer pause this time. Hajime can practically see Tooru googling.

Tooru: IWA-CHAN

Tooru: ILYA ROZANOV THE HOCKEY PLAYER???

Tooru: THE ONE WHO'S BEEN ON THE COVER OF SPORTS ILLUSTRATED???

Tooru: Okay yes he has excellent taste, I'm not even mad

Hajime: I'm going to have coffee with him. The team set it up.

Tooru: EXCUSE ME

Tooru: Iwa-chan, you can't have coffee with someone who thinks you're single when you have an incredibly handsome husband

Hajime: The team doesn't know about you.

Tooru: ...oh

Tooru: Right

Tooru: I forgot you're keeping us secret from them

Hajime: It's easier this way. Less questions. Less explaining why my husband lives in Argentina and only visits a few times a year.

Tooru: I know, I know. We talked about this. Keep work and personal separate.

Tooru: But Iwa-chan, what are you going to tell him?

Hajime: I told Bood I'm not interested in dating anyone. That I'm focused on work.

Tooru: That's not technically a lie

Tooru: You ARE focused on work

Tooru: You're just also married to me

Hajime: I'm going to have coffee with him to figure out who he actually moved here for. Because I don't think it's me.

Tooru: Then who?

Tooru: Wait, you have to find out.

Tooru: But also be careful, Iwa-chan. If he really does like you...

Hajime: I'll handle it. I'm not going to lead him on.

Tooru: I know you won't. I trust you.

Tooru: I just wish I could be there. I wish they knew about us.

Hajime: Me too. But this is easier. For now.

Tooru: For now. But Iwa-chan?

Hajime: Yeah?

Tooru: I'm still jealous. You're mine.

Hajime: Always. Only yours.

Tooru: Good. Now go have coffee with your admirer and report back immediately.

Hajime: He's not my admirer.

Tooru: We'll see about that.

The coffee shop Bood chose is aggressively boring—not too romantic, not too casual, just simple enough. Hajime arrives five minutes early out of habit and orders a black coffee. He's claimed a table by the window when Ilya Rozanov walks in.

Hajime has seen him around the facility, of course. Has worked with him on his training regimen, assessed his flexibility and strength. But there's something different about seeing

him in civilian clothes, in a plain black t-shirt and jeans, without the context of the gym.

He's tall. Hajime knew that, obviously, but it's more apparent when they're not in a professional setting. And he's nervous, Hajime realizes. There's a tension in Ilya's shoulders that wasn't there during their training sessions.

"Iwaizumi-san," Ilya says, and Hajime appreciates the Japanese honorific. "Thank you for meeting me."

"Just Iwaizumi is fine. Or Hajime, if you want." Hajime gestures to the seat across from him. "And I should probably apologize in advance. I think the team has the wrong idea about this. I am also very married."

Ilya's laugh is surprised and genuine. "Yes. Very wrong idea." He sits down, and some of the tension eases from his frame. "But also very funny."

"You're not upset?"

"Why would I be upset? They are trying to be good teammates. They want me to be happy." Ilya's smile is warm. "And they are right that I move here for someone. Just not you."

"Want to talk about it?" Hajime asks. "I mean, we're here. Might as well actually have coffee."

Ilya considers this, then stands. "I get a drink first. You want anything?"

"I'm good."

Hajime watches Ilya order—something complicated with extra shots and caramel—and return to the table. There's a grace to the way he moves, an athlete's awareness of his body in space. Hajime recognizes it because he sees it in Tooru, that particular confidence that comes from years of elite performance.

"So," Ilya says, settling back into his chair. "You are married."

"Five years. Together for three before that."

"Long distance?"

"For most of it, yeah. He plays professional volleyball in Argentina."

Ilya's eyes light up. "Volleyball? What position?"

"Setter. He plays for Boca."

"I know this team!" Ilya pulls out his phone, fingers flying across the screen. "Wait, your husband is Tooru Oikawa?"

Hajime blinks. "You follow volleyball?"

"I follow many sports. The Canadian Men's team practices just a few kilometers east of here. And Oikawa is very good. Very famous in Argentina." Ilya shows Hajime his phone—it's pulled up to Tooru's Instagram, which is exactly as dramatic as Hajime expected. The most recent post is a photo of Tooru mid-serve, all power and precision, with a caption in Spanish about dedication.

"That's him," Hajime confirms, feeling the familiar warmth that always comes with talking about Tooru.

"How do you make it work? The distance?"

"Video calls. Lots of them. We talk every morning and every night. He comes here in the summer, and I visit when I can during his off-season." Hajime takes a sip of his coffee. "It's not easy. But he's worth it."

Ilya nods slowly, something understanding in his expression. "Yes. I know this feeling."

"The person you moved here for," Hajime says carefully. "Are they in Montreal?"

Ilya's head snaps up, eyes wide. Then he laughs, a real laugh that draws looks from other patrons. "How did you—"

"You moved from Boston to Ottawa. Montreal is two hours away. And you described someone bilingual." Hajime shrugs. "French and English, I'm guessing?"

"You are very observant."

"It's my job. So, Montreal?"

"Yes." Ilya's smile is soft now, private. "Seven years we are together. Secret, because of hockey. Because of many reasons. But now I want to be closer. Want to have weekends, not just stolen hours."

"That's a big move."

"He is worth it." Ilya echoes Hajime's words from earlier. "But it is complicated. His team, my team. We play against each other. People will talk. The league might not accept it."

Hajime thinks about the scrutiny, about what it means to be a public figure in a relationship that challenges expectations. He and Tooru have their own version of that—the long distance, the different sports, the way people assume they must be unhappy or looking elsewhere.

"People always talk," Hajime says. "The question is whether you care more about what they say or about being with him."

"I care about protecting him. His career, his reputation."

"Does he want to be protected? Or does he want to be with you?"

Ilya is quiet for a long moment, staring into his elaborate coffee drink. "We are working on it. The being together part. The not hiding part." He looks up. "It is scary."

"Yeah," Hajime agrees. "It is."

They sit in comfortable silence for a moment. Then Ilya grins, mischief lighting his features.

"So the team thinks I am in love with you."

"Apparently, you described me perfectly."

"I described my boyfriend perfectly. You just happen to fit the description." Ilya's grin widens. "What do we tell them?"

"The truth?" Hajime suggests.

"That I am in secret relationship with captain of rival team? I don't think so."

"Fair point." Hajime considers. "We could just say we had coffee, we're friends, but there's no romantic interest. Because I'm married and you're in a relationship."

"They will ask who I am in relationship with."

"Tell them it's complicated. Tell them you're working on it. Tell them it's private." Hajime meets Ilya's eyes. "You don't owe them your whole story."

Ilya nods slowly. "You are good person, Iwaizumi. I see why team likes you."

"Just doing my job."

"No. This is not your job. This is you being kind." Ilya finishes his coffee. "Your husband is lucky man."

"I'm the lucky one," Hajime says automatically, and means it.

They talk for another hour—about training regimens and recovery protocols, about the challenges of elite athletics, about their respective partners and the particular joy and pain of loving someone whose career demands as much as yours does. Ilya is funny and thoughtful, and Hajime finds himself genuinely enjoying the conversation.

When they finally leave the coffee shop, Ilya claps him on the shoulder.

"Thank you," he says. "For understanding. For not making this weird."

"Thank you for being honest. And for what it's worth, I hope it works out. You and your guy in Montreal."

Ilya's smile is bright and hopeful. "Me too."

Three weeks later....

Tooru follows Hajime into the weight room, looking around curiously at the players working out on various pieces of equipment. He spots several players he recognizes from the clips Hajime's sent him over the last year. But the Russian god who took his husband on a date appears to be missing. Good.

Clearing his throat, Tooru asks loudly, "Which one of you assholes set my husband up on a date?"

Heads snap up at his words, all eyes focusing in on the stranger in their space.

"Is that—"

"Holy shit, that's Tooru Oikawa!"

"What's he doing here?"

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Hurricane Oikawa hits Ottawa.

Hajime is in the middle of reviewing training schedules when his phone rings. Tooru's face fills the screen—a photo from their honeymoon, sun-bright and laughing.

"Iwa-chan! Tell me everything!"

"Hello to you too, husband of mine," Hajime says, but he's smiling. "Shouldn't you be at practice?"

"Rest day. Now stop deflecting and tell me about your coffee date with the sexy hockey player."

Hajime leans back in his chair. "It wasn't a date. And he's in a relationship."

"I knew it! With who?"

"Can't tell you. It's complicated."

"Iwa-chan, you're killing me."

"He's a good guy, though. We had a good talk. I think we'll actually be friends."

There's a pause on the other end of the line. Then Tooru's voice comes through, softer. "You sound happy."

"I am happy. I like my job. The team is good. And you'll be here in three weeks."

"Twenty-two days," Tooru corrects. "Not that I'm counting."

"Not at all."

"Iwa-chan, I want to meet him."

"What?"

"The hockey player. Rozanov. I want to meet him when I get there."

"Why?"

"Because he made you smile. I can hear it in your voice. And because anyone who moves across the country for love is someone I want to know." Tooru's voice takes on a teasing lilt. "Plus, I want to make sure he knows you're very taken."

"He knows. We talked about you for like twenty minutes."

"Only twenty? Iwa-chan, I'm disappointed. I'm at least a forty-minute conversation topic."

"You're a lifetime conversation topic, you dramatic asshole."

"I love you too."

Twenty-two days later, Hajime picks Tooru up from the airport. He spots him immediately as he's impossible to miss, even in the crowd. Tooru's hair is lighter from the Argentine sun, and he's wearing sunglasses and looks remarkably well put together for someone who just travelled across the world.. He's also dragging two enormous suitcases and carrying a garment bag.

"Iwa-chan!"

Hajime doesn't run. He's a professional. He has dignity.

He walks very quickly.

Tooru drops everything and throws his arms around Hajime's neck, and Hajime lifts him slightly off the ground, breathing in the familiar scent of his shampoo and cologne. Five months. It's been five months since they've been in the same place.

"Missed you," Hajime mumbles into Tooru's shoulder.

"Missed you more."

"Not possible."

They stand there for a long moment, oblivious to the flow of travelers around them. Then Tooru pulls back, keeping his hands on Hajime's shoulders, and studies his face.

"You look good. Tired, but good."

"You look like you're ready for some sun."

"It's winter in Argentina, dumbass." Tooru grins. "Now take me home, Iwa-chan. I want to see our apartment and sleep in our bed and eat your cooking."

"I made my favorite."

"Agedashi tofu?"

"And I even found a bakery that makes milk bread."

"This is why I married you."

They collect Tooru's luggage—"I needed options, Iwa-chan, don't judge me"—and make their way to the car. Tooru talks the entire drive, filling Hajime in on his season, on his teammates, on the new setter they're training, who has potential but needs work on his form. Hajime listens, asking questions, letting Tooru's voice wash over him like a balm.

Home. Tooru is home.

The apartment feels different with Tooru in it—fuller, brighter, more alive. Tooru immediately starts unpacking, hanging up clothes and arranging his extensive collection of hair products in the bathroom. Hajime watches from the doorway, content.

"So," Tooru says, not looking up from his task. "When do I get to meet the hockey player?"

"You're relentless."

"It's one of my best qualities." Tooru turns, leaning against the bathroom counter. "Come on, Iwa-chan. I'm curious. And I want to see the facility where you work. Show me your world."

Hajime considers. The team is still doing summer training sessions. Ilya will be there. And honestly, it might be good for the team to meet Tooru, to see that Hajime's marriage is very real and very present.

"Fine. Tomorrow. I'll take you to the facility."

"Perfect." Tooru crosses the space between them, sliding his arms around Hajime's waist. "But tonight, you're all mine."

"Always," Hajime says, and kisses him.

The next day, Hajime brings Tooru to the practice facility during the afternoon training session. Tooru is dressed in athletic wear from his latest sponsorship and it fits him so perfectly that Hajime's struggling not to drool. And, of course, he's attracting stares from the moment they walk in.

Clearing his throat, Tooru asks loudly, "Which one of you assholes set my husband up on a date?"

"Is that—"

"Holy shit, that's Oikawa!"

"What's he doing here?"

Hajime feels a surge of pride. His husband, the one people recognize on sight, even if he's being an asshole.

Bood spots them first, his eyes going wide.

"Iwa! You brought—is that—"

"Everyone, this is my husband, Tooru." Hajime keeps his voice level, professional. "Tooru, this is the team."

Tooru's smile is dazzling. "It's so nice to meet you all! Hajime talks about you constantly."

"Your husband," Wyatt says slowly. "Your husband is Tooru Oikawa."

"Yes?" Hajime raises an eyebrow. "I've mentioned him."

"You said your best friend played volleyball in Argentina. You didn't say he was Oikawa."

"Does it matter?"

"Dude, he's famous!"

Tooru laughs, delighted. "I like this team, Iwa-chan. They have good taste."

That's when Ilya walks in from the locker room. He stops short when he sees Tooru, and Hajime watches recognition flash across his face.

"It's the husband," Ilya says, and there's genuine respect in his voice. "I am big fan of your work."

"Rozanov!" Tooru grins his most wicked smile. "I hear that you want to date my husband."

Ilya grins back, "I know that Iwaizumi is very taken but...if you were ever looking for a third—"

Hajime holds a hand up, "Please stop. Tooru, this is Ilya. Ilya, this is the love of my life, Tooru."

They shake hands, and Hajime notices the way the team is watching, confused. Bood leans over.

"Wait, so Rozanov didn't move here for you?"

"No," Hajime says patiently.

Hajime watches Ilya head toward the bench press, motioning for Tooru to follow him. "I love my husband, and I will always make it work."

Bood has the grace to look embarrassed. "Sorry, man. We just thought—"

"I know what you thought. It's fine." Hajime claps him on the shoulder. "But for the record, Tooru is it for me. Distance doesn't change that."

Across the gym, Tooru is laughing at something Ilya said, hands outstretched under the bar as Ilya goes through his reps. Then he looks over at Hajime, and his whole face softens. Even from here, Hajime can read the love in his expression.

"Damn," Wyatt says quietly. "That's some serious relationship goals right there."

"Yeah," Hajime agrees. "It is."

Later, after the team has dispersed and Tooru has charmed everyone in the facility, Ilya extends an unexpected invitation.

"You want to come to my place? I have very good vodka. From Russia. We can eat and sit outside, enjoy the evening."

Tooru's eyes light up. "Iwa-chan, did you hear that? Very good vodka."

"I heard," Hajime says, but he's already texting to cancel their dinner reservation.

Ilya's house is a piece of gorgeous architecture, windows lining whole backside of the house, overlooking the river and backyard. The evening sun casts everything in gold, and there's a pleasant breeze that makes the heat bearable. Ilya emerges from the kitchen with a bottle of vodka that looks expensive and three shot glasses.

"This is the good stuff," he announces, pouring generously. "From home. My best friend sends me case every year."

"You have good friends," Tooru says, delighted.

They drink. The vodka is smooth, burns just right.

"Okay," Tooru says, settling into one of the deck chairs like he owns it. "Now that we have alcohol, you have to tell us. Who did you move here for?"

Ilya refills their glasses. Takes another shot. Then he seems to come to a decision.

"Do you follow hockey, Tooru?" Ilya asks to which Oikawa nods and replies that he follows it more than he used to due to Hajime's job.

Ilya smirks, "Do you know who the Montreal captain is?"

Tooru's eyes go wide. "Montreal? Oh...shit."

"Yes."

"Holy fuck." Tooru leans forward. "How long?"

"Seven years."

"Seven years?" Tooru's voice pitches up. He reaches for the vodka bottle. "We need more alcohol for this conversation."

Ilya laughs, a real one. "Is not so dramatic."

"It's extremely dramatic," Tooru counters, pouring another round. "You're telling me you've been secretly dating the captain of a rival team for seven years and no one knows?"

"Some people know. Close friends. Family. You two. But not public, not media." Ilya accepts his refilled glass. "It is complicated. Two captains, rival teams. People will have opinions."

"People always have opinions," Tooru says, echoing Hajime's words from their coffee date. "The question is whether you care more about the opinions or about being with him."

Ilya laughs, "Your husband said same thing."

"That's because we're both right," Tooru grins. "Also because we're both geniuses. Iwa-chan, tell him we're geniuses."

"You're a genius," Hajime says dutifully. "Tooru's also a very dramatic romantic."

"I'm a dramatic genius," Tooru corrects. He turns back to Ilya. "Look, I get it. Hajime and I kept our relationship quiet for a long time. Different sports, different countries, people saying it wouldn't work. But eventually, we realized that hiding was harder than dealing with whatever came from being public."

"When did you go public?" Ilya asks.

"We made it public a year ago. We've been together for eight years now, and we aren't hiding it anymore. Volleyball is different from hockey, a lot less paparazzi." Tooru reaches for Hajime's hand. "But he's worth every negative comment. Fuck the haters."

"Eight years," Ilya muses. "And you still look at him like that."

"Like what?"

"Like he is only person in world."

Tooru's expression softens. "Because he is. At least, the only one who matters." He pours another round. "Your turn. Tell me about Mr. Montreal. How did you meet?"

The vodka is making everything easier, looser. Ilya leans back in his chair, glass in hand, and starts talking.

"Juniors tournament. Almost 9 years ago. I was eighteen, he was eighteen. He thought I was cool and met me in parking lot. I did not know how to talk to someone so beautiful so I was an asshole. Then we play against each other, very intense game."

"And?" Tooru prompts.

"I won," Ilya responds with a grin, "and then I got drafted #1 and he got #2. God, he was so unhappy about that. But then we keep seeing each other which led to me inviting myself to his room. And we just didn't stop."

Ilya's expression goes distant, fond. "He is so smart, so funny. And he understands, you know? What it is like to have this pressure, to be the one everyone looks to."

"When did you know you loved him?" Tooru asks.

"When my father died and all I wanted to do was be held in his arms. I told him I loved him several months later. His answer? 'Holy shit.'"

Hajime rubs a hand over Tooru's knee and says, "Sounds like you."

"Shut up, Iwa-chan."

Ilya swirls the half drunk shot, continuing, "But we were young, we were on different teams, different countries. So we keep it casual. Secret phone calls, stolen moments when our teams play each other. For years, this is how it is."

"That sounds exhausting," Hajime says quietly.

"It is. But also, it is worth it. Because when I am with him, everything else disappears. The pressure, the expectations, all of it. Is just us."

"So what changed?" Tooru asks. "Why move now?"

"He changed it. He says, 'Ilya, I am tired of casual. I am tired of stolen moments. I want mornings with you. I want weekends. I want to wake up and know you are close, not thousand miles away.'" Ilya's voice goes soft. "And I realize, I want this too. So when my contract is up, he suggests Ottawa. Close to Montreal, but not same team. We can have more."

"That's beautiful," Tooru says. Then, because he's Tooru, he adds, "Also insane. You moved to a new team, new country, new everything, for a relationship you're keeping secret?"

"When you say it like that, it sounds crazy."

"It is crazy," Tooru agrees cheerfully. "But the best love stories usually are. Iwa-chan, tell him about the time I flew to Japan for thirty-six hours just to see you."

"You had a fever," Hajime says. "You shouldn't have been flying at all."

"But I missed you!" Tooru turns back to Ilya. "See? Crazy. But worth it."

Ilya is smiling now, really smiling. "You two are very good together."

"We are," Tooru agrees. "And you and your captain will be, too. You just have to decide what you want more—privacy or proximity."

"We are talking about it. About being more open. But his team, they are very traditional. And my new team, I just got here. I don't want to make problems."

"You won't make problems," Tooru says firmly, pouring yet another round. The bottle is getting noticeably lighter. "You'll make waves, maybe. But anyone who has a problem with you being in love is someone whose opinion doesn't matter."

"You are very confident."

"I'm very drunk," Tooru corrects. "But also very in love. There's a difference. When you love someone the way I love Hajime, the way you clearly love your boyfriend, everything else becomes background noise."

"Background noise," Ilya repeats. "I like this."

"You should," Tooru says. "It's wisdom. Drunken wisdom, but wisdom nonetheless."

Hajime, who's been nursing his vodka more slowly than the other two, watches them with amusement. Tooru gets philosophical when he drinks, and apparently so does Ilya. They're both gesturing more now, leaning into their conversation with the easy intimacy of people who've found common ground.

"Tell me more," Tooru demands. "How did your captain react when you told him you were moving?"

"He cried," Ilya says simply. "He is very emotional person. He tries to hide it, be tough captain, but with me he is soft. He cried and he kissed me and he said, 'Are you sure?' Like I would change my mind."

"Would you?"

"Never. I love him. I want to be close to him. Want to build life with him." Ilya looks at his glass. "Is scary, yes. But is also right."

"That's how you know," Hajime says quietly. "When it's scary but still right."

"Iwa-chan is also very wise," Tooru announces. "I married well."

"You married someone who puts up with you," Hajime corrects.

"Same thing."

Ilya laughs, loud and genuine. "I like you both very much. You are good people."

"We like you too," Tooru says. "Which is why I'm going to give you more advice. Are you ready?"

"I don't think I have a choice."

"You don't. Here it is: bring Shane to dinner. To our place. Let us meet him properly."

"Tooru—" Hajime starts.

"What? We're friends now. Friends have dinner." Tooru looks at Ilya. "Unless you think he wouldn't want to?"

"No, he would like that. He is very curious about you both." Ilya grins. "I tell him about the coffee date. He thinks it is hilarious."

"It is hilarious," Tooru agrees. "Your team trying to set you up with my husband. That's novela-level comedy."

"They mean well."

"They do," Hajime confirms. "They're good guys. They just want you to be happy."

"I am happy," Ilya says simply. "I am close to Shane. I have good team. I have new friends." He raises his glass. "To new friends."

"To new friends," Tooru echoes. "And to love. And to very good Russian vodka."

They drink. The sun is setting now, painting the sky in shades of orange and pink. The vodka bottle is nearly empty, and all three of them are pleasantly buzzed, warm with alcohol and the easy comfort of good company.

"You know what?" Ilya says. "I think everything will be okay."

"It will be," Tooru says confidently. "Because you have Shane, and you have lots of money, and you us. What else do you need?"

"Nothing," Ilya says. "This is enough."

30 minutes later, Hajime is throwing a passed out Tooru over his shoulder to carry him to the cab they'd called with promises to set a dinner date in the future.

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Shane and Ilya join Hajime and Tooru for dinner.

Chapter Notes

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

The following Friday, Ilya arrives at their apartment with Shane Hollander in tow.

Hajime opens the door and immediately understands why Ilya described Shane the way he did. Dark hair with dark eyes, strong build—Shane is maybe an inch taller than Hajime, which still makes him significantly shorter than Ilya. He's wearing a simple button-down and jeans, and there's an intensity to his gaze that Hajime recognizes from elite athletes.

"Iwaizumi-san," Shane says, offering his hand. His grip is firm, confident. "Thank you for having us."

"Just Hajime is fine. Come in."

Tooru appears from the kitchen, wiping his hands on a towel. "You must be—"

He stops dead.

Hajime watches his husband's face cycle through several emotions: curiosity, recognition, horror, and finally dramatic despair.

"No," Tooru says.

"Tooru—"

"No, no, no." Tooru points at Shane. "You. You're like him."

Shane blinks. "Like who?"

"Kageyama Tobio. You're—the way you stand, the way you looked at me just now, assessing me—oh my god, Ilya, your boyfriend is Kageyama."

"I don't know who that is," Shane says, looking to Ilya for help.

Ilya is grinning. "Kageyama is Tooru's rival. Setter for Japan national team."

"Rival is a strong word," Tooru says. "More like the bane of my existence. The thorn in my side. The pain in my—"

"The person you complain about constantly," Hajime finishes. "Come on, let them in properly."

Shane passes Tooru a bottle of wine as he comes in, saying, "Oikawa-san, I was told this was a good year."

Whistling appreciatively at the bottle of Argentinian wine, Tooru looks at him again with narrowed eyes and replies, "Alright, Shane. You're forgiven for looking similar to that asshole. But seriously, get your genealogy checked because you're definitely related somehow, which is just very bad for you."

Hajime takes their jackets as he mutters, "Such a fucking asshole. Shane, I apologize for him. I swear he knows how to be a decent human."

Ilya chuckles as he pushes a now-cautious Shane into Hajime's apartment.

They move to the dining room, where Tooru has actually cooked—or rather, assembled a spread of dishes that range from homemade to definitely store-bought. Shane and Ilya settle on one side of the table, Hajime and Tooru on the other.

"So," Tooru says, pouring wine. "Shane Hollander. Captain of the Montreal Voyageurs. Seven-time All-Star. Known for your offensive play and your ability to make the league's top goalies look like rookies."

"You did your research," Shane observes.

"I always do my research." Tooru's eyes narrow. "What's your training routine?"

"Tooru," Hajime warns.

"What? I'm making conversation."

"You're interrogating."

Shane, surprisingly, doesn't seem bothered. "I'm on the ice six days a week during season. Strength training four days, cardio three. I track my nutrition, my sleep, my recovery metrics."

Tooru's eye twitches. "Of course you do."

"Is that... bad?" Shane asks.

"No, it's very Kageyama of you," Tooru says. "Let me guess: you also think about hockey constantly, you hate small talk, and you once made your teammates run extra drills because their passing wasn't crisp enough."

Shane looks at Ilya. "How does he know that?"

Ilya is laughing now. "I told you. You two are very similar."

"I am nothing like this Kageyama person," Shane says, but there's no heat in it.

"That's exactly what Kageyama would say," Tooru mutters.

Hajime kicks him under the table. "Be nice."

"I am being nice! I'm just observing that Ilya has a type, and that type is apparently 'intense athletes who take everything too seriously.'"

"You take everything seriously," Hajime points out.

"I take things seriously with flair. There's a difference." Tooru turns to Shane. "Do you have flair?"

"No," Shane says simply.

Tooru throws up his hands. "See? Kageyama!"

Despite Tooru's dramatics, dinner is warm and easy. Shane, once he relaxes, has a dry sense of humor that catches Tooru off-guard more than once. When Tooru complains about a referee's call in a recent match, Shane responds with, "Sounds like you need better positioning," and Hajime has to hide his laugh at Tooru's offended gasp.

"I like him," Hajime tells Ilya quietly while Tooru and Shane debate the merits of various training philosophies.

"He likes you too," Ilya says. "He was nervous. Shane doesn't warm up to new people well."

"Neither does Tooru, actually. He just hides it better."

They watch their partners argue about whether ice baths or contrast therapy is more effective for recovery. Shane is methodical and cites studies. Tooru is passionate, citing personal experience and dramatic hand gestures.

"They're going to be friends," Ilya predicts.

"God help us," Hajime says, but he's smiling.

After dinner, they move to the living room. Tooru curls into Hajime's side on the couch, and Shane sits close enough to Ilya that their knees touch. It's a small thing, but Hajime notices the way Shane's hand finds Ilya's, the way they both relax into the contact.

"So," Tooru says, "you two want advice about long distance."

"Tooru—"

"What? He said they did. On Ilya's deck, remember? Very drunk but very honest conversation."

Shane looks at Ilya. "You got drunk with them?"

"Russian vodka," Ilya explains. "Was a good night."

"We've been doing long distance for eight years," Hajime says. "Different sports, countries and schedules. It's not easy."

"But it works," Tooru adds. "You just have to be intentional about it."

"Intentional how?" Shane asks. He's leaning forward now, genuinely interested.

"Video calls," Hajime says. "Not just texting. Actually seeing each other's faces, hearing each other's voices. We do it every day, even if it's just for ten minutes."

"We have lunch together," Tooru says. "Well, my lunch, his breakfast. But we eat at the same time, talk about our days. It makes the distance feel smaller."

"And you can't let distance create assumptions," Hajime continues. "If something's bothering you, you say it. You don't let it fester just because you're not in the same room."

Shane nods slowly. "We're working on that level of honesty and being able to talk about feelings so easily."

"We aren't great at it either," Tooru says cheerfully. "Hajime's solution is to grunt and hope I figure it out. My solution is to be passive-aggressive until he asks what's wrong."

"That's not—" Hajime starts.

"It's exactly what we do, Iwa-chan. But we're working on it." Tooru squeezes Hajime's hand. "The point is, you have to make time for the hard conversations. Especially when you're apart."

"What about the future?" Ilya asks quietly. "How do you plan when you don't know when you'll be in same place?"

Hajime and Tooru exchange a look.

"You plan anyway," Hajime says. "Maybe the plans change. Maybe they don't work out the way you expected. But you keep planning, keep working toward being together."

"We're looking at houses," Tooru admits. "In Japan, for when I retire. Somewhere near a good training facility for Hajime and near the water for me. We won't live there for years, but we're planning for it. It helps."

"It gives us something to work toward," Hajime agrees. "A future that's ours."

Shane is quiet for a moment. Then he says, "Ilya moving to Ottawa was the plan. Our plan. But now that it's real, I don't know what comes next."

"You don't have to know everything," Tooru says, gentler now. "You just have to know you want to figure it out together."

"We do," Ilya says firmly. "We want to figure it out."

"Then you will." Hajime leans forward. "Look, it's going to be hard. There will be times when you're exhausted and frustrated and you miss each other so much it hurts. But if you're both committed, if you both keep choosing each other, you'll make it work."

"How do you keep choosing each other?" Shane asks. "When it would be easier not to?"

"Because easier isn't better," Tooru says simply. "I could date someone in Argentina. Hajime could date someone in here. It would be logistically simpler. But I don't want simple. I want him."

"Every time," Hajime adds. "Every time I have to choose between easy and Tooru, I choose Tooru."

"Even when I'm being dramatic?"

"Especially then."

Ilya and Shane look at each other, and something passes between them.

"Okay," Shane says. "We can do this."

"You can," Hajime confirms. "And when it gets hard, call us. We've been through it."

"Fair warning," Tooru says, "I will give you very dramatic advice and Hajime will tell you to communicate better. But between the two of us, we're occasionally helpful."

"Occasionally?" Hajime raises an eyebrow.

"I'm being modest."

Later, as they're saying goodbye at the door, Shane shakes Hajime's hand again. "Thank you. Really."

"Anytime."

Shane turns to Tooru. "You too. Even if you think I'm like your rival."

"You are like my rival," Tooru says. "But Kageyama's not so bad. Annoying, yes. Talented, unfortunately also yes. But not bad."

"I'll take it," Shane says.

After they leave, Hajime pulls Tooru close. "That was good. You were good."

"I was, wasn't I?" Tooru grins. "Even though Shane is literally Kageyama 2.0 in a different sport."

"He's really not."

"He really is. But I like him anyway." Tooru's expression softens. "They're going to make it, aren't they?"

"Yeah," Hajime says, thinking about the way Ilya and Shane looked at each other, the way they held hands like lifelines. "I think they will."

"Good." Tooru kisses him softly. "The world needs more people who choose love over easy."

"Is that what we did?"

"Every single day, Iwa-chan. Every single day."

Epilogue: June 2025

Six years after that first summer in Ottawa, Hajime finds himself in the Videotron Centre in Quebec City, watching his husband warm up for a VNL match. Some things never change—Tooru's pre-game routine is still meticulous, his serves still vicious, and he still scans the stands looking for Hajime before every match.

What has changed: Hajime's not alone.

"I still can't believe you convinced me to wear this," Shane Hollander-Rozanov says, tugging at his bright blue and white Argentina jersey. Oikawa's number stretches across his back.

"You look good," Ilya says, grinning. He's wearing a matching jersey, and unlike his husband, he's completely comfortable in it. "Very supportive."

"We look like traitors. Wearing Argentina jerseys in Canada where Argentina is playing... Canada," Shane mutters, but there's no real heat in it. After six years together—three of them married, two of them as teammates in Ottawa—Shane has learned to pick his battles. This isn't one of them.

"Canada is going to revoke your citizenship for this," Hajime says dryly.

Ilya grins, shrugging, "I will risk it for Tooru."

They settle into their seats—good ones, courtesy of Tooru's insistence that if they were coming all this way, they were sitting close enough for him to see him. Ilya immediately starts waving at the court, trying to catch Tooru's attention.

"Subtle," Shane observes.

"I am never subtle," Ilya says cheerfully. "You knew this when you married me."

"I did," Shane agrees, and the look he gives Ilya is so fond that Hajime has to look away, feeling like he's intruding on a private moment.

It's been a journey to get here. Ilya and Shane went unexpectedly public four years ago, right before Shane requested a trade to Ottawa. The media had a field day—rival captains, a secret relationship, and questioning whether Shane had purposefully allowed Ilya to win. But they'd weathered it together, and now they're just... normal. As normal as two elite athletes can be.

Shane got to be just a player who loved hockey in Ottawa. If anything, having both him and Ilya leading the team has made them stronger. And hell, the Centaurs had won the Cup a few weeks ago.

Down on the court, Tooru finally spots them. His reaction is everything Hajime expected: eyes wide, mouth dropping open in delight, then that brilliant smile that still makes Hajime's heart skip after fourteen years together.

Tooru points at them, then at his jersey number on their backs, then makes an exaggerated heart shape with his hands.

"He's so dramatic," Shane says, but he's smiling.

"You have no idea," Hajime says. "This is him being restrained."

"I love it," Ilya declares. "Tooru should always be dramatic. Is part of his charm."

The match starts, and Argentina dominates from the first serve. Tooru is in top form with perfect sets and blistering serves. Every time he makes a particularly good play, Ilya leaps to his feet to cheer loudly. Shane is more reserved but equally invested, offering quiet commentary on technique and strategy that shows he's been paying attention to volleyball over the years.

"That rotation was beautiful," Shane murmurs after a particularly complex play. "The way he read the defense—"

"I know!" Ilya grabs Shane's arm. "Did you see? So smart!"

"Remember when your team thought Ilya moved here for you?" Shane asks during a timeout, grinning at Hajime.

"I try not to," Hajime says. "Tooru still brings it up at least once a month."

"Because it's hilarious," Ilya says. "Best misunderstanding ever."

"It worked out," Shane says quietly, and there's something in his voice—gratitude, maybe, or wonder. "If they hadn't pushed Ilya to have coffee with you, we might not have become friends. Might not have had you two to talk to about... everything."

"You would have figured it out," Hajime says.

"Maybe. But it helped, having people who understood." Shane looks at Ilya. "Having people who'd already done the hard thing."

The match resumes, and Argentina pulls further ahead. Tooru is showing off now—Hajime can tell by the extra flair in his movements, the way he's playing to the crowd. Playing for them.

When Tooru scores the match-winning point with a serve that the other team can't even touch, all three of them are on their feet. Ilya is cheering in Russian, Shane is whistling, and Hajime is clapping so hard his hands hurt.

Tooru turns to their section immediately, finds them in the crowd, and blows them a kiss. Then he makes a show of pointing at each of them, at their jerseys, and gives them a thumbs up that's so enthusiastic it's almost comical.

"He's never going to let us forget this," Hajime says.

"Good," Ilya says firmly. "We are his biggest fans. He should know."

After the match, they wait outside the locker rooms. When Tooru finally emerges, hair damp from the shower and gym bag slung over his shoulder, he makes a beeline for them.

"You wore my jersey," he says to Shane and Ilya, voice thick with emotion. "Both of you."

"Of course we did," Ilya says. "You are our friend. We support you."

"Plus, Ilya insisted," Shane adds. "Something about team spirit."

Tooru pulls them both into a hug, and Hajime watches his husband—his dramatic, brilliant, beautiful husband—get teary-eyed over hockey players wearing his number.

"Okay, okay," Shane says, but he's hugging back. "You played great. That last serve was insane."

"It was pretty good, wasn't it?" Tooru pulls back, wiping his eyes. "Iwa-chan, did you see—"

"I saw," Hajime says, stepping in for his own hug. "You were magnificent."

"I had good motivation." Tooru kisses him, quick and sweet, then turns back to Shane and Ilya. "Dinner? There's this place nearby that has amazing poutine. My treat, since you came all this way."

"We came to watch you play," Ilya says. "Not for free food."

"But we'll take the free food," Shane adds.

They end up at a small restaurant and crowd into the booth. Tooru orders half the menu, still riding the high of his win. Shane and Ilya sit close together, Shane's hand resting on Ilya's knee under the table in a gesture so casual it speaks of years of practice.

"So," Tooru says, pointing his fork at them. "When are you two going to give me something to celebrate? A championship, maybe?"

"We literally just won the Cup?" Shane says, eyebrows furrowed in slightly in confusion.

"Oh, I know! I cried when I saw Ilya hoist that trophy over his head. And then your kiss? So adorable."

"You cry about everything," Hajime says.

"Only the important things, Iwa-chan." Tooru turns back to Shane and Ilya. "But seriously. You two are good together on the ice. Everyone says so."

"We work well together," Shane agrees. There's a quiet pride in his voice. "Always have."

"Even when you were on different teams?" Tooru asks.

"Especially then," Ilya says. "We made each other better. Now we just do it on same team."

"I'm glad we met," Hajime says suddenly. Everyone looks at him. "That summer, when the team thought Ilya moved here for me. I'm glad it happened."

"Even though it was embarrassing?" Tooru teases.

"Even though. Because we got you two out of it." Hajime raises his water glass. "To unlikely friendships."

"To love," Tooru adds, raising his own glass.

"To making it work," Shane says.

"To being brave," Ilya finishes.

They clink glasses,

"Next summer," Tooru announces, "we're all going to Argentina. You have to see where I play. Meet my team."

"We'd like that," Shane says, and Ilya nods.

"It's a plan," Hajime agrees.

Later, walking back to their hotel, Tooru laces his fingers through Hajime's. "Today was perfect."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah. I won the match, and I've collected more top athletes who adore me. Oh, and you" Tooru squeezes his hand. "Especially you."

"Sap."

"Your sap."

Ahead of them, Shane and Ilya are walking close together, Ilya's arm around Shane's shoulders. They're talking quietly, heads bent together, and there's something beautiful about how comfortable they are. How far they've come from those early days of secrecy and fear.

"We did good," Tooru says softly. "Helping them. Being there for them."

"They did the hard part themselves," Hajime says. "We just... showed them it was possible."

"That's not nothing, Iwa-chan."

"No," Hajime agrees, watching Shane laugh at something Ilya said. "It's not nothing."

"I love you," Tooru says.

"Love you too," Hajime replies, pulling him closer.

And ahead of them, Ilya pulls Shane closer, and Shane lets him.

Everything is exactly as it should be.

Chapter End Notes

And that is the end of the crossover, my friends! I hope you enjoyed it!

End Notes

Comments and kudos are appreciated.

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