

my moon, my man

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by [tameiki](#)

Summary

Shane Hollander and the emotional rollercoaster of Russian pet names.

Notes

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

This season was everything he ever wanted, and it was kicking his ass.

Shane has been feeling off since the moment he woke up and saw a storm outside instead of the sun promised by the forecast; his legs still hurt from getting smashed into the boards the previous day, and Ilya was snippy, and whiny, and bouncing with too much energy, which typically meant too much bullshit both in the locker room and on the ice. Shane was exhausted. His normal, perfect stick tape ran out, and he had to borrow some from Hayes.

Their game stayed close until the momentum shifted in the end of the second period and never quite came back. Shane felt like his legs were disconnected from his brain; he was slow and sluggish, his shots going just a little wide too many times.

The media — he liked Wiebe, but he would have preferred literally anyone else to do the post-game interviews today — was, as expected, a shitshow. Ilya got through his share of questions quickly (not surprising — without the exhaustion of hiding weighing him down, his husband was shining) and left after Shane waved him off. Journalists took it as a sign to circle Shane tighter, and the questions just didn't stop coming.

"We haven't seen you play on the level you did in Montreal the whole month, is it just the adjustment period?"

Yes, I knew Voyagers better than myself, and I'm lost here, but hey, at least no one thinks I lose so I can get fucked after.

"Do you think it was your marriage with Rozanov that influenced the way you played today?"

Sure, I just can't keep my eyes off him, so I lose the puck.

"How do you deal with the downgrade from captain to a second-line player? Are there a lot of arguments going on in the locker room?"

He wished he could just tell them to fuck off.

He stumbled through his usual, media-trained answers, feeling numbness creep up from his toes and hollow him out, and left exhausted and miserable, only nodding to Harris when he finally told the room they were done. The locker room around him was quiet; Shane wasn't sure if the Centaurs had felt the mood and rushed out, or if he'd really spent that long doing interviews. Hayes was the last one left when Shane came in, clasping him roughly on the shoulder without saying anything.

Now he was sitting alone, helmet unstrapped and abandoned on the bench near him, still in half his gear. He couldn't bother right now. He needed a minute, and Ilya wasn't here yet — still talking to the coaches about their fuck-up of a game — so Shane couldn't leave anyway. He just stared at his hands, one knuckle split and red from the cold. He knew he needed to take off his gear, shower, and get ready.

He couldn't force himself to move.

Bad games and even worse interviews were starting to feel routine, and Shane couldn't figure out *why* everything had gone to shit the moment the season started. Media comments left him feeling exposed, itchy, eager to get the hell out of the arena; playing the way he had tonight left him cold.

Fuck, he wants to forget this day so badly.

“Shane?”

A warm hand touches his cheek, barely grazing him with fingertips, and Shane flinches. He can see his husband's feet between his own now, but dragging his eyes up to Ilya's face feels impossible. He stays frozen, focusing on the leftover warmth on his cheek and the familiar shoelaces.

“Солнышко, иди сюда.”

Ilya's fingers brush his shoulder, and a second later he leans in and pulls Shane into his arms, one hand at the back of Shane's neck, the other around his waist. His fingers are cold, familiar pressure. Shane's eyes slip closed, and he sways forward, letting his heavy head fall against Ilya's chest. He's too tired to sort through the Russian words tucked away in his head; it doesn't matter anyway — Ilya keeps murmuring into his hair, rocking them gently, and with every shiver that runs through Shane's body, some of the tension pulsing painfully through his shoulders goes away. He feels almost sleepy.

Ilya lets them stay like that for a few more minutes, silent now, then tugs Shane upright and presses a soft kiss to his forehead. Shane nuzzles closer, chasing warmth.

“Shower at home, yes?” Ilya says quietly, lips still brushing Shane's skin. “We will do a bath with all your salts and foams and little ducks.”

The corner of Shane's mouth tilts up.

“We do not have any ducks,” he murmurs.

Ilya laughs and kisses him again, brief, grounding, there and gone in a second.

Later, soft, cozy, tucked into bed and wrapped in his husband's arms, Shane asks, “What did you call me? In the locker room?”

Ilya, half asleep already, cradles him closer to his chest and stays still for a couple of seconds, thinking, then kisses him again, gently, almost reverently.

“Little sun.”

Hayden invites them over, and they drive the two hours to Montreal on their only free weekend. Shane can't believe that only months ago he was making the same drive, leaving Ilya's loving, gentle arms to go back to his own apartment.

Hayden's kids get an early Christmas every time Jackie allows Ilya to bring gifts — she learned the hard way that giving him free will means all four little gremlins get spoiled rotten. Sometimes he sneaks in little trinkets and sweets even when Jackie says no, and the only reprimand he gets is an exasperated smile.

The food is delicious, and, as always when Jackie cooks, somehow fits their diet plans. Shane isn't sure what kind of magic lets her make all the boring dishes taste this good. Ilya and Hayden bicker through the whole dinner, then bicker some more while they clean up, but it's light. Shane laughs more than he talks, refilling his glass when no one is looking.

"It's nice, right?" Jackie says. "They finally get along."

Shane startles where he's bent over the dishwasher, mid-rinse. He hadn't heard her come in, much less stop beside him.

"It is."

There's less animosity at these dinners now, but Ilya, Shane thinks, would rather be tortured than admit he actually likes Hayden.

"Honestly, I expected it to take years, not months."

Jackie just snorts in response, amused.

They slowly migrate to the living room, Shane wine-drunk and happy. The space around him seems to tremble in soft, slow waves; he knows a conversation is still going on in low murmurs, but he can't follow it, the words floating away from him. It's no matter, though — Ilya is wrapped around him like a vine, one hand in Shane's hair, the other gently brushing his fingers, and Ilya's answers rock through his body like a soft hum, running from where his cheek is pressed to Shane's head all the way down to Shane's toes.

He thinks he hears his name, and then Ilya starts to move around, slipping from under Shane and leaving him alone in the sudden cold of the Pikes' living room couch. Something closely resembling a whine slips from his lips, and he hears some shushed laughter. A warm, gentle hand touches his forehead and brushes his hair back. Shane follows the movement, leaning further into the gentle fingers.

"Котик? Let's get you home, yes?"

He is so lucky to have a husband who has warm hands and a beautiful smile and strong arms to pick him up from this extra comfortable couch, Shane thinks. And then his rusty Russian, learned through countless tortuous hours, annoying Duolingo tests, and eleven years of knowing Ilya, kicks in.

He opens his eyes, squinting at first because of how bright the lights in the Pikes' living room are — he wants to go home to their million of lamps — and glares at his husband, who is standing above him with the gall to smile.

“Did you just call me a cat.”

Ilya flicks his nose, then kisses it lightly, tugging Shane fully up, one hand gentle at his waist.

“Is true, no? You fall asleep on me and refuse to move.”

Shane is pretty sure that the weird thing his mouth does in response would be called pouting.

He hears Jackie snickering behind, but Ilya is already tugging him towards the front door. They get through their goodbyes and put clothes on. Shane sulks the whole time, all the way to the car, and promptly passes out with his forehead against the window before they even get out of the Pikes' driveway. He wakes up, disoriented and happy and still warm, when they are thirty minutes away from home, and tugs Ilya's hand into his lap, lacing their fingers together.

“I love you, yes?”

“I love you too,” Shane echoes.

Someone's stick crashes into his face, slipping under his visor, and then Shane gets slammed into the boards hard enough to make his ears ring.

He knows what happened — they were on a power play; he'd just made a pass to Ilya; Toronto's defensemen were trying to strip the puck. He knows what day it is and where he is. His ribs hurt, but not like they're broken. It still takes him a few seconds to drag himself up from the ice, blood trickling down from his forehead and smudging his vision.

The play had felt so good, only to go to shit a second later. Nothing is broken, at least, he thinks. The world around him is exploding with sound — he thinks he sees Bood slamming into an opposing player out of the corner of his eye — but Shane can't focus long enough to make sense of any of it.

He blinks once, and Ilya is in front of him, a hand wrapped around Shane's upper arm, his face carefully blank. His eyes are dark and distant, and it's strange that he isn't in the fight breaking out around them — Ilya, infamously, loves fighting. Most of their penalties come from his ill-timed chirps.

Ilya gives him another second, then starts tugging them both away — first off the ice, then down the tunnel toward the locker room, the game clock still ticking. Shane catches Wiebe's eye on the way and nods — he's okay, but the cut on his forehead definitely needs fixing —

and hears Ilya mumble something to the coach. His ears are still ringing and everything feels sluggish, like he's been dunked in cold spring water.

The next thing Shane registers is the coach waving them both off with another careful glance.

The farther they get from the ice, the more sensation returns to his body, and by the time he sits on a bench in the locker room, his forehead is exploding with white-hot bursts of pain. Blood still trickles down his face, dripping from his lashes when he blinks. It's gross, but nothing that can't be fixed with a few stitches.

The bruise will be ugly, though. He'll have to frown less for a couple of weeks.

Ilya carefully unlatches the clasp of his helmet with steady hands, still silent, tugs it free, and gently brushes back the hair stuck to Shane's forehead, frowning.

The room still spins. Shane feels woozy, almost like black spots should be eating away at his vision any second, but nothing happens. He just feels off-center, unable to focus on anything except the faint buzz of the overhead lights.

Maybe the hockey gods are mad at him — he can't come up with another explanation for how the last few games have gone for him. It's still the middle of the regular season, and his minor injury count is already ridiculous. Soon they'll run out of athletic tape, bandages, and arnica cream. They'll have to stop by the pharmacy tonight.

The locker room door opens, and Shane slams back into reality, feeling like he's properly in his body for the first time since the hit. He starts to stand — Charles, the team medic, will probably call him over anyway — when the hand around his wrist tightens, tugging him back to the bench.

“Тише, ласточка. Sit down.”

Ilya's voice is soft and low. He's been so quiet Shane almost forgot he was still there.

When Shane turns his head to tell him he needs to go — needs to get stitched up so he can get back into the game as soon as physically possible — he notices that Ilya's face is blank, eyes almost absent, his thumb still moving in slow, soothing circles on Shane's wrist.

That expression on his face is just wrong.

Ilya is the most emotional person Shane knows; scowls and smiles and frowns and bliss flicker across his face lightning-fast when they're alone, shades and shapes of his feelings hard to track. Shane spent years and years studying him, and he still needs to ask and guess.

Right now, his face is empty, like there's a wall of ice between him and everything outside his own head. His shoulders are too tight, his breaths rougher than they should be after a long shift on the ice.

Shane frowns.

Then he remembers how long those few seconds after the hit felt until he found the strength to get back up.

“Hey.”

Shane cups Ilya’s face, fingers pressing into his cheek, and turns it so Ilya has to look at him instead of past him. He has seen this before — Ilya being physically present, but withdrawn, gone somewhere else.

“I’m fine,” Shane says. “It’s just a cut.”

He knows how it looks, though — face lacs always bleed like hell — and he remembers watching that cursed documentary from last year.

Ilya exhales heavily and tries to look away. Shane tugs him as close as he can, careful not to smear blood on the uniform or knock into the gear Ilya’s still wearing. There’s a little light in Ilya’s eyes now.

Shane smiles softly, presses his fingers into Ilya’s shoulder, soothing, and bumps their noses together.

“Let Charles handle this,” he says. “There’s still a game going on, remember? Go get them.”

Ilya huffs, fond and annoyed and alive again, even if his posture is still a bit too tight. He stands, smoothing the uniform on Shane’s shoulder, kisses the top of his head, and heads back out without looking back.

Shane’s cut gets stitched in time for the third period, and they win the game 6–2.

“There it is, buddy!”

He gets his hat trick, and the Centaurs crowd him into the boards in the biggest group hug of his life, an endless wave of hands tapping at his helmet. Someone is jumping up and down, tugging on his shoulders.

He slammed the first goal home on a power play, Ilya on his side, and then the game just felt *right* in a way it hasn’t in ages.

“That’s how we do it!”

He got his second one a minute after their opponents scored. The ice was his friend again, and cutting through the defense felt like child’s play.

“Way to go, Shane, eh?”

The last one came so late in the third period it felt like a hard-won blessing.

“Good job, Hollzy!”

He laughs, delighted and dazed.

“I want some! Come here!”

Hayes, unable to get through all the hands and bodies in his bulky gear, tugs him free and nearly sends them both sprawling. Everyone is still screaming like this is the Stanley Cup Final and not a late regular-season game, and Shane is left feeling confused and happy.

He wasn’t here yet when everyone around him nurtured this team into the one it is right now from the constant losses and missed passes and stupid mistakes. He was back in Montreal winning with the Metros when Ilya guided them back up from the ground with careful hands.

He’s here now, though, and they’ve accepted him with all his quirks and nerves and relentless hockey obsession, like he’s always belonged with them. Maybe he did.

Ilya presses into him the second Hayes steps back, breathing hard, and kisses him on the cheek, then on the top of his head. The smile on his face is bright and sure, dimples deep in his cheeks, and that’s the smile Shane fell in love with. He can still vividly remember flinching away from his husband’s hands, viscerally afraid someone would see, but there isn’t even a speck of that old fear left in him.

With thousands of people watching them on the jumbotron, he just leans in harder.

“Моё золотце.”

Shane knows this one. It means *golden* — and hearing that soft Russian here, in the middle of the ice, fills him with happiness until it spills over. He leans in and kisses Ilya, gentle, then smiles so wide his cheeks hurt. He tugs his husband even closer, for all the times he had to look from afar before. This season is everything he ever wanted, and they don’t need to hide anymore — never again.

Bood is laughing when they slam the locker room doors open; Ilya follows at his heels, still smiling bright. Shane feels giddy. He hasn’t had this much fun playing hockey since he was a chubby-cheeked ten-year-old, three apples tall, and hockey was just laughter, the sound of blades on ice, and goal after goal.

After years away in Montreal — going back to his apartment alone, stressing, day after day, about winning, hiding, and lying — Ottawa has been exhilarating. He loves their house, their dog, and the random dinners they get with his parents.

And he loves *this*.

Shane hates West Coast road trips.

They mess up his whole routine, but most of all he hates how his sleep schedule gets wrecked for the ten days they're usually gone. Even now, finally home, he feels itchy and exhausted. He's not looking forward to jet lag kicking his ass for the next three days.

He likes this part, though — finally cooking his own dinner. Days and days of hotel meals, with their gross scrambled eggs and greasy, overcooked meats, left him aching for food that tastes decent and isn't mushy. He'll text his parents later to thank them for stocking the fridge.

By the time Ilya gets out of the shower, the vegetables and chicken are cut and marinating, and Shane is waiting for the oven to heat. They've been making their own food instead of eating whatever the trainers supply more and more often, ever since Shane noticed how much Ilya craves homemade meals. It's a pain to cook something that fits their diet, but it's worth it.

Ilya hugs him from behind for a second, presses a kiss to his neck, and then goes to the fridge for cheese and sour cream. Shane sighs. His husband's sour-cream obsession is something he'll probably be dealing with for the rest of his life.

They move around each other easily, pulling plates and bowls from the cabinets, and Shane smacks Ilya with a towel when he tries to steal a piece of chicken before it's been measured and portioned. The quiet around them is soft.

Shane doesn't know why he still bothers measuring portions when everything is going to get drowned in a sour-cream-and-cheese sauce made with an unknown, entirely eyeballed amount of ingredients anyway.

They eat dinner, load the dishwasher, Ilya sucks him off in the shower, and they end up in bed blissed-out and tired. Shane tugs Ilya up against his chest, wrapping around him in the best approximation of a squid he can manage, and nearly falls asleep before Ilya shifts in his arms.

"You know, there is a song in Russia," Ilya says. "From old movie."

Shane doesn't. The only music he listens to these days is still Ilya's car playlists, and even though they include a fair number of Russian songs, they're mostly — he thinks — modern pop and rap, not something ancient. He hums thoughtfully anyway, rubbing slow circles into Ilya's shoulder.

"It is about boy going to future. And space pirates. Is crazy, like all Soviet movies. I watched it many times with my mother."

Ilya doesn't talk about his mother much — sometimes after therapy, or after dinner with Yuna, or to tell Shane she would have loved him. He repeats that last one often. He doesn't usually bring her up out of the blue, though, or talk about his childhood like this. Shane knows more now — much more than he did last year — but the casual, almost light way Ilya speaks still makes him want to brace himself for wherever this is going. He doesn't, though. His fingers keep threading gently through Ilya's hair.

“We should watch it together.”

Ilya hums. Shane lifts his head from the pillow to look at him. Ilya looks a little sad, a little distant.

“The song is about future, too. I heard it today. There is a line... How do I say that?”

The room is quiet. Ilya’s next breath sounds too loud in it, the only other noise the low buzz of the heater.

“It asks future not to be cruel to you.”

Shane’s heart drops.

There was a boy, once – before Saskatchewan – who knew Shane Hollander only as his promised rival, and before that there was one who didn’t know about him at all. An Ilya – *his* Ilya, but not yet – who was walking through the snow in Moscow streets to get back to a home where kindness was to be earned, not freely given. An ocean away and eight hours ahead in time from the love of his life.

“I was so afraid, all the time,” Ilya says quietly. “Of what will be. I was alone, and was sad. Nothing good happened, except hockey. I listened to that song, and I always got more afraid.”

He shifts, impossibly, even closer.

“I moved here, and I met you, and my father died. I had no one, still. I wanted you and I couldn’t have you.”

Shane is so fucking grateful they met. He doesn’t know how his life would’ve gone if this man, the one he gets to wake up next to every day, had stayed in Russia to play in the KHL, or given up, or gotten injured and never made it to Regina. He can’t change the years they spent orbiting each other, but if he could, he’d grab the seventeen-year-old version of Ilya and never let go.

Ilya breathes in, then turns in Shane’s arms to look at him.

“All of this still feels like dream,” he says. “I play with you. I live with you. I am married to you. I am happy. We get dinners with your parents. I am not afraid anymore.”

Shane’s next breath comes out shaky.

He tries to speak, and nothing comes out. He never trusted people who said love was the greatest, endless thing worth fighting for — not until a boy, a complete asshole, started chasing him and never gave up. Until he asked him to stay the night, and made him tuna melts, and called him by his first name. Until that same man told him he loved him.

Shane kisses him softly and pulls him closer, hugging him tight.

“I love you,” he says. “This feels like a dream to me too. I have everything now. More than I ever knew to want. I have the most perfect husband in the world, a stupid dog, and I get to

kiss you on the ice. This is better than any future I ever dreamed of.”

Ilya laughs, half-sniffles, and starts pressing kisses all over Shane’s face.

“Золото мое, ласточка моя, любовь моя.”

Shane knows them all.

End Notes

The movie Ilya talks about in the last part is *Guest From the Future (1985)*, and the song is Prekrasnoe Daleko/The Beautiful Far Away. That song traumatized a whole generation of Russian-speaking children. It is devastating, go look up the translation.

The list of pet names and direct translations:

- Солнышко – little sun
- Котик – kitty
- Ласточка – swallow/martin (that's a bird!! Idk why we use it as a pet name! It's, honestly, the one I have never heard being used ever, but I love it. It's so soft)
- Золото моё / моё золотце – my gold
- Любовь моя – my love

“Золото мое, ласточка моя, любовь моя.” – my gold, my martin, my love.

All these nicknames are just really fond.

Also, thank you, Sidney Crosby, for being exactly the person you are. A great pleasure to steal hockey bits from you, you insane man. Penguins will win once again :)

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