

Mother Knows Best

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Mother Knows Best

by [aspiringtoeloquence](#)

Summary

In which Ilya negotiates, Shane gets steered around charity fundraisers, and Yuna Hollander mothers.

Notes

No, this isn't the fic for yet another fandom that I have been ignoring off-and-on for 18 months, yes, I did binge Heated Rivalry yesterday, and no, I will not apologize.

Thank you to idoltina, who is a real one, however our fandoms may diverge.

“ –very promising, honey.” His mom’s voice is soothing as he starts to gather his things for practice tomorrow, phone tucked to his ear. “And Shane, I don’t want you to worry about the scheduling, I’m making sure they have a strict list of dates.”

“Thanks mom.” He elbows Ilya, who is sitting on his favorite hoodie. Ilya looks unreasonably offended. “Okay, I’ll talk to you later.”

“Is it Yuna?” Shane waves a hand at him, palm over his mouth.

“Oh,” his mom lights up. “Is Ilya there? Tell him I have a call in to Grant. On second thought, I can text him.”

Shane doesn’t respond, mostly because he has six feet and a few inches of free agent actively trying to climb him to grab his phone.

“I do not call her back yet.” Ilya reaches for the phone. “Tell her I forward her latest email now.”

“Okay, mom, he heard you. Love you. Bye.” He hangs up, then drops his phone to the empty couch. “What, my mother is managing your contract negotiations now?”

“Yuna is very good,” Ilya says, defensive in a way that Shane finds baffling. “She tell me their first offer, not anywhere near their cap like they said –”

Now Shane’s fingers are on his waist. “I told you that –”

“So I ask her to suggest the new term.” He waves his own phone helpfully at Shane. “She tell me the Ottawa manager has been seen talking to agent for André Roscoe –”

“Bullshit. He’ll never leave Cleveland.”

“ – aha, yes, but she also says André does not want to leave, really, so I have time. I make myself more valuable option, to show Ottawa I am serious investment for the future of his franchise, and it will make many waves.”

Shane’s gaze drops to the magazine on the coffee table again, Ilya shifting off his lap to show it off. Cover Ilya is shirtless, holding a hockey stick too close to his body to be anything but indecent. The Byline reads: *From Russia – Free Agent – with Love: Former Boston star Ilya Rozanov is ready for his next challenge*

“I look good, no?” Ilya smooths the magazine cover down. “Your mother, she is smart cookie. This comes out, oh, suddenly my agent has email ‘please tell him we found an extra million’ – probably it was under the couch, that is always where I find.”

“Another mill?” Shane knows what Ilya signed for in Boston, and that was based on pure

potential. Another million would put him above what Shane makes now at the end of his Montreal contract, but around what Shane will expect when it's time to renegotiate.

"Yes. Not their cap, maybe, still they are way below, but is good money. For Ottawa –" He looks at Shane, a long, dark sip. "For two hours, I think ninety minutes, no traffic to here – I will do this." Shane takes his hand, feels Ilya's fingers twitch for a cigarette. "It buys a great deal of petrol, I think, one million of your dollars."

"My dollars? They're mine now?"

Ilya fidgets. "Ours. For the charity thing." He brightens. "And who knows, maybe I have your mother help me negotiate when I win them cup. Several of their players will retire for winning."

The future spots available in Ottawa have been on his mind too, but he settles for pressing a kiss to the corner of Ilya's mouth. "We'll see."

"Yes, see my name on the cup. I am glad you agree."

"Did you need to call my mom back?"

"No, I send her email. And she tell me to tell you to ice your shoulder."

"Grown adult," Shane reminds him, patting him on the cheek.

Ilya tilts his head to kiss his palm. "Ah, but is benefit for me too. If you do not ice, I know we will not be able to fuck later like the position you want."

"Maybe my arm is fine and we can have sex wherever and whenever and however we want."

"Would not want you to settle," Ilya shrugs. "You have been wanting for me to fuck you there since the new furniture arrive. So I will make it perfect for you."

"Is that what I would be doing? Messing with perfection?"

"Is true not all sex can be perfect sex," Ilya admits practically. "I suppose we could try to do mediocre sex. Most people, they are not great at it like we are." He moves to pull off his shirt. "But if you ice your shoulder I will make it worth your while." He drops his sweatpants as he heads for the bedroom. He looks ridiculous in just Christmas socks, but it isn't long until one is being thrown at him. "I take nap now. So hot from cooking in kitchen. If only was solution." He leaves.

Shane puts his calendar away, grabs his ice packs, and follows.

The Irina Foundation's first fundraiser is hosted the following year. Both the event and the foundation's offices are in Ottawa: Shane's hometown, Ilya's home, and a reason for Shane to

travel between the two cities frequently.

They survive the speeches, accompanied by some really great canapés, and steel themselves for the necessary evil of *schmoozing*.

Ilya has been pretending that he doesn't understand English well enough to answer more than a few questions from donors at a time for the last twenty minutes, something Shane finds both horrifying (in that it works without question) and disappointing (that he didn't think of it first).

"You made a speech," he complains, trying to take a few more bites of his dessert in the corner with his boyfriend before it gets whisked away or he gets pulled into another conversation. "They know you're fluent."

"Eh," Ilya says, handing him three bread rolls wrapped in a fancy napkin, secreted from the bar, probably. He has a crumb resting in the V of his shirt, and it makes Shane's fingers itch. "The fluency, it comes and goes."

"Convenient." Logically, Shane knows he should not bite the hand that is offering illicit carbs, lustfully or hungrily. And that Ilya is skipping the press because he knows attention on Shane will make contract talks easier next year. And that Ilya put a lot of time into that speech, which was hard for him.

Ilya takes Shane's phone out of his other hand and slides a glass of vodka into it. "Drink up."

"Are you sure?"

Ilya looks offended. "I told you. I import only the best for this event."

That wasn't what he was asking, but to be fair, Ilya had told Shane this. It had been a whole thing. Both Ilya and Svetlana had insisted on paying for the open bar, and then insisted on top shelf liquor. "When the rich, they get drunk, they give more money," Ilya explains to Shane, like he's too Canadian to grasp the concept of getting people trashed to write cheques.

Shane's anxiety does ebb, standing there with Ilya close enough to feel the heat of his arm where it is casually resting against his. All eyes have been on them tonight, as expected, but the Toronto Star posted an article about the event, calling them the enemies-turned-bromance: philanthropic heroes of the NHL. Ilya keeps threatening to have it embroidered on a pillow.

("Matching pillows," Ilya later clarifies in bed, his hands already kneading the muscles of Shane's ass through his underwear. "For my bro.")

His mother takes a break from rounding up donations to come fuss over his hair, telling Ilya he looks great and there's an oil billionaire who wants to meet them. Ilya tweaks the collar of his black dress shirt – he's in all black, lethal enough to have given Shane an actual moment of white noise when he stepped out of the bathroom in their Ottawa apartment.

Mom is still fiddling with his bowtie (Ilya tied it, Shane's hands gripping at his waist to feel grounded before the first big event of their foundation's history). She takes Ilya's arm first, then Shane's. "Come on, boys."

Ten minutes later Ilya taps his foot against Shane's, leaning in as he laughs, wrapping an arm around Shane. "You know, I tell him this idea, it is wonderful opportunity for the league."

The executive – Mark, he's pretty sure, smiles and nods, thinking nothing of this display of brotherly comradery. "Well, everyone says you've got a hell of head for business, Hollander."

"He is real estate tycoon," Ilya beams, kissing the top of Shane's head in an effusive way that reads 'slightly drunk Russian' rather than 'publicly outing their relationship'. The *moya lyubov* Ilya sighs happily into his ear in the car later, and then there's bed, later, the quiet "catering was good, no? I ask, they do many event. We should hire them. Next fundraiser, maybe, or I throw party when Cap retires. They do birthdays, quincenëra – I learn this word, always I heard it on TV –"

"I don't think the e sounds like that."

"What, you speak Spanish now?" He flicks his fingers, the gesture not yet rewritten from muscle memory even after years without a cigarette (allegedly). Ilya looks defiantly at the ceiling. "Just because you are being asshole to me, I will not tell you what other occasion they do."

"Is it weddings," Shane grins, and Ilya can't fight the smile that takes over his face as he pounces.

"You are a clever cookie," he murmurs between kisses, and okay, Shane can wait until the morning to put his tux away.

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