

Anyway, Don't Be A Stranger

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Anyway, Don't Be A Stranger

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Summary

Svetlana sat there, gorgeous as always, curls catching the light, wearing his new Ottawa jersey.

At least this time, Ilya thought gravely, she wore pants.

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Svetlana meets Shane Hollander. Ilya thinks all in all, it could have gone worse.

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Notes

A/N: Since the show changed Svetlana's backstory (for the better, in my humble opinion) and she so much more important to Ilya in the show I thought she deserved a proper introduction to the madness. Set between Heated Rivalry and the Long goodbye, but with the TV Svet. You get it.

Jane: It's because Matterson broke his collarbone I swear, but anyway, yeah, the whole schedule is pushed by like 4 days. Logistically I have no idea how they are going to swing it.

Lily: It is so many words you are asking me to read and they are so boring

Jane: I'm saying I'll be there at 10. And I'll stay four days.

Lily: Oh

Lily: Should have just said 'its your lucky day, I am coming to suck you off'

Lily: Your dad is picking me up from airport. Meet me at mine and he can take your car back to their house. So only one car outside. Plus you will be trapped. Which I like.

Jane:...

Jane: He doesn't pick ME up at the airport.

Lily: Likes me better

Lily: And I let him drive Bugatti

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Ilya didn't care about the quirks of the NHL and the 1,000 years of history and stats Shane seemed determined to tell him, but somehow the new 'European afternoon games for broadcasting' (Ilya was not really listening) Had messed the schedule up and they had four glorious days off in Ottawa. Ilya was not about to look into a horse's teeth, or whatever the English phrase was.

Normally, if they were fucking around in Ottawa, they would go to the cottage. It was more private, less chance of being spotted, giant windows to press Shane against. But Ilya had just closed on his house after three months of back and forth and he wanted to feel settled in his own space for a while. He was trying to build a new home.

He basically bounced off the plane. David was there, front seat of the Bugatti as promised, wearing sunglasses at night. Ilya was very fond of him, this kind of father. He did not know this was allowed, this father who said “take a break,” and “you tried your best, son.” He loved letting him drive, too, because he was a speed demon. They had an agreement. Ilya would not tell Yuna and David would not tell Shane about all the parking tickets he found in the glove box.

The timing had worked out just perfectly, a rarity for them. Shane pulled in while Ilya was just getting out of the car. Ilya couldn't help it help it. Shane was looking so wholesome and flushed in the Canadian winter. Ilya pushed away any fleeting concerns of the privacy of his driveway and took the moment and shoved Shane against the door of his stupid jeep, kissing him hard.

“Ahem,” David said, holding out Ilya’s keys to him.

“Goodbye, David, thank you for ride,” Ilya said, not bothering to let go of Shane, who was fighting his way out of his embrace. Traitor.

“I’d like to say hi to my son, if that’s ok with you, Ilya.” David said, but there was no heat to his words.

“Ok but be fast, love you love you, goodbye.”

Shane shot Ilya and exasperated look, but he tangled his fingers into Ilya’s as he talked. (*Physical reassurance* he had babbled to Ilya to one night something about *touch as a love language*.)

“Yes.” Ilya had reply, “It is called fucking.”)

David did keep it quick, to his credit, hugging Shane warmly and congratulating him on tonight's win. He invited him to dinner the next night and Ilya scowled, but there was no need, Shane was already saying.

“Thank you, no, I’m - uh,”

David put his hands up, laughed. “Take good care of my boy, Ilya, I’ll see you both on the 15th. Non-negotiable.”

“I will try, thank you, David.” Ilya said solemnly.

He waved as Shane’s car disappeared down the drive and pulled Shane’s arm up over his shoulder in one swift motion, slipped his sneaker under Shane’s when he was caught off guard by the action and then hauled him up by the ass so he had no choice but wrap his legs around Ilya.

“Ow, asshole,” Shane said, but he was laughing, and his hands were all in Ilya’s hair, and Ilya held him up as he fumbled with his keys.

“I thought you said you were going to take good care of me?”

“I lied, am liar.” Said Ilya, as he kicked his own front door in with a bang and carried Shane in through the threshold.

The new house was dark, he had some furniture but not enough yet, and he was sincerely excited to show Shane around (he had seen all the listings, of course, but it was different, all purchased and sort of-decorated. He wanted his big real estate boyfriend to approve.) But that would come later because they were knocking shit over and tumbling to the couch with a ferocity that Ilya loved. Why play coy now? He tore Shane’s hoodie off and turned on the fancy lights with the fancy remote and sank both his knees on either side of Shane, straddling him when -

“Privet,” confident voice said from chair next to them. *Right* next to them.

Ilya’s mouth fell open. Shane was a statue beneath him, shirt half off.

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“Ty *krysa*, tebe nel'zya prosto tak pronikat' v chuzhiye doma. Tebya zastrelyat.” Ilya said, exasperated, falling back on his heels.

“That doesn’t seem to be the projectile I should be worried about here, Ilyusha.” She had the audacity to be laughing.

Shane looked back and forth between them, mouth hanging open. He looked like he wanted to sink into the couch forever. If this situation wasn’t so dire, Ilya would have giggled at his scared little face.

“Ya ne znal, chto vy govorite po-angliyski,” Ilya said, plainly, his brain still not firing on all cylinders to switch back.

“I was half raised Chicago? I am an American citizen?” Svetlana said, “Do you speak Russian, *Jane*?” she addressed Shane.

“Uh,” Shane stuttered, “Can I sit up?”

Ilya scrambled off him, then rested his hand over his racing heart dramatically.

“Sorry,” he said to the both of them, “am having panic attack because of home invader. Shane Hollander, this is Svetlana Vetrova.”

“His first wife,” Svet deadpanned, reaching her hand out. Shane shook it.

“No!” Ilya yelled, and then looked deep into Shane’s dumbstruck face, “no, no, she lies, I have never been married. You want me dead, Sevtlana, you break into my house to kill me in my jersey? You are some sort of evil hockey assassin witch-”

She was giggling, that asshole. Shane was melting into some sort of goo puddle and she was laughing.

“What,” Shane said, “is happening?”

“I am sorry Shane Hollander, this is very funny to me, but probably not to you. You seem nice, this torture is really for Ilya. AND you should be very proud of that goal earlier, Sergi is a beast and he did not want you to have it. I’m a big fan!”

Shane looked at Ilya with a desperation in his eyes. He was not understanding.

“Ok,” Ilya said, trying his best, “Svetlana is my friend. From Russia. Who is American and she speaks English better than me which I am finding out about right now. She is not, and has never been my wife. Or anyone's wife. She is spinster.”

Svet huffed.

He turned to Shane, putting on his most earnest expression, hoping beyond hope that Shane would just...believe him.

“I did not tell her you were *Jane*. But she did guess that I had a - She suspected that -”

“I knew he was in love with a man,” Svet said, helpfully, “And I guessed it was you because he got so sulky and pouty about how much better you are than him at backhand shots. But it was just a hunch until...” She gestured to them in their rumpled states.

Despite it all, Shane's face lit up at hearing Ilya was jealous of his hockey game. Ilya groaned, "Did not get *pouty* did not-" Ilya looked around for things to throw at her but his house was too empty.

"Why are you here in *my house*?"

"You said you closed! I wanted to see your place! I don't fly back to Moscow till late tomorrow and I was nearby, in Michigan. The flight was two hours, and cheap. Plus I missed you. And you always hide your key in the same spot. And you don't call, you don't write!" She feigned dramatic woe.

"Ok," Shane was rubbing his hands on his knees, staring at the floor, "Ok so you know, or I guess you *knew*-"

"I suspected." She confirmed, "But I really didn't mean to scare you, I am sorry for that. I thought you would probably still be in Montreal. I did not factor in the schedule change. That is my fault, and I am sorry." She reached out and touched Shane's hand.

He looked like he was trying to give her a reassuring smile with a live fish in his mouth. This time Ilya did laugh.

"Anyway," She glared at Ilya, "I am here now, and I am happy to meet you, and I'll go now. Unless you would like to be a good host and invite me for a drink first, Ilya."

"No, goodbye forever, bye-bye."

Shane elbowed him hard in the ribs.

"Ok fine, stay, drink my vodka after breaking into my home and cockblocking me, great way to spend an evening-"

"How long have you...." Shane began.

“Known Ilya was gay?”

“I am bisexual,” Ilya called from the kitchen

“I am acutely aware, miliy.” She said, reaching her hand up for the vodka Ilya placed in it. She made some expression like he was annoying to Shane. Great, thought Ilya, just what I need, those two making fun of me. And then his heart warmed a little at the thought.

Shane got water with ice instead of vodka. He might still throw up, guessing by his expression, Ilya thought. No need to waste vodka.

Shane nodded, “Well, uh, about us. And also known that it is important not to say anything. To anyone. Especially... hockey people.”

Svetlana’s face went stern for just a second. “I have known Ilya a very long time and I am very fond of him. I would never do anything that would hurt him, or his career. I've never said anything to anyone. I love him very much. He’s my brother. ”

“That is awkward.” Ilya replied, “because then there are all of these times we’ve committed incest.”

Shane blinked at him. He was probably not helping.

“Secret is safe with me,” Svetlana said, addressing both of them. Shane seemed to unclench, then.

“So... why were you in Michigan?” Shane asked. Ilya knew by the tone this was about hockey now and, oh for fucks sake, Svetlana was smiling like the cat that got the cream. Who was in Michigan, again?

“Rawlings?” Ilya gawked, “Gross. He’s like 57 thousand years old. Shane, Svet is very gross person, weird fetish, very strange, not good to talk to. We should kick her out now.”

“I had a date with Rawlings, yes.” Svet said simply, with her stupid little ‘who me’ expression.

“Svet has NHL seduction bingo card. She tries to sleep with all the "greats". She is probably here to seduce you.” Ilya said. Svet laughed.

“I wouldn't turn it down, but somehow I feel like Shane might be taken.," Shane gave a little nod to say yes, he was taken at this. Ilya wanted to laugh again, at how hard Shane was trying to get his footing in this conversation. He was so sweet, so earnest. Svetlana continued, "I like hockey! I like when good players want to fly me out and buy me dinner and listen to me tell them all the ways they have fucked up this season while they eat me out. Sue me.”

Shane dropped his gaze again and was staring at the carpet like it was spinning. Ilya knew him well enough to know that he was probably thinking of all the ways Svet could ruin their lives tonight, if she wanted to. 1,000 players and forecasters in her phone contacts. But he knew she would never do that, never, and he knew Shane would know in time. He slid his hand over Shane’s, on his knee.

“How did you two... become friends?” Shane asked.

“We have been friends since we were tiny children, we used to play in the summer. Svet came with her dad, to hockey camp. I think we were like 10 and 11, something like that.”

Svet smiled at him. He was grateful, so grateful for her friendship. His last real family in Russia. He really did want her and Shane to get along.

“She used to sneak me snacks. And make me listen to boring hockey stories.”

“And drive you around because you didn’t learn to drive till you were like 20,”

“Untrue, I was just 17. Not my fault you are old hag.”

“I’m like a year older than you!”

“And it's showing, you have lines here,” Ilya gestured to where crow's feet wrinkles would be, knowing full well Svetlana looked perfect, “Anyway, yes. Um.”

He was trying to reassure Shane of Svetlana’s trustworthy qualities, but that meant dropping the joking tone and saying something real. Which was hard enough with just Shane, but admitting to Svet that he loved her as much as he did... it was hard. It wasn't very Russian. And if he did it badly she would tease him till he died.

“Svet made her parents take me in for weeks, um, after my mother died.” Ilya said, softer now, “It was hard at home. My father... he didn't like to see other's grieving. Weak, he said. She really had to bully her parents. 'Extended sleepover emergency,' she said. I was very grateful.”

He gave Svet a look that he hoped said, *‘I swear to god if you make a joke right now I may die’* and she took pity on him.

“Of course. Like I said, you are my brother. I mean that.” Ilya smiled at her. A real smile.

“How did you two become friends?” She asked Shane.

They were really going to have to get a handle on telling this story, sometime, Ilya thought, as they both uh-ed and um-ed.

“We met before our rookie season, and uh-” Shane stuttered, “well, they were pairing us in the press a lot, so-”

“We basically fucked the third time we met. At the commercial shoot, you remember, da?” Ilya said dryly. Next to him he heard Shane softly gasp ‘oh god.’

Svetlana *giggled*. “Omg, Ilya, you asshole, since you were fucking 18? You could have at least brought me an autograph. Wait, wait, wait, didn't you come home from that commercial shoot-”

"No, I didn't," Ilya protested.

"-saying-"

"I said nothing. Not a big talker. Do not kiss and tell. Very discrete."

"You had the best sex of your life?"

Shane beamed. Ilya groaned.

“You are a genius player to watch, Shane Hollander. And now you are my favorite player in the NHL, seeing as Ilya Rozanov threw his career in the toilet by moving to Ottawa,” Svet kept on.

“You are *wearing my jersey*,” Ilya grumbled.

“Thank you,” said Shane. *Canadians*.

“And what are your intentions with my darling boy here,” She asked Shane, tone shifting sharply.

“We have a long-term plan for coming out, and the foundation -” Shane started outlining a very detailed description. He seemed more at ease with this part. It was not Svet’s question, Ilya could tell, but she would wait. She was more patient than him. She was patient *with* him, Ilya knew. He felt another rush of gratitude towards her.

“Yes, but *with* Ilya. You intend to be with him, a long time, forever?” She asked, seeming serious, “You intend to be kind to him. Not keep kicking him around with little starlets?”

“Yes,” Shane said. Ilya’s heart swelled a little, at how sure he sounded. “I want to be very nice to him. Forever, maybe. As long as he’ll have me.”

Svetlana gazed appraisingly at him. Shane seemed to pass her little test, she leaned back.

“Good. He’s very pathetic over you. Giggles when you text him. He seems all tough, but he’s very mushy. If you hurt him I’ll have you killed.” She said all these as if they were simple facts, nothing to quibble about.

Shane looked at Ilya. He shrugged. Guilty as charged, at least, on being mushy for Shane. He was not surprised he hadn’t hidden it well from Svet. She could always see what he was lying about.

“She cannot have you killed... probably...”

“Now!” Svet clapped her hands together, “It is story time, for me and for you. Ilya, you make popcorn. Shane, I will tell you every embarrassing story I have. Did he tell you he threw up on Wayne Gretsky?”

“No,” gasped Shane, and Ilya watched all his chances of getting laid that night evaporate into thin air.

They talked late into the night, and despite the odds, Shane and Svetlana seemed to get on great. They loved hockey, they loved Ilya, what else did they need? They had Shane laughing at pathetic stories of old mother Russia. Shane told her all the details of their sordid affair he could muster without blushing, and she was enthralled. Ilya could not remember a time where he remembered feeling lighter than when they ganged up to make fun of him. He played the heel, a little, just to watch them roll their eyes together. Went to the bathroom once just to feel what it was like to hear their voices echo down the hall. Together. Laughing.

Shane finally went up to bed at around 3, and Ilya stayed behind to grab a blanket for Svet to sleep on the couch.

“You lovvvveeee him,” She teased, sleepily.

“I do.” Ilya said, softly.

“I am so happy for you, Ilyusha. You are so loveable. You deserve a great love. And a home.”

“You are drunk.”

She half heartedly swiped him with her pillow. He tucked her in. Shane was already half out by the time he made it to bed, curled up around him.

“I like Svetlana,” Shane mumbled. Ilya smiled into his hair.

“Me too, moya lyubov.”

“Still can’t... marry her,” Shane mumbled into his pillow.

“Deal.”

Ilya drifted off feeling warm that, maybe for just one night, he was under one roof with the two people in the world who knew him best.

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