

Something New and Something Old

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Something New and Something Old

by [PaonCheri](#)

Summary

Both Shane and Ilya had gotten concussions before. It was part of being a hockey player, but neither of them had ever woken up thinking they were seventeen. Of course, Shane had to change that.

Notes

I love writing amnesia fics so now I had to write one for Heated Rivalry as it consumes my life currently.

Please note that I do not have a beta reader. I did edit this fic, but sometimes I do not see my own errors so please point any mistakes out to me! I am so tired I definitely missed something stupid and small so tell me please!!!! Also I know a little Russian, but it's not the best so I did do some google translating so sorry if anything is grammatically incorrect on that front.

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

Hollander is somehow fucking missing from his fucking hospital bed, that was all Ilya could think on fucking repeat as he searched room after room. Despite the staff reassuring him that ‘they had it under control’, even though they had been the ones to lose Shane in the first place, Ilya searched. He had only gone to the cafeteria to get coffee, leaving his sleeping, concussed, on-watch husband for all of five minutes, only for the man to be gone by the time he returned.

Meaning Hollander had woken up from his mini coma and decided to go on a walk, alone. Knowing Shane, it was probably some new rebalancing concussion walk. Ilya knew he reasonably had nothing to worry about, but Shane was still just so stupid it was impossible not to worry.

The floor was Shane-free, beside the bathroom that Ilya wasn’t giving up hope for. Though it would make more sense for Shane to be wandering the halls in silence for meditation than causing all this commotion and stress for a bathroom break. Really hopped up on drugs and painkillers, Shane shouldn’t have been able to walk this far by himself without someone at least noticing the man was barefoot. Yet, by some miracle, past the white walls and aggressive lighting, Shane was there staring too closely at himself in the mirror (only proving Ilya right that Shane’s eyes really were going and he would need to update his prescription soon).

“What? You wake from surgery and think ‘I must pee now and not tell anyone’?”

Shane was staring in the mirror at himself still, as if not even noticing Ilya’s entrance.

“What’s wrong?”

“I’m old.”

“Yes, I noticed,” Ilya agreed, “happened around three years ago.”

“I am not supposed to be old.”

“You are not that old, Моя любовь,” Ilya sighed, “come on, you should rest.”

“I— I can’t—“

“You are in hospital, Shane,” Ilya rested his hand on Shane’s shoulder, trying to direct the man out of the bathroom, “you do not even have shoes on, come.”

Shane looked down at his bare feet, grimacing and bouncing from foot to foot as if trying to limit his exposure to the bathroom floor, now happy to leave with Ilya.

“Who are you?” Shane asked once they were in the hallway, still letting Ilya lead him despite the question.

Ohhh, Ilya supposed he probably did do something bad enough in his life to deserve this.

“Do you work here?” Shane was hunched in on himself. Hunched like he was some nervous kid and not Shane Hollander, hockey legend, “You don’t look like you work here.”

“I don’t.”

“Why am I so old?”

“I will ask,” Ilya promised, getting Shane back into his room and settled onto his bed before pressing the call button for a nurse as his face scanned Shane for signs, more signs of all the wrongness Ilya now knew was there. Shane’s hands were pushing into the fabric of the bed sheets, a nervous stim Ilya was familiar with. Shane’s eyes traced Ilya, but never made eye contact, as he covered himself with the hospital blanket like there was anything he could ever hide from Ilya, like there was anything he needed to hide.

“You are from Russia, right?” Shane asked suddenly, “I mean your accent—”

“Yes,” Shane flushed, up to his cheeks and down his neck. Ilya had not seen Shane blush like that since they were young, *so very young*, and before any of this was figured out.

“You have a nice accent,” Shane added.

“I know.”

Shane nodded, going back to pinching the blanket between his fingers, then releasing the fabric, only to pinch it again.

“Mr. Hollander, it looks like you are awake, and... back,” a nurse finally arrived, stepping into the room, reviewing a chart in hand.

“He’s confused,” Ilya spoke up.

“That’s expected after walking up from an injury like this, and his anesthesia is still wearing off. There is no need—”

“He thinks he is old.”

“Okay?”

“Older than he should be.”

This finally got the nurse’s attention, “Mr. Hollander, I am just going to ask you some questions, and I just need you to answer them to the best of your abilities. You can guess if you don’t know, okay?” Shane nodded, staring up at the woman as if waiting for her to strike, “Do you know where you are right now?”

“Hospital...?”

“Located where?”

“Ottawa?” The nurse wrote something down, but was still smiling politely (Shane never liked polite smiles; he wasn’t sure what to do with them) despite Ilya’s leg starting to bounce nervously at his side.

“I am going to repeat three words, and in a minute you will be asked to repeat them, okay?”

Shane nodded.

“Apple, refrigerator, dog,” the nurse wrote down what she said before moving on, “What is your full name?”

“Shane Hollander.”

“When were you born?”

“May 10th, 1991.”

“Who is the current Prime Minister?”

“Uhhh...”

“It’s okay to guess if you are not positive.”

“Harper?”

“What’s today’s date?”

“October...” the nurse nodded encouragingly despite it being long into spring, “2008... end of October,” Shane said the last part confidently.

“What is your occupation?”

“I don’t have one...” Shane looked from the nurse to Ilya as if expecting one of them to step in, “I am in school.”

“What were the three words from earlier?”

“Apple, refrigerator... dog?” The nurse smiled.

“Can you count backwards from ten to zero for me?”

“Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three...” Shane paused, staring at the women before sighing, “two, one, zero,” he finished quickly.

“Where were you born?”

“Ottawa,” he waited a moment, “Canada,” he added afterward.

“What was one important event or accomplishment in your life?”

“Huh... I am captain of the Canadian Junior Hockey Team.”

“That’s all,” the nurse smiled, writing down Shane’s last answer before flipping through the pages. Ilya had sat silently through the entire interaction

“Are my parents here?”

“They are not currently in the area, Mr. Hollander, but Mr. Rozanov has been keeping in contact with them,” the nurse answered before Ilya had a chance. “We are going to run a few more tests. However, when you originally came in, an MRI was already run, and no swelling was found. There is currently nothing to be concerned about—”

“He cannot remember.”

“The memory is a delicate thing, Mr. Rozanov, but if there is no serious damage, everything should come back on its own with time.”

“Should?”

“The brain is delicate,” the nurse scanned Shane’s charts again, “Mr. Hollander, we are going to keep you for a few more tests, but if all is negative, then you will be released into Mr. Rozanov’s care. Do you understand?”

“Are we friends?” Shane asked, staring Ilya down hesitantly.

“This is your husband, Mr. Hollander.”

“What...?” Shane whispered it as if he could hide from the very concept.

“I am going to make a few calls, and hopefully you can be released tonight.”

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Shane was released that night to be driven to an apartment that he shared with his... husband. Despite Ilya’s, that was his husband’s name, attempt to be welcoming and calm, it had very little effect. The apartment was homely. Maybe that was the worst part of all of this. Not the awkward drive there or the hospital or the memory loss, but that Shane had married a man, and their life looked happy.

They had photos on the walls and big blankets, and it was clean in just the way that scratched that never-ending nervous itch in Shane. It looked like a home and even felt like one as some anxious part of Shane unraveled as he walked in as if his body knew this place. Shane supposed his body did know this place.

“Are you hungry?”

“I guess.”

“Are you on macro diet yet, or no?”

“What?”

“No then, good,” Ilya smiled, “will get to eat normal food.” The man rushed to the kitchen, pulling out things from the fridge and pantry. His shoulders were relaxed, even if he was tense earlier. Shane thought he heard Ilya saying something to himself in Russia as he worked. Shane sat at the counter watching with little other knowledge of what to do. “You want sandwich?”

“Sure.”

“Good,” Ilya nodded, “that will be quick, then you can shower and rest.”

Shane didn’t respond. Shane didn’t talk as Ilya made food, or as they ate. Ilya didn’t seem bothered by it, quick to let Shane lament about his lost life in silence until they had both finished eating, and Ilya took the plate from Shane.

“Come,” Ilya beckoned Shane upstairs... to the bedroom, Shane realized. They were married, and married people slept together and did things together in bed that Shane did not want to consider doing with a man. Ilya opened the door, and Shane walked forward.

“You shower,” Ilya commanded, walking into the bedroom after Shane, “I will change sheets.”

“We share a bed.”

Ilya paused, “I will be down the hall, you will stay here.”

“But we sleep in the same bed.”

“Yes, normally.”

“So...” Shane’s eyes were focused on the bed, not moving to Ilya’s face, “we have kissed before.”

Ilya knew he should have known better; he shouldn’t have laughed, not so openly in Shane’s scared little face, but he could not help himself. Their relationship had started with much more than just kissing, and yet kissing was Shane’s biggest concern: “Yes, many times.”

“I’m not gay.”

“Okay,” maybe Ilya only dropped it because he was just a kid, mentally at least. Maybe Ilya had not dealt with it all that well the first time Shane had come out, but it always seemed too obvious. Ilya was better at this stuff now... kind of... when he wasn’t feeling like being a dick.

“I’m not.”

“I did not say you were.”

Shane nodded, seemingly pacified, before walking into the bathroom, locking the door behind him.

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Yuna and David were in the apartment, treating it as much like Shane and Ilya's home as it looked. Two of them were in the living room trying to comfort Shane to the best of their abilities while Ilya puttered around the house, doing chores and trying to provide a false sense of privacy.

The conversation his parents provided was not as helpful as Shane would have liked. They confirmed that Shane and Ilya were married, that they have been for years and lived together for longer. They confirmed that Shane was apparently happy, that he was a professional hockey player, that he modeled sometimes as part of his brand deals, that he still liked ginger ale and yoga and now old people (and gay?) things like architecture too, and that he had friends —good friends.

"I am good at hockey?" Part of Shane wasn't entirely sure it was going to last. Plenty of players were good young, but with age, their bodies just couldn't keep up, no matter how good their skills should be in theory.

"Really good," Ilya butted in from the laundry room as he moved clothing from the washer to the dryer.

"You don't know how rare that is for Ilya to admit," Yuna laughed like Ilya wasn't some stranger, like he was family. Well, apparently, he was family.

"So I am normally not good?"

"No," Ilya laughed, "I normally asshole."

Everyone laughed, except Shane. Shane wasn't unfamiliar with not understanding jokes, with feeling just slightly out of touch with the rest of the group, the rest of the team, but he knew when to smile, when to laugh, when to do what others did. Now he looked at his parents, and he wasn't sure what he was supposed to do. He never felt as lost with his family as he did with others, but now it was like they were strangers, too.

"I still live in Ottawa?" Shane asked.

"Only during the season," Yuna answered.

"During the summer you are at the cottage," David added.

"I live with you guys?"

"No," Yuna laughed, "Imagine."

“You and Ilya have your own cottage down the road.”

“We will go to the cottage when the season ends,” Ilya called, “it should feel more familiar.”

“Am I missing a lot of games?”

“Only five,” Yuna promised.

“Are the Centaurs doing well?” The words felt weird because the Centaurs weren’t a very good team, but now apparently they were the best, if his mother was to be trusted that was.

“Favored to win the cup.”

“I’m missing that?”

“You have won many cups before. It will be fine,” Ilya stated, walking past Shane on his way to the kitchen.

“Can I see a game?”

“No screens, Shane,” Yuna chastised, “Ilya, do not let him look at any screens.”

“Am not,” it was all so domestic. Shane wasn’t sure what to do with it. It didn’t feel like his life, his husband. It felt like he was watching someone else’s family, someone else’s life with their gay husband, as Shane waited for his wife to come pick him up.

Shane wasn't gay; he had a husband. He wasn't gay; his parents were acting like him having a husband was normal. He wasn't gay; he would have tried harder to be normal. He had dated women, he played hockey, he had done the work to be right. He still ended up like this. He wasn't gay, he was sure of it, and yet Ilya was in the kitchen.

Shane was supposedly happy, but this wasn't the life he ever imagined himself living. It wasn't right; it was almost cruel.

“Are you making cookies, Ilya?”

“да, he is not on any stupid macro diet yet.”

How was this Shane Hollander’s life? It made no sense.

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Ilya was busy today. He had work, or a promotion, or something, and Shane wasn’t allowed to be alone, it seemed, as he was now at a restaurant, sitting across from a Hayden Pike, his supposed best friend (Ilya had grumbled the words like they insulted him personally before

dropping him off). Hayden was nice, polite, a father of four, and aware of Shane's need for personal space.

"Do you like it?"

"What?"

"Your life?"

"Uhh...."

"I mean, you just woke up to your whole future, that has to be pretty cool."

"I guess."

Hayden laughed like Shane had said something funny, "You don't change that much when you get older."

"Thank you?"

"When Ilya called and said you were mentally a teenager, I was nervous about what it would be like to talk with you, man, but you have always been an old man at heart, I guess."

Shane wasn't entirely sure that wasn't an insult, "Okay."

"Sorry," Hayden laughed, "you are the youngest man I have ever met."

"What?"

"Sarcasm," Hayden explained, but it didn't explain much.

Shane just... he just wasn't entirely sure he could do this. He couldn't fit here. He so clearly didn't fit, and he wasn't sure he ever would, and now it wasn't just with Ilya, but with Hayden, with his friend. He didn't have a place here, and the person he grew up to be was not who he was; he did not even know who he was, but it was not this. Not someone who exchanged jokes casually with ease and came home to an apartment like his with a husband like his.

Something about this whole thing, his apartment, this restaurant, even just the car ride, made him feel empty. Like a broken toy that no longer fit. Everyone was being welcoming, maybe Shane didn't want to be welcomed. Maybe he wanted to be left off to the side to figure it out himself instead of being pushed into his life. A life that the more he saw, the less he was sure he could ever play the roles of or want to. It was too much, all too much.

"If you need to stay with me, say the fucking word, and I will swoop in and carry you off," Hayden spoke up, seeming to realize Shane's change in mood, "I will be your prince in shining armor." The thought was tempting if only to escape Ilya and his hovering parents (who felt all too wrong), but this man was just as much of a stranger as Ilya, if not more so.

“What do you think of Ilya?” She asked instead as Hayden’s smile dropped, and he looked confused, Shane thought, or maybe sad. A lot of people looked at him like that now.

“I can barely stand the guy.”

“And I married him?”

“I don’t know why,” Hayden huffed, “but you are happy,” he groaned. “Way too happy, like grossly happy with your annoying, rude, ugly man.”

“He’s not ugly,” Shane wasn’t sure why he defended Ilya; he just did before he could even register that the words had left him, a red heat rising to his cheeks at the admission.

Hayden snorted, “You haven’t changed at all, but I am your best friend, Shane, and whatever I say goes.”

“What, it’s the word of God?”

“Pretty much,” Hayden yawned, “I am a dad, I created the world my kids live in, and now I can create yours too.”

“I’m not a kid.”

“You literally think you are what, sixteen?”

“Seventeen!” Shane felt the heat rushing to his face, “That’s not a kid.”

“Teenager is a kid, dude, that’s like basic.”

Later, when Ilya picked Shane up, Ilya asked, “Do you like Hayden?”

“Yeah, he was nice.”

Ilya would scoff, “yes you love him, best friend.”

“Are you jealous?”

Ilya would smile something predator before it slipped off his face into something gentle, “of course not, you are allowed friends. Even ones bad at hockey.”

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Shane knew Rose Landry was a famous actress, but apparently she was also his friend, “and ex-girlfriend,” she added helpfully as Ilya sent a harsh glare her way.

“I like both?” It should not have given Shane the amount of hope it did.

“No,” Ilya corrected.

“Just a little confused,” Rose’s smile was polite, kind, like she understood the delicacy of Shane’s state without him ever having to explain it; he wasn’t sure he even could. She seemed to get it more than anyone else did: “It took you some time, but it was worth it.”

“Very worth it,” Ilya laughed, “I get much better sex than Rose ever did.”

The flush that colored Shane’s face was from nothing more than shock.

“How mentally old is he?”

“Eighteen.”

“Seventeen,” Shane corrected.

“I retract statement,” Ilya said quickly, causing Rose to burst into laughter, “you too young to hear words like that.”

“I know what sex is.”

“Ohh,” Ilya pondered, “if you so expert tell me all about it.”

“No, ewww,” Shane groaned, and Rose laughed, “I dated you?” Shane asked, confirming.

“Not very long,” Ilya interrupted.

“I have dated other women before, too,” Shane recalled his current girlfriend at seventeen, who he hadn’t thought of much; he didn’t think of her much when he was actually seventeen either, so it wasn’t all that shocking that they broke up. But he thought of her now, Jessica. He hadn’t liked Jessica much, but he had dated her, and he had dated Rose, so that had to mean something when put together.

Shane looked up and saw the pity on Rose’s face and something Shane didn’t have the words for on Ilya’s. It hurt; he didn’t know why it hurt, but it did. It shouldn’t matter what either of them thought; it really shouldn’t. Shane turned his eyes down to his water, drinking some and taking great interest in his meal.

“I get kidnapped again in my new movie,” Rose was nice for changing the subject.

“When do you not?” Ilya was a good husband for going along with it.

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Ilya had a game tonight, so Shane was watching (finally allowed one hour of screen time per day after a week with none) with his parents. Hayden and Ilya were on the same team playing

against Scott Hunter, *the Scott Hunter*, who was a supposed close friend. Shane nodded along and cheered when his parents did only half paying attention.

Ilya scored. Ilya scored a lot, Shane noticed. Ilya was good, he was really, really good, and something faint stirred in his stomach at the realization. Shane was half tempted to stand up and leave. Leave for somewhere, he wasn't sure where. Just anywhere but here, watching Ilya's grin and sly eyes as he chirped words Shane could not hear at the opposing team.

"You like the layout of this rink," his mom said, as the game paused a moment between the second and third period.

"Okay?"

Yuna sighed, shaking her head, "You are more interesting as you get older."

"I don't think architecture is all that interesting."

"Give it two years," David suggested. Wow, Shane couldn't believe he became that boring that quickly. How had he become interested in architecture of all things? Was it a gay call sign? Had Ilya and him connected over architecture?

"Well, I'll guess I'll wait."

They fell silent as the third period started and Yuna began coaching Ilya through the TV, helplessly calling out to a man who could not hear her. The night continued like that until Ottawa won, and Yuna cried out, happy and relieved. Shane watched the players celebrate, feeling both a lack of enthusiasm and rising jealousy toward the whole scenario, which he wasn't sure how to unpack.

Yuna and David stayed with him until their eyes began to droop; their age was showing. Shane's was too because he was barely any better, but still good enough to shoo them home.

"Are you going to be fine alone?"

"Yeah," Shane sighed, "I'm a grown man."

Shane could see the annoyance on his mom's face, but she let him get away with the comment, "goodnight young man."

"Call us if you need anything."

Then, for the first time in a week, Shane was truly alone. It was not nearly as relieving as he imagined. It was near suffocating, in fact, with all the homeliness around him, surrounding him without distraction, he was now only further trapped in the future. The post-game interviews were still running, then being dissected. Shane hadn't been paying attention when they came on originally; he now rewinded (the future had its benefits).

Ilya had an interview; he was the captain of the winning team, so that made sense. He was smiling, sharp and cocky, and it brought out some attentive warmth in Shane's belly that

settled between his legs. A familiar comfort that grew into heat he wasn't entirely sure what to do with.

"Are you worried about how Hollander's absence weakened your line?"

"Did I look fucking worried?" Ilya laughed, "Hollander's good like little girl is good, but I am best. There is never any weakened line when I am on the ice." His words were sharp, but his eyes were soft. It did not take a genius to know Ilya was not as serious as he tried to make himself seem.

"You said you would make sixty goals by the end of the season—"

Ilya stopped the interviewer, "I always make my goal. I made three tonight, all very sexy. I need one more, you think I can't do?"

"Of course...." Shane would admittedly describe the goals as... 'sexy', and his semi seemed to agree. It wasn't Ilya or the fact that it was a man, but hockey. Hockey, no matter Shane's age, was exciting. It was a thrill nothing else could top, and watching it had made him excited in all ways imaginable. Seeing his team win had been a lot, even if his mind didn't respond, his body knew. It wasn't gay, Shane would know if it was gay, and it wasn't.

Shane watched the interview drag on as he remembered a cocky grin and angry eyes that seemed ready to tear up the whole world around him (ones that the Ilya on the screen poorly imitated). He remembered Ilya, no not Ilya, Rozanov. Young and hateful and a near disaster and nothing like the man he grew up to be. The memory sat heavy on his tongue until the front door jiggled open and Ilya walked in, whispering into his phone as if afraid to disturb Shane, who was very much awake. Shane muted TV Ilya, as the real Ilya did not realize Shane was still downstairs watching him stand in the doorway as he shucked his shoes off.

"Сейчас я дома," he paused as the other person on the phone spoke, "Sventlana, Я пытаюсь." he huffed, "Я знаю... Я люблю его, а теперь он как будто напуган. Это хуже, чем когда наши отношения были тайными. Он думает, что я вдруг начну делать ему минет." Ilya's voice rolling over the syllables nicely, (Shane felt some shameful jealousy that Ilya was talking to someone else and not him; it angered him as much as it scared him), "Ему нужно спросить." Ilya finally looked up, seeing Shane still on the couch and his interview playing in the background, "You should be sleeping," Ilya's eyebrows furrowed, pulling his phone from his ear as his accent thickened with the quick switch between languages.

"I am not tired," it was a lie, they both knew it.

"What about your bedtime and all your boring?"

"I am boring?" Shane had already suspected it based on his parents' comments, but it hurt to hear it confirmed.

"Very, now bed."

"I remember you," Shane knew there was a more tactical way of saying it, but it just came tumbling out of his mouth.

“I call you back,” Ilya hung up the phone, “you remember?”

“You are an asshole,” Shane wasn’t sure how else to explain this young version of Ilya he remembered other than that. This young, angry, and hateful version that seemed to spit with his resentment, that should have scared Shane, but only made him feel fondly, as if looking back at a sweet memory, instead of a rude interview.

“Yes,” Ilya nodded along excitedly.

“That’s it,” Shane admitted, “that is all I remember.”

“That is good,” Ilya still praised, “asshole is much of my personality. Good progress,” he nodded to himself, smiling. Shane found himself leaning forward, far too close into Ilya’s space, and the scared part of him did not rear its head the way he thought it might; instead, his body told him to lean closer, and he did. Shane wasn’t sure what he was even going to gain because he was not leaning toward Ilya’s lips, that was for sure, just into his space. But Ilya closed the gap, Ilya turned and pressed his lips to Shane’s, not into anything sensual or aggressive; it was just a mere peck, something familiar, something quick and habit-like.

Ilya pulled back and smiled, sweet and comfortable until the look cleared away. His actions catching up to him. “Sorry,” Ilya cleared his throat.

“No, it’s— it’s okay,” because Shane had been the one to lean in. Shane had unwittingly leaned in as his body had wanted it in some wordless way. He had turned his head, and Ilya had reacted without thought to kiss his husband, who was and wasn’t Shane, “sorry, I got too close to you.” Ilya seemed to be studying Shane before nodding along wordlessly to a thought in his head never spoken aloud.

“That is your first kiss?”

“No,” Shane was more than half offended.

“With a man?”

“...Yes.”

“It was good for first time.”

“Hey!” Shane swatted at Ilya, the familiarity of the action controlled Shane before he could think about it, “it was barely a peck, wasn’t exactly a kiss.” Ilya laughed, smiling at Shane’s frustration.

“You should rest,” he directed Shane upstairs, back to his... their bedroom, dropping Shane at the door before continuing down the hall.

“Goodnight.”

“Goodnight, Hollander.”

Shane was alone. He didn't want to be alone. He knew he could go to Ilya. That he could crawl down the hall, and Ilya wouldn't turn him away, but Shane also wasn't entirely sure he wanted to do that either. Instead, he found himself calling Hayden, which was somehow his best option in all of this.

Hayden picked up the phone quickly, like a good best friend, despite sounding seconds away from falling asleep, "Hi?" and Shane supposed it was late.

"I kissed him."

"Who?"

"Ilya."

"Your husband?"

"Yes."

"Good night, Shane."

"...Hello?" Hayden had hung up on him....

.

"Ohh shit, you kissed him," Hayden called back that morning as Shane sat up in a far too large bed that felt empty.

"That's what I said."

"I just forgot about your concussion," Hayden was rustling something on the other side of the phone, "I never saw what you were like when you first started seeing each other. You were very... private about it. I suppose it makes sense that you would be the type to have butterflies in your stomach after a kiss," Hayden laughed, "I mean, I knew you were seeing someone originally, but I didn't know it was him that got you like that. I thought it was just some Boston chick."

"Chick?"

"Ohh, yeah. You had him as Lily in your phone. I always thought he was some chick, and you never corrected me."

"Why didn't I?"

"Hockey can be... complicated with— stuff like that."

"Yeah," Shane agreed at a lack of what else to say, "you thought I was straight?"

“I had no reason to think otherwise.”

“Good.”

“What?”

“Not good,” Shane corrected, “I just mean thank you?”

“Okay?” Hayden seemed more lost now, “Look, I have to go, Jade is sick— NO! Don’t spin your sister! I will call you later, Shane, bye.” The line went dead.

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Shane was on a walk through his new neighborhood with Ilya, something apparently they did often... well, usually it was a run, but they walked for now as Shane’s brains were too tenderized to run (as Ilya so lovingly stated). The neighborhood was nice, homely, the type of place Shane imagined he would live when he grew up with a dog and three children. They didn’t have a dog, though Ilya mentioned wanting one when they watched TV last night, and they didn’t have children either. Maybe they could adopt, but Shane didn’t suppose that would happen for a while, at least until he remembered.

Ilya stopped them at a park, a dog park that was more than half empty, with a large pond in the middle and benches speckled around it. Ilya led Shane to the pond, pulling out a roll of bread from the bag he claimed needed to be packed that Shane originally believed only had their water bottles in it. Ilya pulled the roll apart, handing shredded bits to Shane to toss at the ducks swimming out of the pond and quickly surrounding them on the grass.

“I used to do this with my mom when I was a kid,” Shane admitted as he tossed pieces out to a mother and her duckling.

“I know,” Ilya sounded fond, it twisted something inside Shane, “you named them all.”

“Yeah, I did.”

“Still do,” Ilya pointed to one of the ducklings, “that is Philip, and his mother is Rose, and father is James. There is Peter and Calico,” Ilya pointed to a spotted duck, “Suds and babies are Bean, Whiskey, Vodka, and Snuff—”

“I named them that?”

“No, I name babies,” Ilya seemed quite proud, “Tulip and Carrot are in the bushes.” There were two where Ilya pointed, sitting in the shrubs, staring at them.

“How do you know all their names? They look the same.”

“No,” Ilya shook his head, “patterns are all different. You will see it later,” he promised.

.

Ilya made dinner. Apparently, Shane usually cooked, or they did it together. Shane was supposed to be good at cooking, but now he watched. Ilya made steak with roasted potatoes and carrots. He ate a lot of meat, Shane realized, definitely more red meat than was healthy. If Shane were all of his future self, maybe he would have said something, but he wasn't the guy's husband, and it wasn't his business.

Tonight, Shane let Ilya dominate the conversation over dinner as he had for all of the previous meals. But the conversation felt stiff, and for some reason Shane found it in himself to admit something he did not want to, "I know who you are."

"I know you do."

"No, from... I saw you play in the junior Olympics before."

"Oh. Did you?"

"Yes, I just said that."

"I was good."

"I know I saw it."

"You think I am good," Ilya had way too smug of a grin on his face.

"You objectively are."

"You think about me playing lots, yes?"

"What?"

"You never told me you watched my games before. It is good to know," Ilya took another bite, not waiting to swallow before speaking again, "I was very handsome then too, I remember."

"Sure."

Ilya smiled, "You are cute."

"I'm a grown man."

"You are seventeen."

"Not actually."

“Blush like you are seventeen,” Ilya pinched Shane’s cheek briefly to see that red flush cover his face once more, making his freckles stand out further against his pale complexion. Shane swapped his hand away, annoyed.

“When did we meet?” he asked, changing the conversation.

“Soon for you, winter of 2008 at Junior Olympics.”

“You actually remember when we met?”

“Yes, very important day,” but Shane would go on to date Rose Landry, so he could not have just become gay after meeting Ilya. It made no sense with the timeline he constructed in his head. He should have had more adult years of being straight. “You have question. Ask question,” Ilya probed as Shane, confused, stared dumbly at him from across the kitchen table.

“I— huh—“

“Ask.”

“Did I not try harder? Did I really just give in?”

“What?”

“I don’t understand how I would just turn gay.”

“You did not turn, you always were.”

“I would know if I was gay.”

“No,” Ilya shook his head, “you are bad with knowing. You not know yourself at all.”

“How is that possible?”

“You are autistic, Shane.” Maybe that wasn’t right, but it was the only reason Ilya could give. Just as Shane did not know when Ilya was being sarcastic, Shane did not know he got hard when he looked at a penis, but not a vagina. The connection was clear to Ilya, but maybe it was only clear to him; maybe the logic was flawed. Shane’s horror seemed to make Ilya think that the logic must have been flawed, and Ilya was all wrong about how autism worked.

“No.”

“Shane....”

“No, I’m not,” because he had to be normal in at least one way, and that wasn’t fair. That wasn’t fucking fair.

“Shane....” Shane had been the one to tell Ilya. Tell him he was autistic, and Ilya assumed Shane must have known his whole life, some obvious thing he always knew about himself, and yet now Ilya was not sure that was the case at all.

“Why?”

“Oh, Shane,” Ilya was hesitant to reach across the table, not sure if it would make it better or worse. But Shane’s breath picked up again, and he seemed to struggle, one of his hands grabbing at his hair for a moment before quickly grabbing his pants’ pocket instead, “You are panicking, breath.”

Shane seemed to fall in on himself, his forehead resting firmly against the kitchen table, and Ilya finally stood, moving to Shane’s side.

“I don’t understand how I turned out like this.”

“Life is complicated.”

“Why couldn’t I just be normal?” his words are muffled and strained.

“You are much better than that,” Ilya promised, “second-best hockey player, big real-estate architecture guy, best terrible dresser, you have the most boring in all the world. I like how you are. I like how you turn out very much.”

“Obviously,” Shane huffed, lifting his head, “you married me.”

“Yes,” Ilya nodded gravely, “many hot women wanted me badly. So many, in all cities, and all so beautiful, and they would beg to date me, to fuck me,” Shane made a face, “but I wanted you much more. All I could ever think about.”

“Thanks, I guess,” Shane seemed to calm a moment, even if his face was still splotchy and his eyes red.

“I cannot make you like yourself, you must do that on your own,” Ilya added, because if he could, he would make Shane like himself. Shane was very likable, it was a shame he could not see it. “But I can tell you, you are very likable. Very easy to love, worth giving try, even when boring.”

“I am not boring.”

“You are always boring,” Ilya argued, “it is good. Means constant, makes you easier to love. I know boring, don’t have to worry about boring, no anxiety around boring, yes?”

“Sure.”

“Good,” Ilya went back to sitting across from Shane, continuing their meal as if nothing had happened. Shane found himself appreciating it. Appreciating Ilya being able to return to normal as if Shane had not just panicked so pathetically to a stranger... to his husband.

Shane remembered Ilya smoked once; he didn't think Ilya did anymore. If the man did, Shane hadn't seen him do it or smelled it on him. Shane remembered Ilya smoked because he remembered talking to Ilya once, in an alleyway, and the guy being kind of a dick.

It was just something that popped into his head while he was sitting across from Ilya, as if the memory was always there, but just got pushed to the forefront for some reason. Shane didn't say anything about it. There was nothing to say.

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Ilya was taking Shane to meet Scott Hunter, *the Scott Hunter*, who was retiring after this season and lived in New York. Ilya had flown into New York for only the weekend, and Shane had to accompany him, apparently, because he could never be trusted on his own. Scott Hunter was now a new babysitter for Shane while Ilya dealt with whatever 'adult business' he had for the day (which Shane learned included doing underwear ads, don't ask how he learned that).

"He is..." Ilya seemed lost for words, huffing a little, "he is good for you to talk to now. Was big part of us getting together."

"Okay."

"Good."

Ilya knocked on the door, and Scott and he had a wordless back and forth in front of Shane that was weird and felt vaguely threatening based solely on a strong chill that settled in the back of Shane's neck.

"I pick you up in two hours," Ilya promised before turning around and leaving.

"Come in," Scott was leading Shane through his apartment like it was the most normal thing in the world. They were supposedly friends, so maybe to Scott it was. Shane couldn't help but stare at everything with awe.

"Big fan," Shane heard himself admit before he could process the words leaving his mouth.

"Thanks," Scott laughed, "I'm a big fan of yours too." Shane couldn't help the brief moment of awe that struck him hearing that Scott Hunter, *the Scott Hunter*, had seen him play, and thought he was good enough to be a *fan*.

Scott led Shane into the living room, where a short and beefy man sat on the couch, leaning over the coffee table with photos laid out all across it, scribbling notes to himself as he did so, as if comparing the shots or readying them for archival.

"This is Kip," Scott introduced

“Nice to meet you again,” Kip was all too welcoming as Shane shook his hand after the man stood up, rushing to greet Shane, who nodded along.

“Kip is my husband,” Scott explained as Kip went back to scanning what looked like photographs of different paints, all very old, Shane realized. Shane was almost too distracted by the photos to realize what Scott had even said, but it caught up to him soon enough.

“This is why Ilya wanted me to meet you?”

“Are you thirsty?” Scott asked instead, Shane nodded allowing himself to be ignored. Neither of them seemed to be sure what to do with the other, “I don’t make as good of a smoothie as Kip, but I will try my best to impress.” Kip laughed as Shane got led away into the kitchen.

Scott pulled out blueberries, bananas, ice, dragon fruit, and apple juice. The blender grated against Shane’s head, quickly building into a headache he was too hesitant to speak up against; *it was Scott Hunter*. The blender turned off soon enough, and yet was on too long in the same moment. Scott poured Shane a smoothie and placed it in front of him. Shane shook back the headache sitting in his forehead that was persistently not going anywhere.

Scott poured a third cup and left to give it to Kip before returning with a smile. When Scott turned back to Shane, he wasn’t looking; he was peering as if searching for something within Shane.

“It’s none of my business if you don’t want to talk about it,” Scott said, his hand swirling the glass as the thick smoothie slowly moved with the movement. “I remember being your age, and you could not have pried that information out of me.” Scott laughed as if the idea was funny. “I think Ilya’s experience with all this was much different than ours. I am not sure what he expects to happen here.”

“I don’t want to talk about it,” Scott nodded as Shane paused to take a sip of his drink, “this is really good.”

“Blueberries and banana.” Shane hummed along to be polite. “You don’t remember being a rookie, right?”

“Yeah,” Scott seemed to be able to carry the conversation on well enough, even with Shane’s limited answers, as if he was used to directing conversations around Shane.

(Later, when Ilya picked him up, Shane told him, “Scott Hunter is gay.”

“Yes.”

“He only likes men, not both?”

“Only men,” they didn’t talk for the rest of the car ride. That night, when Ilya got Shane a separate hotel room, he almost protested, *almost*.)

“You should do yoga.”

“What?” Shane had spent his day reading a book on architecture, one he apparently already read and was shamefully enjoying.

“To stay in shape.”

“How is stretching going to help me stay in shape?”

“You do it now,” Ilya explained, “it helps.”

“Am I...?” Shane looked down at himself. He didn’t look all that different from when he first woke up, but then again, he wasn’t all that familiar with this body, “getting fat?”

“No, never fat,” Ilya shook his head as if the very concept offended him. He seemed to rush to Shane’s side as if quickly wanting to reassure him through touch, but Ilya stopped himself halfway, swaying awkwardly a moment before backing off. The entire interaction only confused Shane more.

“You said I should work out.”

“Yes,” Ilya agreed, “So you are not out of shape next season.”

“So I am getting fat.”

“No,” Ilya promised, “just losing muscle and too tense.” He said it like it was any less offensive, like it was some safe ground that he knew Shane would accept, but it hardly felt less insulting.

“That’s not much better.”

“I will do yoga with you,” Ilya decided instead, “it is good exercise.”

Ilya had sent Shane to change into his workout clothing, and Shane was once more in a spot where he didn’t have much choice. A lot of his time had been like this, where either Ilya or his parents or someone else sent him on a task or gave him a to-do list like he was a child. As much as he wanted to complain, he was unbelievably bored and honestly was open to suggestions.

Ilya had set up a mat in the home gym, but was stretching next to it instead of on it.

“We only have one mat?”

“I do not need,” it sounded like arrogance, and Shane couldn’t help the annoyed huff that left him and earned a side eye.

Shane got on his mat, copying Ilya at a loss of what else to do, reaching down to touch his toes. An act that was much easier than he ever remembered, as his palms laid flat on the floor

with little strain. Shane jumped as a hand pressed down against his back, kneading the muscle gently.

“You are tense.”

“Yeah,” of course, Shane was tense. He had forgotten half his life and was living with a stranger.

“Downward-facing dog?” Ilya asked.

“What?”

“That is the one that stretches the back, yes?”

“Maybe?”

Ilya nodded to himself as he continued to think, “It is,” he declared eventually. Ilya lead over ass up and face down with his hands and feet on the ground stretched out. “It will help with your tense back,” he explained.

This felt like a trick, but Shane followed Ilya anyway, keeping an eye on him in the corner of his vision. Shane’s body was able to arch into the movement fluidly, leaning down into the mat following Ilya’s lead and coming up into seal pose.

“Sexy, yes?” Ilya laughed.

“Sure?” Ilya laughed harder. Ilya leaned back onto his folded knees, “child pose now,” he commanded as he kept his arms stretched out before him, and Shane followed. The poses were easy, but Ilya’s body seemed to protest the movement, even as Shane stood easily and stretched up afterward, then reached down to his toes again at Ilya’s command.

Ilya continued to struggle to hold the positions. Like he hadn’t done them before, only seen them, and now tried to replicate them from a memory he was only half conscious of, while Shane’s body fell into place without him realizing.

Shane noticed Ilya constantly swaying beside him, as his back cracked and his knees twisted. Somehow, Shane with no memories, was much better at all of this than Ilya. It made no sense, like Ilya was the one with amnesia, not Shane.

“You don’t do yoga?” Shane realized.

“No, never,” Ilya confirmed, “boring,” he huffed, “for old people.”

“Then why are you making me do it?”

“You like it, yes?” Shane wanted to complain if only to complain, but he did have to admit that stretching out his muscles for the first time in over a week did feel good. He did like yoga, and Ilya seemed to know it too, as his obnoxious smile grew when Shane didn’t answer (how did he marry this guy?).

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“Shane, you have guest,” Ilya called from downstairs as footsteps started up the stairs, stopping in Shane's open doorway, with a solid knock on the wall.

“I wanted to make sure Rozanov was treating you well,” Hayden smiled like it was a joke, and Shane couldn't tell if it actually was one or not.

“He took me to meet Scott Hunter,” Shane said, because he wasn't really sure what Hayden would consider being treated well.

“Scott's a nice guy.”

“We feed ducks.”

“You and Scott?” Hayden seemed genuinely baffled by the idea.

“Me and Ilya,” Hayden nodded as he thought about it, as if the concept was foreign. Shane supposed he never told Hayden about all the ducks they named at the pond, or maybe he just didn't think Ilya would bring a faulty Shane to the pond.

“I just wanted to make sure you were really okay, man.” Hayden stood awkwardly as if he wasn't sure how to talk to Shane suddenly, “Ilya is a nice guy, but I know you must feel lost, and I don't want you to go out there and... and I don't know, get like scared that you're alone.”

“I'm not scared.”

“That's good,” Hayden sighed, “that's good, but you will call me if you panic or want to leave. I can pick you up, okay? No questions asked or whatever.”

“It's several hours out.”

“I don't care.”

“I'm fine,” Shane went back to folding his clothing, placing them gently in his suite case as not to wrinkle them.

“Are you happy?”

Shane thought he might be something adjacent to happy, maybe accepting, partly to terms with where his life had ended up. But that wasn't the answer Hayden wanted; that wasn't an answer that would get Hayden to back off, “yeah, I am.”

“That's good,” Hayden seemed relieved, “you deserve to be happy,” it was earnest.

“Thank you.”

“So...” Hayden’s face morphed into a mean smile, “do you have a crush?”

“No.”

“Come on, you never told me anything the first time around. I earned this!”

“No.”

“Do you get nervous when you see him? Do you blush just thinking about holding his hand?”

Shane wasn’t sure why his future self insisted on surrounding himself with assholes.

.

It had been just over two weeks, and finally, they were leaving Ottawa. The Centaurs did not win the cup, but it was a close game, and Ilya came home seeming happy enough, smiling brightly and walking toward Shane with purpose before he stopped himself and instead spoke to Shane from a socially acceptable distance.

In the few days since Scott Shane had had several memories return, but not many of any purpose. Small moments like losing the cup in Vegas, Ilya at a hotel in Florida swimming with children in a pool... Ilya’s dad being dead. He wasn’t sure what to make of it, so instead he kept it to himself, hushed like a secret.

Now they were at the entrance of their cottage, a cottage Shane designed apparently. It did not feel like coming home, but was instead a much more daunting place than their actual home ever was (there was none of that subconscious relaxation that their apartment offered). Maybe because they were truly alone, even Shane’s parents would not be at their own cottage for three days. It was just Ilya and Shane. Shane wasn’t sure how he felt about that, for as much as he knew about Ilya from the last two weeks, he seemed nice enough, but the few previous memories Shane had of the guy proved him to be both a pervert and an asshole. Not exactly the best company to be alone with.

“Your bedroom,” Ilya explained, dropping Shane’s luggage in the room.

“I could have carried that myself.”

“No,” Ilya shook his head, “you are too hurt.”

“I barely have a concussion.”

“Weak little kitten still,” Ilya mused, “I am strong man, it is easy for me. It will only be struggle for you.”

Ilya left before Shane could argue anymore. Shane was at a loss of what actually to do without Ilya hovering over him. He left his room to follow Ilya, but instead found his husband had already made himself scarce. This place was much larger than their apartment; it was actually possible for Ilya to be scarce.

The kitchen and living room were nice, but the backyard was much better. Shane wandered out, down to the dock on a lake that was quiet and void of people despite it being the middle of the day and a weekend. This place really was private; nothing seemed private anymore, especially with everyone hovering over him and his personal life like it was their own, all strangers expressing ‘concern’, and Shane was over it. For a moment, Shane could just breathe alone and quiet, but nothing like that ever lasted long.

“No swimsuit?” Ilya walked up the dock toward Shane. He had nothing on but a swimsuit and a towel thrown over his shoulder.

“What are you doing?”

“Swimming,” that wasn’t what Shane had meant at all. Ilya’s swim shorts were definitely three sizes too small and far too short, creasing in the space between his groin and thigh. While it was a private deck, this was still not appropriate.

“You like my shorts?” Ilya asked as Shane quickly dragged his eyes up from Ilya’s shorts to his eyes.

“No.”

“You do,” Ilya smiled, “I know you do.”

“Did they shrink in the wash?”

“No,” Ilya laughed, throwing his towel down next to Shane and toeing off his sandals, “they are the size you like.” Ilya dropped into the water, smiling up at Shane, who huffed as he was inevitably splashed from the ordeal.

Ilya swam under the water before Shane had time to consider what Ilya’s statement could have meant. Ilya’s legs only surfaced a moment later as he started doing handstands (poorly) before swimming back up to the surface. And in that limited time Ilya was upside down, Shane could see the back of the shorts, wet and tight and definitely inappropriate as Shane felt a part of himself stir to attention. Shane, maybe some subconscious gay part of him, liked Ilya’s ass. As awkward a realization as it was, it was a comforting one. Women had asses too, and if Shane liked Ilya’s ass, then Shane was at least the man in the relationship.

Ilya surfaced, spitting water out toward Shane, “ewww!”

“How do you like the water?” Ilya asked, splashing Shane as if his spitting wasn’t already enough.

“You are disgusting.”

“Yes,” Ilya agreed, “now get in.”

“I don’t even have my swimsuit on,” Ilya splashed him again, “hey!”

“You are boring,” Ilya complained, “get in in your clothes.”

“I will be cold.”

“Then underwear.”

“Then I have to wash out the lake smell,” Shane frowned. The smell of a lake was always hard to wash out.

“Then naked.”

“No!”

“Boring!” Ilya floated on his back, staring up at the clouds.

“Why do you want me naked anyway?” Shane couldn’t help the deep blush rising on his cheeks at his own question.

“Always want you naked,” the answer wasn’t even seductive or sexual, just a genuine smile and far too fond look in his eyes, “I like your little butt, very nice to swim with.”

“My butt?” Shane asked, “Your butt is the one that gets all the attention.” Shane was sure his assertion was correct. That he had remembered, or more accurately guessed, their dynamic correctly by his own bodily reactions and Ilya’s demanding personality.

“No, no,” Ilya laughed, “it is all your butt.”

“I’m the girl?”

“No, you are man,” Ilya seemed confused, before climbing out of the water onto the deck and shaking himself dry next to Shane, successfully distracting him.

“Hey!”

“Get changed!”

“I am not just going to follow your every demand.”

“Change!” Ilya cried again, wrestling Shane down, “Or I drag you in and your clothes get lake smell.” Shane shifted under Ilya, but the man had successfully pinned his wrists down and was dripping cold water onto Shane’s face and shirt.

“Fine!” Shane gave in, realizing his struggling was pointless, “Fine.”

“Good, change quick!” Ilya rolled off him before jumping back into the water.

“You want to look at the fire?” Shane asked, a little disbelieving as he had been pulled away from the PS5 to sit outside with Ilya at the man’s constant and annoying plea.

“You made me look at it many times.”

“So this is payback?”

“You are boring,” Ilya declared once more, “but it gets worse when you get older. Now I can bore you.”

“You would rather sit out here than play NHL 25?”

“No,” Ilya sighed, “but you want to play NHL, so now you have to watch fire instead.” A loon called out, and Ilya jumped, jerking back to stare at Shane, who had no reaction to the sound, “That did not scare you?”

“It was just a loon.”

“But you think you are kid. Loon is scary to kids, yes?” Shane wasn’t sure he was ready to correct Ilya that he had more memories past seventeen, but a loon wasn’t scary even to a seventeen-year-old.

“It’s just a bird.”

“You are worst,” Ilya stood up, walking back inside.

“Are we going to play NHL 25 now?”

“Yes, yes, come on,” and another loon called out, and Ilya jumped as he reached for the door, though he tried to hide it. Shane called back to the bird, waiting for a response he didn’t get, but the glare of Ilya was response enough.

“You are worst at all ages,” his words were salty as he trudged back inside and took up far too much space on the couch.

.

Ilya woke up to Shane standing over his bed, having just walked in, seeming hesitant as he stood distantly.

“What? You have nightmare?”

“Ilya.”

“Shane?” Ilya rolled onto his back, looking up at Shane, who sat on the edge of the bed.

“I remember marrying you. I remember why I married you.”

“You remember?” Ilya sat up, pulling off the sheets quickly, pressing a kiss to Shane’s temple, and nearly jumping on the man and almost pushing them both off the bed in the process.

“Not everything,” Shane admitted, “But enough to—” Ilya had cut him off with a kiss that quickly devolved into panting.

“I missed this,” Ilya admitted, “been so tense,” he smiled, “I wonder if my husband can help.”

“Well, after you took such good care of me.”

“Only right for you to repay favor, Hollander.”

End Notes

I need Hayden to follow Shane after everything with the Metros so I put him on the Centaurs, everyone deal with it!

I have pet ducks; do not feed wild ducks bread in real life. Give them peas or corn (even a good fig) if you want to feed them anything. Bread has too much concentrated sugar that in large quantities could cause health risks. That being said, it's a silly little fic, and in this universe, the ducks love bread, and it's good for them.

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