

## making love out of nothing at all

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# **making love out of nothing at all**

by [ExtraSteps](#)

## Summary

A drunken night after the NHL awards in Vegas leads to unexpected consequences for Shane and Ilya.

A married in Vegas fic.

## Notes

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

Shane couldn't bring himself to leave, even though it was uncomfortable and Rozanov was acting weird and kind of standoffish.

It was the first time he'd seen him in six fucking months. He was feeling some kind of way about that. Rozanov had often been on his mind, not just during games but also, just randomly. He'd see Coke at the grocery store and smile. Or his mom would make some disparaging comment about him, and he'd think about how funny it would be to tell him about it later. Or he'd just... be lying in bed at night, with only his own fucking hand for company, and he'd miss him.

So, he lingered, sipping the vodka that was apparently his reward for putting on a show that he couldn't bring himself to feel embarrassed about now, not when Rozanov's eyes had been so full of intense desire as he'd watched him.

The liquid burned the whole way down, but he kind of liked the warmth it sent into his bloodstream.

Once the glass was finished, Rozanov looked at him, surprised. He'd stubbed out his cigarette, but the smoke still lingered in the air.

Shane held the glass to him, a silent request.

With a heated look, he topped it up. This time, when Shane brought the glass back to his lips, Rozanov watched him.

"Is good?"

Shane shrugged. "It'll do."

The corner of Rozanov's lips quirked up at that, and he slugged back the rest of his glass, before refilling it.

And well, like so many things between them, it soon became a competition.

By the time the bottle was gone, they'd long since given up on the glasses. Instead, they'd been passing the bottle back and forth, and it finished with Rozanov holding it to Shane's mouth, tipping the last of it down his throat.

He swallowed it, holding Rozanov's gaze. Everything felt a little hazy, like he was seeing the world through a film of glass.

It didn't make Rozanov look any less pretty, though. Especially from where Shane was currently perched on his lap.

Shane took the bottle from him, setting it down firmly on the bedside table. Rozanov took advantage of the position to mouth at his neck, his hands gripping Shane's ass.

They hadn't bothered getting dressed.

He could feel how hard Rozanov was under him and rolled his hips over him, a silent dare that had him grinning crookedly up at him.

“You want?” Rozanov asked him, sliding a hand up to cup his cheek.

“Obviously,” Shane said, grinding against him again, his eyelids fluttering as his cock rubbed over the coarse hair of Rozanov’s happy trail.

Fuck, why was he so addicted to this?

Rozanov found the lube and a fresh condom and Shane scooted back just enough to let him put it on, slicking up his length. He tossed his head back, watching Shane with lidded eyes as he gave his cock a few pumps, an invitation that needed no words.

They might not be able to communicate very well, but their bodies knew this language fluently. There was a give and take between them that just flowed as naturally as breathing. Shane rose up on his knees while Rozanov held his cock in place, helping him sink down over him.

Shane was a little sore, still, from how hard Rozanov had railed him earlier, but it was still a kind of relief, letting gravity push him down over his cock until he was fully seated.

He’d thought he’d lost this. As much as Rozanov was an asshole and a menace, Shane had hated the thought of never having him again. Nothing did it for him like this did, like the feeling of being stretched open just shy of too much, of the way Rozanov cursed in Russian as he lifted up and then slowly back down again, fingers digging into Shane’s hips like iron bands, of the way his pretty hazel eyes were a little dazed as he stared up at Shane like he was a fucking miracle, or something.

Rozanov might call him boring outside of the bedroom, but here, when it was just them? It was clear that there was something magical happening.

If only the entire world didn’t think they hated each other. If only they worked in an industry where being gay didn’t matter so fucking much. If only they could have more than stolen moments in hotel rooms.

Then maybe, this actually could be something... something real.

It was these thoughts that plagued Shane as he planted his hands on Rozanov’s pecs, riding his cock in a slow drag that had them both moaning. He wished, more than anything, that he could just have this. That he could have more than just Rozanov’s nights.

He wanted his days as well. He wanted to claim him and be claimed in return. He wanted to see him out in the fucking sunshine, to hold his hand on a date, and bump into his side as they shopped in the grocery store, and make space for his clothes in Shane’s closet. His real one, in his real house, while Rozanov watched from his real bed.

Fuck. He could feel tears stinging at his eyes. It almost sounded like he-

But no, that was impossible. *They* were impossible.

“Dick so good you’re crying over it,” Rozanov said with a laugh, fucking up into him.  
“You’re so desperate for it, Hollander.”

He didn’t respond, just moaning as Rozanov rolled them, thrusting hard the way Shane loved, the way that never failed to take him out of his head, his body just responding and holding on for dear life as Rozanov took him apart.

This time, when he came, he saw stars, and slumped back against the mattress in a daze as Rozanov thrust a few more times before growling his name, flooding the condom with his release.

He fell against Shane with a curse, panting for breath, and mumbled something Shane didn’t understand in Russian. Shane just wrapped his arms around him, trembling through the aftershocks, for once not caring that he was messy and sweaty and disgusting.

It felt good, having Rozanov’s weight holding him on the mattress. Grounding. He should probably be panicking right about now, trying to find a way to leave and rush back to his own hotel room before someone noticed him missing, but he was so content drifting like this, one hand trailing up and down Rozanov’s spine, the other carding through his damp curls.

The alcohol still burning through his veins probably helped, as well. The anxiety was still there, but it was buried deep, an afterthought, rather than a resounding alarm. It was strangely freeing.

Shane was loath for it to end.

Rozanov pushed up onto his elbow, and Shane’s hands stilled, looking at him. There was a strange look in his eyes, something almost tender.

“Are you okay?” Shane asked him.

He nodded in response, though words seemed to fail him. There was still a restlessness to him, a tension in his body that fucking twice hadn’t burned out of him.

Shane wondered why he so badly wanted to fix that.

He looked away from Rozanov, glancing at the clock on the wall. It was still only early, barely even past one in the morning. And they were in Vegas.

“You want to go out?” he suggested.

Rozanov scoffed. “Shane Hollander wants to go out. I don’t believe it.”

He just shrugged in response. It was a terrible idea, he could admit. But he was too tender to fuck again, and Rozanov looked like a caged panther. He remembered this time a few years previous, their first awards, the bitterness in his eyes as he’d said he needed to go back to Russia in three days. He had a feeling it was connected.

For whatever reason, he hated going home, but did it anyway, out of some kind of sense of obligation or duty.

Shane could understand that.

“You’re out of vodka,” he reminded him. “And it *is* your big night.”

Rozanov smirked. “This is true,” he conceded.

Slowly, he pushed himself off of Shane, and he tried not to mourn the loss.

“First, we should shower,” Rozanov said over his shoulder. “Come on, Hollander.”

Shane looked down at the absolute wreck of his body, streaked in dried come and sweat. Yeah, now *that* was probably a good idea.

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Ilya’s head was pounding. His mouth tasted like something had crawled in there and died, and he groaned pitifully, burying his face in the pillow.

Distantly, he noted an alarm going off. He pulled the pillow tighter around his ears, trying to block it out.

“Vyglyuchi eto,” he moaned hoarsely. “Off.”

The warm line along his back moved, muttering an apology.

“Fuck,” he heard Hollander mutter as the alarm blessedly cut out. “My flight is in two hours.”

Who fucking cared? Ilya was *dying*.

He felt Hollander flop back onto the bed behind him, giving his own pitiful whimper.

Instinctively, he turned towards the sound, hiding his face in Hollander’s neck and dragging him back into his arms.

Hollander went willingly. He always did.

The sun rose in the east. He was best at hockey. Hollander was easy.

Some things were just facts.

What was strange, though, was that Hollander was still there. Even in his very pained, pathetic state, he knew he’d never woken up in a bed with him before.

How much had they fucking drunk last night?

“Everything hurts,” Hollander complained quietly. “Why the fuck did we drink so much?”

At least Hollander was suffering just as much as he was. It was small consolation, but with how awful he felt, he’d take any small win.

“My big day, remember,” Ilya grumbled. “Was your fucking idea.”

And fuck, what an idea it had been. It had been electric, bar hopping with Hollander, sometimes finding other players, sometimes not. Dancing, sometimes together, sometimes apart, and just so much fucking vodka.

If anyone had been surprised to see them out together, no one had said anything, at least to the best of his memory.

One thing he didn’t really recall, though, was how they’d ended up back in bed together.

Had anyone seen them?

Ilya squinted an eye open, immediately regretting it as light flooded his vision with an ice pick directly to his cranium. Right, fuck, they hadn’t closed the blinds last night.

Bracing himself and turning his face a little more into Hollander’s hair, he squeezed his eyes open again. It was painful, but slightly more bearable. Even if Hollander fucking reeked of booze and stale sweat.

Clearly, whatever they’d been up to last night, it hadn’t led to a shower before they’d fallen into bed.

“M never drinking again,” Hollander mumbled. “I feel like death.”

Ilya hummed his agreement, squeezing around Hollander’s middle and then slowly pushing himself up. He looked down at him, still squinting, his hand resting on Hollander’s hip as he looked him over.

The blanket had dropped down, exposing his naked back and hip to the golden light coming through the window. It made his skin glow, and even though it hurt to look, Ilya still drank his fill.

And then, something caught his eye. Something that made his heart pound, the pain forgotten.

“Hollander,” he croaked.

“Fuck off,” Shane mumbled.

Ilya brought his own hand up to his face.

Yes... that was definitely a wedding ring. He wasn’t fucking hallucinating.

He shoved Hollander onto his back, grappling for his hand, which he’d had tucked under the pillow. Hollander shrieked and hit out at him, but Ilya was stronger, and after a few moments he had his answer.

Hollander blinked. He looked at his hand. He looked at Ilya’s.

“What the fuck?” he whispered, horror dawning on his face.

Ilya let his hand drop and sat up, putting his head between his knees. He’d never had a panic attack before, but his head was fucking spinning, and air was hard to come by, suddenly.

Hollander’s alarm went off again, and he immediately switched it back off. This time, though, he watched from the corner of his eye as Hollander unlocked it, his face going pale.

“I have a text from Scott Hunter,” he said weakly. “Telling me to call him as soon as I see this.”

Ilya closed his eyes. Yes, they’d seen Hunter, he remembered. It had been at one of the seedier sides of town, a gay bar, from what Ilya had surmised after they’d stumbled inside. Hunter had been surprised to see them. By that stage, they’d been basically propping each other up, cut off like two bars ago.

He’d just wanted to dance. That place had had the loudest music.

Everything was blurry after that, but he had a distinct recollection of telling Hunter to start filming, and then he’d turned and dipped Hollander, giving him a kiss that had been too hot and filthy to be their first.

He bet, if he watched the video back now, that the two of them would be wearing these same two cheap rings.

Fuck.

“Call,” he said, gesturing impatiently. He didn’t look up, couldn’t look Hollander in the eyes.

Married. Fuck. He was fucked. He needed to call his fucking agent.

Hell, he needed a fucking lawyer.

“Scott?” he heard Hollander say.

There was nothing for a few long moments.

“Yeah, uh. We’re together,” he said hesitantly. “In Rozanov’s room, I mean. Penthouse one.”

Another pause.

“Yeah, see you in a bit.”

Hollander hung up the phone and rolled out of the bed, beelining for the ensuite bathroom. Ilya heard the shower start and sighed, running his hands over his face as he tried desperately not to freak out. Hollander would be freaked out enough for the both of them. He didn’t need Ilya having a crisis on top of it.

Running his pointer fingers in tight circles over his aching temples, he counted to fifty in Russian and then English, calming his breathing down through sheer force of will alone.

This was fine. It would be fine. So, he could never go back home again? So what? No problem. He'd work it out.

God, what if it had gotten out to the media?

He was meant to be leaving for Russia in just a few days. That was completely out the window now. Not to mention, he was in America on a work visa. He didn't know if he would have to notify anyone of their marriage, or what the repercussions of that would be.

On them playing. Their teams. Their coaches. Their fans.

Fuck. Did Hollander's parents even know he liked men?

Drunk Ilya had a lot to fucking answer for.

A quick scan of his phone told him nothing. If the media had gotten wind of their marriage, nothing had been posted yet. The only thing a search for his name brought up was the news of his MVP win.

Several minutes later, the shower shut off and Hollander emerged, a plush towel looped around his waist, water still dripping from his hair and running over his chest.

"Do you have any clothes I can wear?" Hollander asked haltingly, not quite meeting his eyes. "I really don't want to put those clothes back on."

Ilya nodded, pointing over to the wardrobe where he'd stashed his suitcase. "Yes, go for it," he mumbled.

While Shane opened it, he slid off of the bed, taking his own quick shower. He scrubbed himself down with military efficiency in lukewarm water, trying to wake himself up.

They didn't have much time. Hunter would be here any minute, and both of them had flights to leave for. They needed at least the bare bones of a fucking plan.

Hollander was sitting on the edge of the bed, phone held loosely in his hands as he stared at the ground, a miserable expression on his face. Ilya's clothes, a plain white shirt and black sweatpants, were too large on him, but something still made his heart leap in his chest at the sight of it, a possessive thrill purring in his chest.

Well, if he was going to be married to anyone, at least it was someone pretty to look at.

Ilya wrenched his gaze away and went to his suitcase. He'd just finished pulling on jeans and a black shirt when a knock sounded at the door. He watched Hollander go and answer it as he ran the towel through his hair.

The door opened and closed. Ilya closed his eyes and sighed.

Show time.

Hunter, thankfully, came bearing gifts. He set them down on the table. Painkillers. Several sports drinks. Something hot that smelled fucking heavenly.

Ilya trudged over to the table and fell into a chair. Hunter and Hollander sat as well. He watched the two of them exchange a nervous look.

He sighed again.

“Thank you for this,” Ilya said, his voice grim. “You did not have to.”

“It’s fine,” Hunter said. “So, uh, that was quite a night for you two, huh?”

Hollander-

Hmmm. No, not quite right. He was married to the man. He should probably start thinking of him as Shane, now. His husband, Shane Hollander.

“Understatement of the year,” Shane grumbled. He was the first to reach for the peace offering Hunter had brought them, opening up the bottle of painkillers and knocking back two dry.

Ilya watched him swallow and then accepted the bottle from Shane, tipping two into his hand. Because he wasn’t a fucking animal, he claimed one of the sports drinks and chased the pills with a mouthful of it.

His stomach roiled for a moment, but, thankfully, it stayed down. He still felt a little nauseous, though, and decided to give himself a little bit of time before tearing into one of the breakfast sandwiches Hunter had brought with him.

He noticed out of the corner of his eye that Shane was staring at his hand, still wrapped around the drink. At his ring.

Hunter cleared his throat.

“I have some interesting videos to show you guys,” he said. Despite the seriousness of the situation, there was a glimmer of amusement in his dark eyes as he met Ilya’s grumpy stare.

“I bet,” he said sharply.

Next to him, Shane was pink, his gaze averted. He looked to be on the verge of tears.

Ilya bit back another sigh.

“Shane,” he said quietly. “Hunter is not going to tell anyone.”

His eyes shot to Hunter with a vicious glare, daring him to contradict this statement.

“Of course not,” Hunter agreed immediately. “I’ll never tell a soul, Shane, I swear to you. I would never out you.”

That specific turn of phrase made the wheels in Ilya's head turn.

Well, they had come across Hunter in a gay bar last night. That was... good to know.

He nodded at Hunter, turning back to Shane. Carefully, like he was approaching a wild animal, he reached for him, running his hand down the back of his neck like he had several years ago at the NHL awards.

Like before, it seemed to soothe him somewhat, and Ilya kept up the repetitive motion while Shane blinked back tears.

"Is okay," he said after Shane seemed a bit calmer. "We'll figure it out."

Hunter was looking down at his phone, deliberately not looking at them. Ilya's phone, still somewhere next to the bed, buzzed a few times. The videos, probably.

He'd look later.

"Anything you need from me?" Hunter asked. His expression was serious.

Ilya shrugged. "Was it real?" he asked. "Real marriage with real license?"

Hunter nodded slowly. "Yeah," he said with a sigh, leaning back in his chair. "I think that's why you guys dragged me along. Apparently, you needed a witness to sign the certificate as well."

"Where is it?" Ilya asked him.

Hunter shrugged. "You folded it up and put it in the pocket of your suit jacket," he said. "It's probably still there."

Ilya cast a look over the rest of the room. Their clothes were scattered from the doorway to the bed. Shane's jacket. Ilya's tie. A sock. Ah, there. Draped over one of the lamps.

He pushed himself up and retrieved it, checking in the pocket. Sure enough, there it was. A Las Vegas marriage license. His own full name in his usual scrawl, alongside the far neater printed letters of Shane's name.

Below, Hunter's name was signed as the witness, alongside a celebrant, whose name had apparently been Helena Talbot.

Ilya sat back down, carefully smoothing out the creases and flattening the paper out.

Well, fuck.

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Shane followed Scott back to the door. His head was still reeling, though thankfully, some of the headache he'd been sporting had started to abate.

He was married to his arch-rival. To Ilya Rozanov.

What the fuck? What the hell was he meant to tell his parents?

Fuck, they were going to be so fucking disappointed in him.

“You gonna be alright, rook?” Scott asked, his kind eyes searching Shane's face.

He gave a tight nod. He was freaking out, no question about that. But it had been enough years now since they'd started this thing that he at least was sure that Rozanov and him would figure something out.

“Yeah,” he said. “Don't worry about us.”

Scott clapped his shoulder and then he was gone. Shane didn't pretend to be anything other than relieved as he locked the door behind him, turning back to Rozanov.

Rozanov was investigating the bag with the breakfast sandwiches, pulling one out. Shane wandered back over, dragging his heels.

He still couldn't decide if this was a dream or his worst fucking nightmare.

Shane dropped back into his seat, covering his face with his hands. “What the fuck are we gonna do?” he groaned.

“Fucked if I know,” Rozanov admitted, peeling back the paper that surrounded the still steaming sandwich.

Shane studied him. Rozanov took a big bite of the breakfast sandwich, his gaze deliberately averted. Shane liked to believe he knew him well enough by now to know when he was being evasive.

“We're married,” Shane said, mostly just to hear the words out loud.

Rozanov didn't respond. But he was tense, his shoulders almost up around his ears.

Shane was too fucking hungover for this conversation, but he forged on regardless.

“Are you still going home?” he asked in a small voice.

This was what finally got Rozanov's eyes back on him.

“No,” he admitted. “I cannot go back to Russia, maybe ever. I am married to a man.”

Well, if that wasn't a punch to the gut...

“Oh,” Shane whispered. Misery choked him. “I'm sorry.”

Rozanov shrugged, setting the sandwich down. “Shane,” he said seriously. “There is no point worrying about what has happened. We are married. That is fact. Now, we decide what is next.”

That was unexpectedly practical.

“You don't want to, I don't know... annul it?” he asked hesitantly.

Rozanov gave him a look of confusion. “What is this word?”

“Annul,” Shane said. “Like, end it. Change your mind.”

Rozanov shrugged. “Would not change anything,” he admitted. “Would not change that it happened.”

“True,” Shane conceded. Still, he was uncertain. “Can we really keep it a secret?”

Rozanov studied his face, his expression deliberately blank.

“I do not know,” he admitted. “I think we just have to wait and see. Decide what we will do either way.”

Shane took a shaky breath. “Okay,” he agreed. Rozanov was right. He couldn't change that it had happened. Even if they went and annulled it right now, if someone had filmed it or leaked that it happened, nothing would change. It still would have happened. It would still affect them.

Rozanov, apparently, much more than Shane. At least he would probably still be welcomed home. He remembered what Carter had said at Sochi, about being brave to be gay in Russia. He could read between the lines.

But still, he felt awful. Not just because he was more hungover than he ever remembered being before, but because Rozanov looked so unhappy. He'd ruined whatever this was, between them. One night of drinking and he'd changed the entire trajectory of their lives.

He sighed deeply, reaching for the other sandwich. It wasn't in his diet, but he was so far fucking past that point right now that it wasn't even funny.

Shane took a bite, chewing moodily.

It was delicious.

And he had - he checked his phone - less than an hour until he needed to be on his way to the airport.

Shane felt weariness seep into his bones. Fuck's sake. What the fuck was he going to do?

“Are you gonna go home, still?” he asked Rozanov. “To Boston?”

Rozanov looked at him weirdly. “Where the fuck else would I go?”

Shane shrugged. “I don't know. You could come to Montreal, with me?”

Rozanov frowned. “Why?”

He took a deep, calming breath, pinching the bridge of his nose.

“Because we're married, you fucking asshole,” he said through gritted teeth.

It was Rozanov's turn to sigh, his gaze dropping. “I'm aware,” he said. “I don't know, Shane. Maybe we should lay low. For a week or two, see if anything happens.”

Shane was frustrated. “What difference does it make?” he asked. “If you're in Montreal or Boston when it gets out?”

“None,” Rozanov sighed. “But I do not know what else to do. What you want from me. Was simple before. Now, not so much.”

For some reason, this infuriated Shane.

Simple? What the fuck about any of this had been simple?

It had been six months since Sochi, since Rozanov had said they were nothing. Now, he was literally his fucking husband. That was a damn sight more than nothing.

But what would getting angry serve him? He'd been angry. All it had gotten him was six months of nothing but silence and his own fucking hand.

He'd rather be miserable *with* Rozanov than without him.

At that thought, most of the fight went out of him. He didn't have it in him, not anymore. Not about this.

“Just... come to Montreal,” he said quietly. “Please?”

Rozanov's face was stony. “I will go home, first,” he said. “But I can maybe come to Montreal after that. I will wait three days and then drive to you. Okay?”

Three days. Enough time for them to tell if the news had broken or not, but not enough to panic.

Shane gave a sharp nod. “Fine.”

They finished their breakfast in silence. Shane kept his eyes down, but even so, he couldn't help but notice the way Rozanov kept looking over at their marriage certificate, his expression contemplative.

He didn't understand him at all. Hell, he realized with dawning horror, he barely even knew Rozanov. Not really. Not about anything important.

Shane didn't know his parents' names. He knew he had a brother, but not what he did for a living. He knew Rozanov was from Russia, but not where. He didn't know his favorite color, or what made him happy, or anything, really.

He knew he was good at hockey, and amazing in bed.

It had been years. Had they ever even had a conversation about anything other than either topic?

Fuck. He was so absolutely and completely fucked.

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Rozanov sat in the airport terminal, refreshing his phone every minute or so, checking his socials, the usual websites where hockey gossip generally floated through, but there was nothing.

It was still early, though. Too early to tell if someone had sold their admittedly very juicy gossip to the tabloids.

But, whether it did or not, he was prepared to deal with it. First, he needed to make a few phone calls.

One would be hard. The other? Impossible.

But he was many things, and a coward had never been one of them.

He pressed the number, gripping his phone to his ear.

“Ilyusha?” he heard Svetlana say in a sleepy murmur.

“Da,” he replied with a sigh, responding to her in Russian. “Sorry to wake you. I have news.”

“MVP. Da, I saw. Congratulations.”

Ilya remained silent, and heard the rustle of her sheets as she sat up.

“How bad?” she asked eventually.

“The worst,” he said miserably. He glanced around, making sure that there was no one within ear shot. Even though he was speaking Russian, he knew that conversations could be recorded these days. He didn’t put it past them to record him and then get someone to translate his words later.

Luckily, no one was close by enough to hear his words.

“Sveta, I fucked up,” he admitted. “I got married.”

Her silence stretched. Ilya closed his eyes. His head was still fucking throbbing. The painkillers had taken off the edge of his hangover, but it was lingering just enough to make him feel ill and listless.

“To who?” she demanded. “Some random girl?”

God, that would probably be better. He could have just paid her off, made her disappear. No, marrying Hollander was much, much worse.

“Not a girl,” he admitted, his voice small and sad.

“Oh,” she whispered. “Ilya.”

“I know, I know,” he said, a pang making his chest feel tight. “I cannot go home.”

She hummed agreement. “Who knows? I did not see anything in the news about this.”

“I don’t know,” he said. “There is nothing yet, but I was so drunk, Sveta. I don’t remember everything that happened. I don’t know who was there, who might have seen us, who we might have told.”

“Shit,” she cursed. “That’s bad, Ilya.”

“Yes,” he whispered. He closed his eyes, slumping down until his head resting on the back of the plastic chair he was currently resting on. “I do not know what to do.”

Svetlana hummed, considering this. “What does he want?” she asked. “Money?”

His lips quirked up at this. “He does not need my money.”

She scoffed. “Please, Ilyusha. You earn more than almost any other player in the league.”

He was well aware. The only reason Shane earned more than him was his manager, his mother, Yuna, now he thought with a pang, his mother-in-law, had cemented him so many brand deals.

“I know,” he said.

Svetlana was silent, and then. “Oh, *oh*.” Of course, that would be all it took for her to figure it out. “He is...” she trailed off.

“I don’t know,” Ilya said with a sigh. “Gay, I assume. I have not known him to be with any women.”

“That...” Svetlana paused, her voice unsure, “that surprises me, I think.”

“Because he is such a good boy?” he asked, amused.

Svetlana hummed. “I guess so,” she said slowly. “He just doesn’t seem the type. I always thought he would settle down, get married, and have a little army of hockey geniuses.”

Ilay rolled his eyes. “You are thinking of Pike.”

“Shane Hollander,” Svetlana said, ignoring his dig. “You sly dog, Ilya. How did you bag that one?”

At this, he felt a slight stirring of pride.

“By getting there first,” he admitted. “Years before anyone even looked at him twice. He is mine.”

“But-” and she trailed off again. And then, her voice was much more certain. “He is your Jane, isn’t he?”

Svetlana was much more perceptive than people gave her credit for.

“Da,” he sighed. “He is my Jane.”

“I should have realized it forever ago,” she said. “You’ve always been obsessed with him.”

“Whatever,” he grumbled. He crossed his legs, narrowing his eyes as someone in the terminal walked a little too close. They weren’t looking at him, though. Still, he would need to wrap this up. “Well, I wanted you to hear it from me, first. In case it does get in the news.”

“You should have told me years ago,” she said, her voice matter-of-fact.

He rolled his eyes. “It wasn’t anything years ago. Just sex.”

It was barely anything *now*.

He’d taken off the ring, instead adding it to his necklace. He kept playing with it, worrying at it like a sore tooth.

What worried him, more than anything, was how Shane was going to react in the coming weeks. It was a risk, getting some distance between them, but Ilya needed to breathe for a few days as he came to terms with his whole life turning on its head. He just hoped that Shane wouldn’t run away from it.

Because Ilya, at heart, was a simple man. He liked fast cars, he liked sex, he liked good vodka and winning hockey games and being the best. And, well, he liked Shane Hollander. His freckles. His shy, awkward demeanor. The way he came to life under Ilya, his sexual appetite just as insatiable as his own.

And... he’d liked waking up next to him, even if he’d been miserably hungover.

He wanted to get to know him, properly. To see his real house and fuck him in his real bed. To see him first thing in the morning with his sleepy eyes and easy smile and messy hair.

“Sure,” Svetlana drawled. “So, when do I get to meet your husband? Is he coming to Boston?”

“No,” he said. “At least, not yet. I am going to see him in a few days. So we can talk.”

Svetlana gave a light chuckle. “Ilyusha, only you would get married first and then have relationship talk after.”

“Fuck off,” he grumbled.

But that word did set off butterflies in his stomach. A relationship. Him and Hollander?

He had a feeling that this would freak him out even more than being married to him.

No, he would need to start smaller. He would need to court his husband.

The two of them talked for a few minutes longer, and by the time he hung up, he did feel a bit lighter. Someone knew about them now, someone important to him.

It helped him feel just a little less alone.

His second phone call was much simpler.

His agent had been hired many years ago by his father. He was a hard, Russian man who managed many of the big players over here in America. While he had negotiated Ilya's contract fiercely with Boston and gotten him a lot of money and concessions, Ilya knew he couldn't trust him.

If he told his agent the truth, it would get back to Russia immediately.

His agent picked up on the third ring. "What?"

"I have decided to end contract with you as my agent, effective immediately."

There was silence on the other end of the phone.

"Does your father know about this?"

Ilya rolled his eyes.

"No," he said simply, offering no further clarification.

The only response was the click of his now-former agent hanging up the phone.

Ilya put his phone on do-not-disturb. He did not want to take the inevitable phone call from his father just yet. And the terminal was filling up, his flight about to board, now.

He stood, rolling his neck.

For good or bad, everything was about to change.

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Shane was sitting on a mat in his home gym, heaving for breath when his phone rang.

He didn't even look, just answering it.

"Hello?"

"Shane," Rozanov said.

He felt his heart do something weird, a little flip that he couldn't explain. Why did he keep calling him that? They'd always been Hollander and Rozanov. This changing the script was disconcerting to say the least.

Still, he was never one to be outdone by Ilya Rozanov.

“Ilya,” he said mildly. Yeah, no, that was so weird.

He heard Rozanov snort. “Who is your agent?” he asked. “I have fired mine.”

Shane’s eyebrows rose. “Uh, her name is Farah Jalali. She’s great. Why? What happened with your agent?”

He’d been back in Montreal for just over a day now. Rozanov was due to join him soon, so he was a little thrown off by his call.

“Nothing happened,” Rozanov said dismissively. “He is old Russian man, friend of my father’s.”

“Ah,” Shane said. He wiped his brow with a towel. “Yeah, I can understand why you wouldn’t want to tell him anything.”

So far, their secret appeared to be safe. Scott, the only one who currently knew, was willing to stay silent about it, and Shane was having dinner with his parents later that night to spring the news on them.

*By the way mum and dad, I’m gay, and I’m married to my mortal enemy. Pass the salad?*

Rozanov hummed his agreement. “He is asshole,” he said. “Good at getting me money, probably not so good at getting me new passport.”

Shane went very still. “A new passport?” he whispered.

“Yes,” Rozanov said with a sigh. “I will need to get citizenship. American or Canadian. I don’t know. Is why I need new agent, and lawyer. I’m hoping your Farah could help.”

“Of course,” Shane said. “Do you want me to set up a meeting with her, for when you get here?”

“Yes,” Rozanov said simply. “Sooner is better, yes?”

It was Shane’s turn to hum his agreement. He still had no fucking idea how to feel about any of this. Being married to Ilyza Rozanov. His arch-rival was now his husband. For better or worse. Sickness or health.

They’d skipped just... so many steps. He felt like he was adrift at sea, the land vanishing from sight. Unmoored. Untethered.

“Yes,” he said quietly. He could feel the anxiety like a band around his chest, constricting his breathing. “I’m telling my parents, tonight,” he admitted.

“Do they know?” Rozanov asked. “About you?”

“No,” Shane said. He’d never told them. Maybe he would have sooner, if it wasn’t for... well, the person who had given him this revelation about his sexuality. Like many other areas in his life, he’d... compartmentalized it. Kept it separate.

He didn’t know how to feel about his worlds crashing together.

“Will they not be okay about it?” Rozanov asked.

“I don’t know,” Shane said with a sigh. “Probably, I mean yeah. My parents are great. They’ll be supportive, once they get over being shocked.”

Rozanov let out a quiet chuckle. “Good. Sounds nice.”

“Your family... They would not be?” he guessed.

“No,” was Rozanov’s tight response. “My father is police. My brother is police.”

Shane chewed on his lower lip, his heart sinking. “I’m sorry.”

Rozanov said nothing in response. The silence stretched.

“I will see you in two days, Shane,” he said eventually. “Is still okay?”

“Yeah,” Shane said. “I’ll text you my address.”

Rozanov made an interested noise. “Real address?”

Shane rolled his eyes. “Yes,” he said with an exasperated sigh. “You’re coming to my actual home. Don’t worry about getting a hotel. I’ll make up a spare room for you.”

Rozanov blew a raspberry at this. “If you think I’ll need it.” The slightly lecherous tone to his voice made Shane blush.

“Shut up,” he grumbled, deliberately side-stepping the obvious bait. “I’ll see you soon.”

“Goodbye, Shane.”

“Bye, Ilya.”

The phone went dead and Shane sighed, tossing it to the side and tilting his head back.

Two days.

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Ilya’s suitcase was open on his bed. He’d already taken the dirty clothes out of it from Vegas and washed them, and was now deciding on what the fuck he’d need to take with him to Shane’s house.

He didn’t know how long he would be staying. There was no plan, really, other than just getting there and figuring out their next steps.

Shane had messaged him after seeing his parents. The texts had been a little stilted, and he'd clearly been panicking, but it sounded like it had gone fine.

Like Shane had predicted, they were definitely shocked, but they also wanted to officially meet him, so that was something, at least.

He was probably more nervous about that than seeing Shane's house.

These were his parents. The most important people in his life. Ilya needed to make a good impression, if he was going to be able to win Shane over.

What if they hated him? If they couldn't get over him being Ilya Rozanov, the asshole Russian who had corrupted their little prince?

He couldn't stand the idea of them looking at him with disgust in their eyes.

Like his father. Like Andrei.

He'd been ignoring their calls since firing his agent. He had no intention of ever returning to Russia now, so there was nothing they could do to them anymore. He was still wiring money to Andrei to look after their father, so he would just have to deal with it himself.

He didn't owe them anything.

With a deep sigh, Ilya turned back to his closet, deciding to just grab a random assortment of clothes. Some for working out, some casual, a few nicer things. The kind of thing he could meet Shane's parents in.

He knew he was maybe being a bit optimistic, especially after Shane had said he'd be staying in the guest room, but he still slipped in a bottle of lube and some condoms into one of the side pockets.

Just in case.

Locking his house down and switching everything back off, he made his way out to his garage. He'd already decided that it was too dangerous to risk flying, and so it wasn't too long until he was peeling out onto the highway in one of his sport cars. He'd looked longingly at his lava orange Porsche 718 Cayman, but it was hardly discrete.

Instead, he'd settled on his Audi TT RS instead, largely because in metallic grey it wasn't quite as flashy and noticeable.

Still fast, though.

He liked driving. It gave him the same feeling he got when stepping out onto a fresh rink, like he was invincible, powerful, the master of his own fate. He pressed his foot down and moved from one place to another in the blink of an eye, and it never ceased to send a thrill down his spine.

Maybe it was dangerous, but he'd always loved dangerous things.

It was why, perhaps, he and Shane didn't make sense to anyone else. Though there was of course the danger of them being found out, it wasn't the sneaking around that Ilya liked. He kind of hated it, actually.

When Shane looked at his teammates instead of Ilya out on the ice, or when he had to roll over and make some lame excuse to leave the hotel before Shane would kick him out, or when he had to go weeks, often months, without seeing him.

It was awful.

But something kept Ilya coming back for more. Always, each time, he'd intended to end it, to let him go. He didn't want to spoil him, ruin him with his touch that turned everything he loved into ashes in his mouth.

If only he'd been a little less greedy, they wouldn't be in this position now.

He stopped just before the border to refill the car with petrol and grab an energy drink. It was a long drive to Montreal, but it was kind of nice, too. Peaceful.

While waiting in line to pay, he checked his phone. He had a few missed texts.

Jane: *Hey, have you left yet?*

Jane: *I'm assuming yes and you just forgot to text me, asshole.*

Jane: *I bought groceries, so we shouldn't have to leave much. You like Coke, right?*

Jane: *Do I need to send out a search party???*

He bit back a smile. Shane was so cute.

Ilya: *Relax, Jane. I am near the border now.*

Jane: *Thank God. I had no idea how I was going to explain that one.*

Ilya: *You are just a worried husband. Is very cute.*

Shane didn't reply to that last message, and Ilya pocketed his phone. He paid for his items and got back into his car, ensuring that his passport and Nexus pass were within reach.

The border, thankfully, was pretty quiet, so Ilya got through easily. Sometimes, being a professional hockey player had its perks, and skipping through border control quickly was one of them. It also helped that the Canadian workers were just so damned polite.

The final stretch didn't take too long, and soon he was in traffic, entering the more urban area of Montreal.

Shane's penthouse thankfully had a garage, and Ilya texted him to be buzzed into it, pulling up alongside a very boring, very sensible Jeep Cherokee that could only belong to him. He rolled his eyes with disgust looking at it. He was a millionaire, for God's sake!

“Did you seriously drive here in one of your sports cars?” was Shane’s pissy comment as he let Ilya inside the front door.

Ilya gave him an amused look, setting his suitcase down next to the door so that he could toe off his shoes. Shane seemed like that kind of guy.

“Would you have preferred my motorbike?” he asked. “Is very sleek and sexy.”

Shane went a little pale. “You have a motorbike?”

“I will take you out on it sometime,” Ilya promised him, stepping past the hallway to take in his house.

His eyes flitted around. It was... tasteful. Lots of art and vases and throw pillows galore, but he’s expected that, from the other place and it’s mountains of them on the bed.

“How was the drive?” Shane asked, coming to stand beside him. He was fidgeting with his hands, Ilya noticed.

He did that a lot when he was very nervous. Ilya could relate. He was fucking terrified of doing or saying something wrong, and then Shane would kick him out and Ilya would... die alone, probably.

Ilya took a shaky breath and then turned to face Shane. “Fine,” he said. “Peaceful, actually. Gave me lots of time to think.”

Shane bit his lower lip. “Oh? What did you think about?”

Fondness clawed at his throat. “About us,” he said, very gently. “About what I wanted.”

He took a step closer, a small one, and ran his fingers up Shane’s arm, cupping his cheek and rubbing his thumb over those beautiful freckles he’d always loved.

“Have you thought about us?” he asked Shane.

He watched Shane swallow thickly, his gaze averted and entire body frozen still. “Yes,” he responded. “I did. I have been.”

Ilya nodded. “That’s good,” he said encouragingly. “I think we need to talk about what we both want, and make some decisions. Plans for where we go from here.”

He felt the tremor that went through Shane at that. He was looking up at Ilya now, his expression raw and vulnerable.

It would be easy, he thought, to push Shane towards his bedroom. To kiss him senseless and make his pretty little mind switch off.

But he couldn’t help but feel like it would be a mistake, falling into old patterns that might not serve them anymore. He wanted Shane more fiercely than he wanted his next breath, there was no question of that. What he wanted more, though, was to keep him.

Now that he had a claim, a real one, he wasn't interested in letting that go. He was diving straight into the deep end.

Shane gave a little nod, and Ilya stepped back, giving him some room to breathe.

He watched Shane as he gathered himself, closing his eyes for a few moments and then opening them again, meeting Ilya's gaze.

"Would you like something to eat?" he asked.

"Sure," Ilya agreed easily.

He followed Shane to the kitchen and sat at the booth, watching him move through his space confidently. It was something simple, just a plate of sandwiches and some apple slices covered in greek yoghurt, but it was still nice, domestic in a way that Ilya could see himself becoming addicted to.

Shane set the food down in front of him, sliding a cold can of Coke alongside it, and Ilya stared down for a few, long moments.

"Are you okay?" Shane asked, sounding uncertain. "I can make something else, if you don't like it."

"No, no," Ilya said, waving his hand, "this is great. Perfect. Thank you, Shane."

"You're welcome," Shane said.

He turned away, tidying up and putting ingredients back in the fridge, and Ilya reached for a sandwich, forcing himself to take a bite and chew.

When was the last time someone had made a meal for him? Just for him?

He couldn't remember, certainly no time in his adult life, though.

Maybe his mama, then.

As soon as the first bite hit his stomach, it was like he realized how hungry he actually was, and he polished the whole plate off quickly. Shane was watching him, nibbling at the corner of his own sandwich like a little baby rabbit, his expression hard to read.

They'd also never shared a meal together, before.

"Good?" Shane asked him when he sat back with a happy sigh.

He nodded, offering Shane a smile. "Very good, thank you again."

"You're being so polite," he said with a rueful smile. "I'm not quite sure how to take it."

Ilya raised an eyebrow at him. "Should I not be polite to my husband?" he asked him.

Shane flushed red.

“You say that a lot,” he noted, instead of answering the question.

He did that a lot; Ilya was starting to realize. Deflection.

“Husband?” Ilya clarified.

He pulled his gold chain out from under his shirt. His wedding ring was still looped through it.

“I think this allows me to use it,” he pointed out.

Shane looked surprised. “You wear it?”

“Of course,” he said easily. “Is important. I do not want to lose it.” He thought for a moment, looking at Shane, eyes flicking over his hands, before narrowing them in suspicion. “Why? Where is *your* ring?”

“It’s in my safe,” Shane admitted.

Well, at least he still had it. That was something at least.

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The fact that Rozanov was wearing his wedding ring around his neck had thrown Shane. He hadn’t expected that, and worse, he didn’t know *why* he hadn’t expected that.

Maybe it was because Rozanov never really seemed to take anything seriously, laughing everything off like it was nothing.

But he kept calling Shane his husband, a smile curling at the corner of his lips whenever he said it, like he was happy about it. Like he was proud of it.

It was doing something funny to his heart. It made it seem like this marriage was real, like it was something that Rozanov actually wanted.

He knew he hadn’t wanted an annulment, but there was a long continuum between being tied to each other on paper and being actually married. He had no idea where on that line Rozanov stood. Hell, he didn’t have a fucking clue where he stood on it either.

This whole situation was messing with his head. First Sochi, where Rozanov had said they were nothing. Then six months of nothing, no texts, no acknowledgement at games, nothing until the award in Vegas and that messy, crazy night. It was a rollercoaster, and he had no idea when or how he was meant to get off.

He wasn’t lying that he’d been thinking about them and what happened next, but truth be told, he didn’t really know what he was allowed to want.

Because truthfully, very, *very* deep down, he could acknowledge that he wanted everything.

But they'd always been casual, inconsistent, secret. He didn't want that. He wanted his marriage to be different. He wanted to be able to love Ilya out loud.

And that terrified him. What if Ilya didn't want that as well? It would probably break his heart.

Shane closed his eyes, scrubbing his hands over his face. God, he was so stressed. And this was different, so different to work stress, or just general anxiety. That was just hockey.

This? This was *everything*.

"Shane," Ilya said, and his voice was careful, gentle, like Shane was a wild horse he was trying to coax to eat from his hand. "It is okay."

"It's not," he said from behind his hands, feeling how they trembled against his face. "I don't know how to do this."

"To be husband?" Ilya asked. "Me neither. Is my first time," he joked weakly.

Shane sighed, letting his hands drop back to his sides, giving Ilya a baleful expression. "Well, yes," he admitted. "But also, how to just be truthful. To say what I'm thinking, what I'm feeling."

Ilya nodded. "Also for me," he said. "I think, maybe, we have not been very honest with each other for a while now."

That, he could admit to. "Yes," he said quietly. "You're right."

"I will begin," Ilya said after a few moments, visibly straightening in the stool. "Is very hard to stay away from you." He shook his head with a hollow laugh. "I have tried. But then I see you, and is like you are magnet, pulling me back in again."

Shane stared at him, stunned. "Then why stay away?" He felt a flash of hurt. If Ilya had felt that way, why had six fucking months passed without a single word from him?

Ilya's brow furrowed. "I don't know," he said. "Stupid reasons, probably. Seems silly, now."

"You won't do it anymore, right?" Shane asked, unable to stop from blurting out the question.

"No," Ilya said, "I am not going anywhere."

Shane studied him. Did he mean it? The mixture of relief and hope was nauseating.

"If you ever leave me for six months again, I'm divorcing you."

Ilya let out a startled laugh, his eyes crinkling up. "That's fair," he acknowledged.

Mollified, Shane nodded. "I like this," he admitted. "I want us to be honest all the time. I don't think I can do this if I'm always second-guessing it."

“This?”

“Marriage,” Shane elaborated. “You know me by now, Ilya. How anxious I can get. I don’t want to be anxious over our marriage.”

Ilya stood and came around the counter, and it was instinct to turn into him, to let Ilya gather him into his arms, to sling his own hands low around Ilya’s hips.

Slowly, giving him time to move away, Ilya ducked his head down, his eyes lidded as they stared at Shane’s mouth.

He met him half-way, and it was soft, exploratory. It was different to any other time Ilya had kissed him. This was sweet, tender. It made Shane shiver, gliding his hands up to instead bury them in Ilya’s curls, keeping him close.

His heart was pounding, but this close, he could feel that Ilya’s was as well.

Ilya pulled back slightly, waiting for Shane’s eyes to open. “I will do my best not to make you anxious,” he promised. “Not about this. About us.”

“Okay,” Shane nodded.

“And, I would like you to wear your ring as well,” Ilya admitted.

“I can do that,” he agreed. “We’ll go out and get a chain for it tomorrow.”

Ilya kissed him again at that, and he sighed into it, letting his mouth fall open as Ilya lazily tasted him. Again, there was nothing urgent in it.

He was kissing him like they had all the time in the world.

“Anything else?” Ilya asked against his lips. His voice was fond, clearly teasing him. “Last chance to negotiate contract.”

Shane felt a thrill go through him and smiled. “Oh, I’ve barely started,” he said. “I have a list.”

Ilya leaned back, his eyes twinkling. “Of course you do,” he said with a laugh. “I would expect nothing less from Shane Hollander.”

He kissed him again and then leaned back, thumb rubbing over Shane’s cheek.

“Alright, Hollander,” he said, giving him a lopsided smile. “Tell me this list.”

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“Ilya Rozanov.”

The woman looked surprised, her eyes flicking between Shane and him through the screen. He nodded in acknowledgement, feeling uncomfortable.

“Hi Farah,” Shane said, rubbing nervously at his knees. “Rozanov here is looking for a new agent. I told him how great you are, and well, here we are.”

“I thought you were with Boris,” she said with a frown. “From what I recall, he negotiated a hell of a deal for you with Boston.”

“He did,” Ilya agreed. “Unfortunately, our views do not align. I am hoping that will be different, with you. Shane seems to think so.”

Her eyebrows rose at that. Beside him, Shane fidgeted.

“I feel like I’m missing something. Someone care to fill me in?”

Ilya glanced at Shane. He gave him a minute nod. Below the frame, Ilya put his hand on Shane’s knee, giving it a light squeeze.

“Well,” Ilya said slowly, looking back at Shane’s phone. “I am seeking new agent because I have a problem. I am bisexual. Is illegal in Russia, for men to like men.”

Comprehension dawned on Farah’s face, her lips curving up.

“I think I see where this is going.”

“I doubt it,” Shane muttered.

Ilya bit back a smirk. “Yes, Hollander and I are together.”

Farah looked at Shane. “So, you’re-”

“Gay, yes,” Shane nodded. He was looking down at his feet, so he missed the understanding smile Farah directed towards him.

“There is more,” Ilya said, drawing her attention back to him. “We uh- we got married. In secret.”

Okay, there it was. The shock he’d been expecting.

“Married?”

“Sorry,” Shane said, finally looking up. “I know this will make things complicated for you.”

“Don’t apologize,” Farah said. “It’s a shock, sure. But you deserve to be happy, Shane, and I’m happy for the two of you. May I ask how long you’ve been together?”

That was a tricky question. But, well. “A long time. Years,” Ilya said quietly. “In secret. No one knows.”

“So it isn’t brand new,” Farah said.

Ilya nodded, but also, yeah, it kind of was. He hadn’t even told Shane how he felt about him yet. This still felt pretty fucking new, raw, kind of terrifying.

“Do you want to tell people?”

“No,” Shane said immediately.

“Not yet,” Ilya amended. “We uh, were drunk. When it happened. It was, uh-” He looked at Shane. “What is the word?”

“Impulsive,” Shane said. “We didn’t plan it.”

“I see,” Farah said. “But it’s serious? You plan to stay married?”

Ilya nodded. “Yes. Very.”

He turned to find Shane looking at him, his eyes shiny, lips quirking up in a shy smile.

Again, he squeezed Shane’s knee, and Shane brought a hand to rest on top of his.

“Okay, so what do you need from me?” Farah asked them.

“We need a plan,” Ilya said. “In case it does get out before we’re ready to announce anything. And I want to apply for citizenship, make sure I cannot be sent back to Russia.”

“That’s probably smart,” she agreed. “We can find a good lawyer, I know a few people and I can email you some options. And we can prepare a statement that you’re both happy with, in case it breaks.”

“That sounds good,” Ilya agreed. “So, you will sign with me?”

“I’d be honored,” she said with another warm smile. “Thank you trusting me with this, both of you. I know it can’t have been easy.”

“I just wanted you to know,” Shane said. “Not many people do, but I knew you could help us.”

Farah nodded. “I’m on your side. So, whatever you need from me, you’ve got it. There’s no precedent for NHL rivals being romantically involved, obviously, so we’re in uncharted waters here. Whatever happens, it definitely won’t be boring!”

“I wouldn’t mind boring,” Shane mumbled.

“Shane loves boring,” Ilya said.

“Well, good,” she laughed. “Because I have many boring questions for you now.”

They talked about logistics. About who knew about them and who they planned to tell. They talked about Ilya’s contract with Boston, and whether he wanted to stick it out for the next few years or meet and discuss a move to somewhere in Canada. They talked about immigration laws, and Ilya was relieved to find out that he did not need to officially notify any government department about their marriage, nor that it would have any effect on his work visa.

They negotiated Ilya's new contract with Farah, which she emailed over to him to sign, and then they chatted more informally about what they would want to include in their joint statement if they were outed.

And finally, they discussed what happened next. That Ilya would not be going back to Russia that summer, but that he was hoping to keep everything secret for as long as possible. He told both Farah, and Shane, about his father's illness, about how he was deteriorating quickly and didn't have much time left.

"Are you sure you don't want to go back to Russia, in that case?" Shane asked him quietly.

Ilya shook his head. "I cannot," he said. "Is too risky. If the news breaks while I am there, I do not know what might happen. Nothing good."

Shane nodded, but his expression was guilty.

He decided to deal with it later, when it was just the two of them. Shane did not understand. His family was clearly supportive of him, of his choices. His father would be the first one to hand him in.

"Okay," Farah said. "Is there anything else? For now?"

"Yes," Ilya said. "One last thing. I do not know how to get official copy of our license. I have the one they gave us, but I want a fresh copy. To hang up in my house. But, I cannot just go ask. Is not very--"

He glanced at Shane, who was staring at him again, his eyes wide.

"Discrete?" Farah suggested when Shane said nothing.

Ilya nodded, dragging his gaze from Shane. "Could you find out for me?"

"I want one too," Shane said.

"Of course," Farah said. "I'll look into it for you right away. Can you email me the name of your celebrant?"

"I will," Ilya promised.

"Then I guess that's it. I'll get back to you guys in a few days once I've made a few enquiries."

"Bye Farah," Shane said.

"Goodbye," Ilya said. "And thank you."

"Anytime," Farah said with a kind smile. "Thank you for trusting me."

She hung up, and Shane pocketed his phone with a shaky hand.

“It went well?” Ilya asked, turning more fully to look at him.

Shane nodded. “Yeah,” he agreed, nervously licking his lips. “Really well.”

“Maybe we’re not such big hot shots after all,” Ilya teased. “Your agent did not even look that surprised.”

Shane just huffed out a relieved breath, nodding.

“Okay, so you have told your parents and your agent. Anyone else?” Ilya asked gently.

His husband wrinkled up his nose, looking shifty. “You’re not gonna like it.”

Ilya could tell where this was going. He narrowed his eyes. “No.”

“He’s my best friend!”

“He is terrible!” Ilya argued. “Worst skater in the league! So slowwww. Shane no, you cannot tell Pike.”

Shane rolled his eyes. “You told Svetlana!” he pointed out.

“She could skate faster than Pike,” Ilya said with a wave of his hand. “And she is scary. If she found out from media, I would wake up to a knife at my throat.”

“I share a room with Hayden every away game,” Shane said. “Who do you think covers for me every time I sneak out to be with you?”

“Ugh,” Ilya groaned. “Fine. If you insist.”

He pouted at Shane, and was rewarded with a kiss. “Thank you,” Shane murmured against his mouth, nipping at his lower lip.

Ilya sighed into it, cupping his face and drawing out the kiss. He pulled away, resting his forehead on Shane’s.

“What is the saying, happy wife, happy life?” he grumbled.

Shane just laughed at him, his face crinkled up, looking happy.

Ilya felt his heart skip a beat.

Okay. He could maybe put up with Hayden Pike. But only because it made his husband look like this. Content. Lovely. So, so pretty.

“One thing is still missing from the list,” he said, looking at Shane.

“Oh?”

He grabbed Shane’s hips, manhandling him back against the couch and perching between his legs.

“Mmm, yes,” he said, ducking down to kiss Shane. “Our honeymoon.”

Shane’s mouth opened under his, greedy hands sinking into his curls and hauling him even closer.

“How about a staycation?” Shane murmured against his lips. “I hear my bed is really good this time of year.”

“I will have to test it first,” Ilya said, kissing Shane tenderly, before dragging his lips up his cheekbone, down his neck. “Is comfortable?”

Shane sighed, turning his head to accommodate him. “Very,” he said.

“Big?”

He sucked over Shane’s racing pulse, drawing a bruise to it. Maybe not a good idea when he would be meeting his parents in a few days, but he’d never been able to give Shane a hickey before. It was just as hot as he’d thought it would be, marking up his skin.

Ducking his head down, he sucked another one into his collarbone.

“Huge,” Shane confirmed breathily.

Ilya looked up at him, resting his chin on his chest.

“Is available for long visit?” he asked, trying not to show his nerves.

Shane gave him a smile, gently running a hand through his hair. “Yes,” he said. “Maybe forever.”

Ilya smiled. It felt like his heart was too big for his chest. “Sounds perfect.”

## End Notes

I could conceivably see a world in which I make this a series and add more down the line. So, let me know what you wanna see!

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!