

Family Vacation

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Family Vacation

by [ofmonticello](#)

Summary

Rozanov rolled his eyes. “Yes, because it is so silly to want to know where you are going. I know you looked up every last detail, you are not high and mighty.”

Hayden found himself chuckling. “Yeah, Shane, you're not all high and mighty. I bet you managed to find the blueprints of the rental, just to make sure it was to your standards.”

“What the fuck is this? You two are teaming up on me now?” Shane tried to sound offended, but his delight pushed right through.

“Ah, is only because we know you are full of shit.” Rozanov nodded, very sure of himself as per usual.

the pikes join ilya and shane on vacation to the bahamas, and everything that happens is actually way easier than any of them expected. hayden gets hit on, jackie appreciates some quality relaxation, and hollanov go on like they always do.

Notes

okay this is my second heated rivalry fic and i feel like it might be too similar to learning curve...but maybe not? anyways, i really enjoy the idea of looking into how the hollander-rozanov-pike dynamics would develop as time goes on, so this is technically set a year following learning curve anyways.

i do have other ideas for fics lol, so maybe soon you will see something that doesn't revolve around summer vacation. i just wish i was at the beach i think

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

Waking up before the sun had risen genuinely made Hayden wonder if going on vacation was really worth it. The sound of his phone alarm blaring from the nightstand mixed with the lingering feeling of his deep slumber made him move slowly, barely with it at all. His first conscious thought was that he really needed a cup of coffee, which was a sure sign that it was way too fucking early to be awake.

After grabbing his phone to shut it up, Hayden turned to see that Jackie was still asleep beside him. He figured he could let her sleep for a bit longer, dragging himself out of bed to brush his teeth and shower. Even though he was quick, Jackie was awake by the time he was out.

“I’ll get the kids up,” he said, pulling on a pair of comfy sweatpants. There was no way he’d be spending any travel time wearing anything else.

Jackie nodded, rubbing her eyes and getting out of bed herself. It was rare to hear her voice too soon after she woke up, so Hayden left her alone and quietly opened Jade and Ruby’s bedroom door. Of course, they were still asleep.

Getting all four kids up and out the door was going to be a feat itself, but then getting them all to the airport and everything would be another. Especially when they’d all be overtired, himself and Jackie included.

Hayden was definitely in for it.

“You have everything, right?” Jackie asked as Hayden loaded the last suitcase, his own, into the back of the Uber. “Passports, everything?”

Hayden nodded. He’d double checked, then triple checked, paranoid that he’d screw up and ruin this trip. “I have everything.”

Jackie gave a small nod of her own, acknowledging Hayden but probably going through her own checklist in her head. Soon enough, they were being driven to the airport, where they’d be meeting Shane...and Rozanov.

The eight of them—Hayden, Jackie, their four children, and Shane and Ilya—were heading to the Bahamas together for a much needed vacation. Even though Hayden had seen a lot of Shane during the hockey camps, he was excited to be spending even more time with his best friend. It still felt empty, not being on the same team as him.

Sometimes Hayden still thought of Rozanov’s joke after the wedding. Hayden joining the Centaurs...it was like a lingering fantasy in the back of his mind now. He’d met some of Shane’s new teammates at the camps, and felt a weird sense of envy at how much of a family they were like. Even Troy Barrett turned out to be likeable, and it made Hayden resent the Voyageurs that he was left with.

Hayden would think about how accepting the Centaurs were of Shane and just ended up getting mad about it every time. Was it really so hard for the Voyageurs to do the same thing? They'd turned Shane into a *he who shall not be named* instead of mourning the loss of the one man who led them to greatness. Hayden was maybe even angrier about it than Shane himself.

His daydreaming distracted him so intensely that he genuinely missed most of the drive to the airport, only coming back to reality when he realized that the car was slowing to a stop.

Hayden and Jackie both thanked the driver. As Jackie corralled the kids, Hayden quickly grabbed each suitcase out of the car to avoid holding anyone up. Then, the horrible process of check in, and Hayden was longing for the future where he was sitting in the sun on the beach.

Once they were finally through all the stupid airport processes, Hayden held onto Ruby and Amber and followed Jackie, who had Jade and Arthur, to the seating area. Of course, Shane and Rozanov were already there. Hayden was sure that Shane had forced Rozanov to get up ridiculously early to get there as early as possible.

The kids (minus Arthur) immediately ran to the two men, who greeted them with matched excitement and open arms. Hayden was glad to be slightly more free for a while.

“You guys are here already?” Jackie asked. “How long ago did you get here?”

Rozanov rolled his eyes. “Shane made me get up an hour after I went to sleep.”

Shane sighed. “We’ve only been here for fifteen minutes.”

“I need my beauty sleep, Jackie.” Rozanov declared dramatically, pulling Amber up into his lap.

“You used to get up this early to drive back to Ottawa, I think you'll be okay.” Shane countered, and the expression on Rozanov's face told Hayden that it was completely true.

Again, he found himself feeling glad that he and Jackie were never truly in a long distance relationship.

Jackie sat down beside Jade, who was in the seat next to Rozanov, so Hayden took the opposite seat so that Ruby was between himself and Shane. Arthur remained in Jackie's lap. Jade was listening intently to Rozanov, who was continuing his conversation with Jackie about travel. When Hayden was satisfied with the safety of each of his children, he relaxed a bit.

“Thanks for inviting us to join you guys,” he said to Shane. “I know you're like, public now or whatever, but I appreciate you sharing your time with us. Jackie does, too.”

Shane smiled. “We're glad to have you. You guys are family, you know. Always will be.”

If anyone had told Hayden a few years ago that in the near future, he would consider Ilya fucking Rozanov on the same level as a brother in law, they would have been laughed at. And if they added that Hayden trusted his children with Rozanov more than almost anyone in his life, he'd be incredulous.

But here he was, waiting to board the same flight as the man, ready to spend two weeks with him in another country. Feeling relieved that one of his (admittedly more problematic) children was sitting beside him, because it meant she'd be looked after.

“Remember when we went to Mexico a few years ago?” Hayden asked. “I think that's the last time we did anything like this together.”

Shane made a weird face, correcting it quickly enough that Hayden almost didn't notice. “Yeah, I remember.”

Rozanov turned to look at them, and Hayden was immediately annoyed that he couldn't even talk to his friend for two seconds without the guy butting in. “Shane talks about his trip to Mexico with Hayden all the time.”

The way Shane's face reddened confused Hayden, and he suddenly felt like he was on the outside of some great inside joke. “Fuck you, no I don't. Let Hayden make conversation, for the love of God.”

Shane turned and saw the exasperated look on Jackie's face. “Sorry, sorry. I forgot the kids are here.”

Hayden couldn't help but chuckle at how flustered Shane suddenly was. “Didn't know that was a sensitive topic,” he teased. “You look like a tomato.”

“Ugh,” Shane rubbed his hands on his face. “Ilya's just taking advantage of me being tired. It's like he keeps a catalogue of random things people tell him that he can use to his advantage.”

Hayden was familiar with that very annoying habit of Rozanov's. “But there's nothing to pick on you for, from that trip. You were slightly less of a puritan, sure, but that's nothing major.”

“Yeah, well,” Shane sighed. “Ilya will find anything.”

Ordinarily, Hayden would find that behavior to be demeaning and out of place in a relationship. For a long time, actually, he felt that Shane deserved someone who spoke to him nicely instead of...whatever Rozanov's way of speaking could be called. But at some point, Hayden had realized that the way Rozanov spoke to Shane wasn't to be mean and insulting. He really just showed his love that way.

Hayden had also begrudgingly realized that Rozanov picked on *him* that way for similar reasons. Last summer at the cottage had been Hayden's first major clue, but then seeing how Rozanov spoke to JJ in comparison also helped. Rozanov definitely did not view Hayden and JJ with the same regard.

“Have you guys done any vacations yet? Other than the cottage, obviously.” Hayden asked, hoping he could maybe change the subject a little.

Shane shook his head. “Not really. Well, we had our honeymoon, but that's it. We were talking about trying to do another big trip to Europe, but Ilya is worried about how Anya does

for so long without us. So we figured a shorter, closer trip would be a good test.”

Hayden thought it was hilarious how Rozanov was melted down to practically nothing for a dog. “How in the world is he going to deal with inevitably being away from your future children?”

“Oh, jeez,” Shane chuckled. Hayden had realized early on that Shane *loved* thinking about Rozanov as a father. “He’ll probably develop attachment issues, or something. The poor kids will be eager to get away.”

Hayden was about to say something about relating to the sentiment of Shane and Ilya's future children, but then he caught the conversation that Rozanov was having with Jade. She was telling him about a girl she'd been having trouble with at school, something Hayden and Jackie had brought up with her teacher several times. Rozanov not only listened intently, but also asked Jade about how the situation was making her feel. There was no way that Hayden could imagine any child of Rozanov's wanting to escape him.

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Shane scrunched his face up, refusing to open his eyes. He could feel Ilya poking him in the cheek, repeating his name over and over again.

“Is time to wake up, Shane.” He nagged, like Shane wasn't finally enjoying some beauty rest. On the way to the Bahamas. With most of his favorite people.

“Let me sleep, Ilya,” he whined.

Ilya poked him again. “I do not think the flight attendants will like it. They can't just let you fly to the next place so you can nap.”

Shane's eyes popped open. “We landed? But I just closed my eyes! We were over New York!”

“Yes, and the boring New York trees put you to sleep. But now we are in the Bahamas. Much nicer, warmer, you know. So come on, we have to help Hayden and Jackie with the kids.”

“I can't believe I slept the entire flight.” Shane mumbled, following Ilya mindlessly. Eventually, they were off the plane and waiting for their luggage, one child per adult.

Shane was holding onto Ruby's hand, suddenly very aware of the fact that he was responsible for someone else's young child in another country, surrounded by a very large number of strangers.

He'd also noticed that Jade had practically attached herself to Ilya's hip. Ilya's patience towards children had always been endearing to Shane, especially when it was the Pike kids. Even though Ilya pretended not to like Hayden, it was such a nice feeling to know that they were practically one big family. Like Full House, but Canadian and with a lot more hockey.

Soon enough, the Hollander-Rozanov-Pikes had arrived at their rented beach house. It was hard to tell who was more excited between the children and the four grown adults.

The house was stunning. Shane had already fallen in love with it when he'd seen the photos online, but it was something completely different to finally see it in person. It was in a fantastic location, with an ocean-front pool. There were even enough rooms for each kid to sleep on their own, though Jackie had said that she expected them to stick together.

Shane and Ilya made it into their bedroom for the next two weeks, which was equipped with an ensuite bathroom and a private, wrap-around balcony with a beautiful view of the water. Shane couldn't get enough.

"Look at these windows, Ilya," Shane breathed, standing in the middle of the room. He felt big arms snake around him, then the press of his husband's chest against his back.

"You see this beautiful view and focus on the windows you see it from. Only you, *moya lyubov*."

Shane rolled his eyes. "Can't I appreciate a beautiful design without you picking on me?"

Ilya rested his chin on Shane's shoulder. "No," he answered simply, planting a soft kiss on the skin of Shane's neck. "If I did not pick on you, you would not know what to do."

"Whatever," Shane leaned his back into Ilya, even though they were already pressed against one another. He placed his hands on top of Ilya's, running his thumb over his husband's wedding band. "Two weeks of this. I'm not even gonna look at my phone if I don't need to."

Ilya hummed in agreement, the vibration in his chest sending chills down Shane's spine. "Are you tired? We had two early days...driving to Montreal, then flying down here...."

"I'm not tired," Shane shook his head, not even trying to bite back his smile as Ilya backed them up as a singular unit towards the large bed.

Shane squirmed out of Ilya's arms, turning to face him. "You're probably tired, huh? You didn't sleep on the flight." He snuck his hand under Ilya's shirt.

"I am never tired," Ilya answered, planting his hands on Shane's hips and turning them both. Then, he pushed Shane onto the bed and climbed on top of him, holding Shane's wrists down. "You will be, though. Absolutely exhausted."

Shane raised his brows up at Ilya. "Oh, yeah? I don't think so. I can't think of any reason for me to be absolutely exhausted."

Rather than respond, Ilya leaned down and kissed Shane. It was demanding, fierce, and filled with a familiar intensity. Laying there, pinned beneath Ilya with arousal growing in his body, Shane's thoughts began to slip away and the windows didn't seem so interesting anymore.

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"You are sure you don't mind? I can stay and help you."

Hayden pressed his lips together, watching Rozanov offer to stay back with Jackie like he was doing something horrible. Obviously Hayden had asked her a million and one times if

she was sure about letting the three of them *all* go to a bar together, but for some reason it bothered him that Rozanov was asking too. Just like when Jackie had rolled her ankle and Rozanov carried her to the car. It made Hayden feel like Rozanov was silently telling him that he isn't a good husband.

“Yes, really, it's fine. You guys aren't that fun to hangout with at a bar anyways. Not when there's no other wives to talk to.” Jackie smiled, looking over towards the kids, who were pretending to give a house tour for a YouTube channel they didn't have.

“Besides, this just means that you three will get a day with the kids while I enjoy a peaceful day full of precious alone time.”

This is the deal that Hayden and Jackie had already decided on. He'd been planning on telling Shane about it later on, but maybe it was better if it came from Jackie. If Hayden was being completely honest, Jackie had all three of these men wrapped right around her finger.

Rozanov smiled. “Okay, if you say so.”

Hayden took his place as Rozanov returned to his own spouse, leaning down to give Jackie a quick kiss. She put her hand on his shoulder to stop him from standing upright.

“Have fun, okay? These are your best friends. Aside from JJ, I know. Enjoy being with people who meet you where you are.”

The plurality did not escape Hayden. “Only one of these people meets me where I am. Only one of them is a best friend.”

Jackie raised a brow. “You know that isn't true. Anyways, no punching Ilya. I need his handsome face intact for photos.”

“What about *my* handsome face?”

“Well, what do you think I told Ilya?”

At the bar, Hayden sat to Shane's left, Rozanov on the other side. They'd each ordered a beer, even Shane, and now were just making small talk. JJ had asked Hayden on more than one occasion if it was awkward, being Shane and Rozanov's third wheel. Hayden realized with a great deal of irritation that no, it wasn't awkward. He had become used to Rozanov pretty quickly.

“We will go to beach tomorrow, yes?” Rozanov asked, leaning forward so that he could look at both Shane and Hayden. “I did not want to mention it in front of the kids. In case we are not going yet?”

Hayden shrugged. “Yeah, I don't think Jackie had anything else planned. I know she wanted to visit some attractions with the kids at some point, but I think that was later on. The luxury of the beach is too fresh in their minds.”

"I think it's the same for Ilya," Shane grinned, taking a small sip of his beer. "He was looking at pictures non-stop before the trip."

Rozanov rolled his eyes. "Yes, because it is so silly to want to know where you are going. I know you looked up every last detail, you are not high and mighty."

Hayden found himself chuckling. "Yeah, Shane, you're not all high and mighty. I bet you managed to find the blueprints of the rental, just to make sure it was to your standards."

"What the fuck is this? You two are teaming up on me now?" Shane tried to sound offended, but his delight pushed right through.

"Ah, is only because we know you are full of shit." Rozanov nodded, very sure of himself as per usual.

The three of them continued to talk and drink, enjoying one another's company. Hayden did kind of wish that JJ or somebody was there with him, not necessarily as a buffer but just to make it even. Obviously, he'd usually have Jackie there too, but she got sick of talking about the same three things with the same three men all the time. He couldn't blame her. Maybe Hayden needed to find a way to become more interesting.

At some point, he felt a hand on his left shoulder, which was distinctly not Shane reaching around his back. Hayden turned to see who it was, met with a man who had taken his hand back and was leaning his hip against the bar. He was tall, with smooth, tanned skin and a neatly trimmed beard. In general, he looked way more put together than the dudes Hayden was normally around, so he doubted that he was somehow running to someone he knew. Especially given the whole *in a foreign country* thing.

"You mad at that tequila or something?" The man asked, nodding his head in the vague direction that Hayden had been staring.

Hayden, having barely realized that he'd been zoning out, chuckled softly. "Yeah, you know, it just gave me a dirty look."

The man's eyes narrowed slightly, like he was really trying to figure something out. Hayden wondered briefly (maybe hopefully) that he'd finally been recognized, but then he remembered who he was sitting with. Shane and Ilya were far more recognizable for so many reasons.

But then the man stuck his hand out to greet Hayden. "I'm Chance."

Hayden shook the man's hand, pleased to suddenly have someone new to talk to. He'd been stuck with just his stupid team for so long. "Hayden," he greeted.

Chance's expression kept that curiosity. He didn't sit down, and also didn't order a drink. "Where are you from, Hayden?"

"Montreal," Hayden answered. Technically it wasn't true, but he did live there and was visiting from there, so maybe it was true? He really didn't know. "You?"

“Connecticut. You don't sound like you're from Montreal.”

Hayden blinked. For some reason, it surprised him that someone would comment on that. “I get picked on for that at work sometimes.” He shrugged. “I’m guessing there's some people out there who would take it as a compliment.”

Chance chuckled, and then finally ordered a drink. He gave Hayden one last quizzical look. “Well, maybe I’ll see you around, Hayden.” And then he patted Hayden's shoulder, and left with his drink.

A moment later, Hayden's peace was disrupted by the frustrating sound of the Russian a seat away from him. “That man wants to have sex with you, Hayden.”

Hayden’s eyes widened, displaying that now he was absolutely fucking flabbergasted. He turned and stared at Rozanov with what had to be a hilariously shocked expression. “What? No, he was making conversation. People do that, you know.”

Ilya sat up straight, putting on an American accent that felt very uncomfortable to hear from him. “I’m Chance, you are boring but easy to look at. I am trying very hard to figure out if you are gay.”

“Ew, never do that again!” Shane laughed, smacking Ilya’s arm.

“I sound like Scott Hunter.” Ilya kept the accent, and it made Hayden's skin crawl.

Hayden was stuck on the actual topic of conversation, though. “No, don't get distracted, I need you to explain to me how that interaction was anything other than some guy making small talk before getting a drink.”

Rozanov shrugged. “He did not get his drink until after he tested you. He did not care what he was saying, he was just trying to get...you know, get a vibe. He keeps saying your name. Oh, you are Hayden? Where are you from, Hayden? See you around, Hayden? Is flirting.”

“Um, no, you're wrong. Shane, tell him he's misunderstanding. That was definitely not flirting.”

To Hayden’s horror, Shane shrugged just like Ilya had. “Nah, that guy was definitely testing the waters.”

Hayden didn't care if a man thought he was attractive, but he was certain that he would be able to tell if someone was flirting with him. What kind of gay man is named *Chance*?

“You saw the guy for what, two minutes? There's no way you know for sure he's even gay. Nothing about him was...obvious.” Hayden argued, trying to choose his words so that they wouldn't accuse him of being homophobic. Again.

Shane took another small sip of beer. “Ilya has a scarily accurate gaydar. He probably knows people are gay before *they* know.”

Hayden rolled his eyes. Rozanov couldn't be *that* accurate. He was constantly implying that Hayden wasn't straight, and he had a wife and four kids.

"You guys are definitely wrong." He grumbled, earning himself a pat on the back from Shane and an unfamiliar laugh from Rozanov.

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Ilya released a deep sigh, leaning down and kissing Shane's bare shoulder. His husband laid on his stomach beneath Ilya, his face in a pillow and his arms on either side of his head. Shane's heavy breathing was the only sound in the room, or at least the only sound that Ilya was listening to.

"Jesus," Shane breathed, rolling over and scooting closer to Ilya as he laid beside him. He had that look in his eye, the one that Ilya had seen for the first time years ago, that was somewhere in the realm of bliss and satisfaction. Ilya loved seeing him this way, loved making him this way. It was rare for anybody to see Shane let loose, and Ilya was proud to be the only person who could unwind him.

Ilya watched Shane closely. He was sure that he shared his own version of that expression, because it was how he felt. It was how he felt anytime he was with Shane, but now he was on vacation with his *husband*. Ilya no longer needed to maintain his composure and pretend that he didn't love seeing Shane so free. He could just...watch his husband, a stupid smile on his face, and not worry that he was giving too much away.

Shane closed his eyes, draping his arm over his forehead with a soft smile on his lips. Ilya looked at him for a little while longer, admiring how peaceful Shane looked, before finally deciding that he should shower. He leaned over and kissed Shane's chest before getting out of bed and heading into the ensuite bathroom.

By the time Ilya emerged from the bathroom, wrapped in a towel and smelling like expensive soap, Shane had sat up in bed with the covers draped haphazardly over his legs. "My legs feel like Jell-O." He said, watching Ilya get dressed.

Ilya smiled softly, pulling a black shirt over his head. Then he sat on the edge of the bed, reaching over to ruffle Shane's already messy hair. "I showered without you. I think I fucked you into a daze. What is it that magicians do? Hypnosis?"

Shane rolled his eyes, giving Ilya's shoulder a playful shove. "You make me sound like some kind of slut. 'You like my dick so much it made you thoughtless.'" He gave a very poor attempt at mocking Ilya's accent, which only made them both laugh.

"Is okay to be slutty." Ilya shrugged. "And I know that is what happened, so."

"Fuck off," Shane laughed, leaning down to drape himself over Ilya. "You're very full of yourself."

Ilya saw an opportunity he just couldn't pass up. "You were just very full of me."

Shane blinked slowly, and Ilya knew that he was mentally cursing himself for walking directly into that. From the nightstand, Shane's phone buzzed. He sat up, much to Ilya's disappointment, and grabbed the phone. So much for not being on it unless he needed to.

"Hayden says he's taking the kids to get ice cream. Jackie doesn't want to go." Shane turned to Ilya, making his '*I really don't want to*' face. "He'd probably feel better if there were more eyes on the kids. I gotta shower."

Ilya put a hand on Shane's shoulder to stop him. "I will go."

Shane raised a brow. "Just you and Hayden? Are we sure that won't result in one of you dead and four traumatized kids?"

"Will be fine. I will even be nice to him. Nicer. I will not be as mean to him as I want to be." Ilya squeezed Shane's chest. "I don't mind." He added, because he could see the doubt in Shane's face.

Shane considered this for a while. Then he said, "What are you going to tell Hayden about why I didn't go?"

Ilya recognized this as a test immediately. He wasn't allowed to antagonize Hayden, and that meant being...he guessed *appropriate* was a good enough word. "I will tell him you want to take a nap. You are tired because we stayed up too late last night in the pool."

"Fine," Shane still sounded suspicious, which Ilya supposed was fair. "Please don't start shit with him. He's on vacation just as much as we are."

Ilya waved his hand dismissively. "Yes, yes, I will be nicer to Hayden than usual. He will be wondering about my motives the whole time, so I win still."

There were many reasons for Ilya to hate awkward silences. Usually it had something to do with a language barrier, and he was able to recover quickly with some humor and charm. But with Hayden? It was awful.

"Shane wanted to *take a nap*." Hayden said skeptically, sitting across from Ilya at a picnic table that was definitely too small for both of them.

Ilya shrugged. He'd told Shane that he would behave, so he disregarded every innuendo or reference to the real reason Shane was in bed. "I know, is rare for Shane to nap. Is probably a good thing."

This, of course, did not settle Hayden's suspicion. But Hayden was only good at guessing giant secrets, apparently. "He's just trying to make us get along."

"Probably." Ilya agreed, and even though that wasn't the surface reason for Shane's absence, it was probably somewhere underneath. "I think he hopes that we will eventually put hockey after...I do not like the word bonding for this. We do not have much in common."

Hayden nodded, looking intently at his ice cream. He'd ordered something with orange in it. "I don't know how he expects me to do that. You're a fu—freaking a-hole." He looked extremely put out by censoring himself, and Ilya had to bite back every bit of mockery his mouth wanted to spew.

"Yes, is true. Not everyone is Shane and will find me enjoyable. But I have made friends with opponents. All of the Centaurs love me." Then, because Hayden had tunnel vision when it came to Ilya, he added, "Same with Troy Barrett. He was pretty horrible, but we all found things to like about him." Troy had also basically given himself a personality transplant, but Ilya didn't need one of those.

Hayden stared at Ilya for a long time. So long that Ilya began to wonder if there were spiders crawling on him, and Hayden was enjoying not telling him. He fought back everything telling him to examine himself, staring right back.

"I guess I can...*appreciate* that you understand Shane. And that you're good to my family." Hayden sounded like a child who had been forced to apologize to a classmate for some minor wrongdoing. Ilya loved it.

"I appreciate that you fight for Shane." Ilya said, hoping it'd maybe sound more forced than it was. Because, in the end, Ilya was just relieved that Hayden had stayed by Shane's side through everything. Even if he had also caused some pretty significant problems too.

Hayden gave one, big nod. "Good. Now we can tell Shane we found common ground and go back to tolerating each other."

Common ground. That was a good phrase that Ilya had probably heard, but hadn't listened to before. He'd need to find time to get used to saying it when it wouldn't be obvious that Hayden was the reason for it.

The two men sat quietly, eating their ice cream. Ilya had gotten cookies and cream, because of course he did. The Pike children were sitting at their own table directly next to Ilya and Hayden's, and Ilya noticed that there was rarely a moment where Hayden didn't have most of his attention on them.

"You are good at watching them." Ilya said. "Why do you think you will lose them?"

Hayden blinked, apparently surprised by Ilya's comment. Ilya had already told Hayden before that he believed he was a good father, so it didn't make sense for him to be confused now.

"I guess I'm just paranoid. I've heard horror stories and stuff." Hayden frowned into his ice cream. "I don't have the skills Jackie has. She does so much, and I feel like I'm not doing enough, or something."

Ilya really had no idea what happened at the Pikes' home, because they still lived in Montreal. He and Shane had visited a few times, but usually any get-together happened in the summers in Ottawa.

In a normal situation, Ilya would offer Hayden reassurance. He might tell him not to be so hard on himself, that he was around when he could be. But Ilya wasn't about to reassure someone with words he wasn't sure were true. Instead he only gave a neutral *hmm*.

A bit of silence passed again until Hayden broke it. "You were just fucking with me the other night, right?"

Ilya wanted to tease Hayden for failing to censor himself this time, but he was curious where this was going, so he stayed on track. "Which time?"

Hayden rolled his eyes, probably realizing that Ilya was almost always fucking with him. "About that guy at the bar. Chance."

Ah. Ilya had expected this conversation to happen sooner, and probably between Hayden and Shane, not him. "No."

"Come on. He was not flirting with me." Hayden rested his arms on the table.

Ilya watched his face. Hayden didn't look offended at the idea at all. In fact, he mostly looked doubtful. But the topic had been bothering him for a few days, so he was also curious.

"Why do you think it's so crazy?" He asked.

Hayden looked thoughtful for a quick moment, probably choosing what he believed to be the least offensive answer. Ilya probably wouldn't be offended no matter what Hayden said.

"I guess I just don't get it. Like, why me? How does he know I'm not some psycho?"

Ilya would think that Hayden was fishing for compliments if he was just about anyone else. But no, Hayden Pike had a different situation going on in his mind.

"Do not think too hard about it, Hayden. He probably just noticed you have a crush on Shane." He knew he was supposed to be nice or whatever, but this conversation was so abnormal for them that Ilya needed to add some kind of familiarity.

Hayden rolled his eyes. "Oh, fuck off." Then, a beat later, "Does that happen a lot? Like, a gay guy will test the waters with a straight guy and just...walk away when he realizes what team he's for?"

Ilya could not believe Hayden was willing to talk about this with him. Wasn't he just complaining that Ilya picks on him? "You were not dismissive of him. If he saw you around again, he might talk to you again. I do not know him, I cannot guess anything else."

"But I didn't flirt back! Isn't that enough?"

Ilya recalled being slightly amused that Hayden *had* sounded like he was flirting back. Or, more accurately, he might've sounded that way to a stranger. "I think you should let it go, Pike. Is no big deal. Is the same as a woman hitting on you when you are not interested. Either way, you do not want to fuck them."

Hayden seemed like he wanted to argue, but Ilya watched as he realized that what Ilya had said was accurate. “I guess so. With a woman, I at least would have known, though. Would have shown my ring and told her to get lost.”

This made Ilya smile, which Hayden probably misunderstood like he often tended to. Ilya apparently always looked at least a little mocking. “Good. Jackie would kill you, and then Shane and your football team of children would be very sad.”

The two of them continued in a strange quiet. Ilya was still baffled that Hayden had been willing to discuss that with him, especially when so many men like Hayden would have been extremely offended. Or, Ilya supposed, those men were not like Hayden at all.

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As much as Shane loved his cottage, he had to admit that sitting under the stars in the Bahamas was pretty fucking awesome. It was late, and ordinarily he might've gone to bed by now, but he was determined to enjoy himself. Ilya had been telling him a lot recently (well, for years really) that he should let loose and try to enjoy things more. So here he was, sitting in a chair in front of a bonfire.

Ilya was in the chair beside him, Hayden and Jackie in the two on the other side of the fire. It actually reminded Shane a lot of their time at the cottage, and somehow that probably helped him enjoy this vacation even more. It was silly, and Ilya would pick on him for it, but Shane would probably tell him anyway.

Somehow, the topic of conversation managed to get onto past relationships. Shane hadn't been paying attention, apparently, because it seemed like everyone else had expected it.

Hayden looked at him, and he had a familiar expression, one that Shane had seen from his friend several times. It was the same one he'd get years ago when hoping to convince Shane to go out with one of Jackie's friends.

“So,” Hayden began, also putting on his *trying to sound nonchalant* voice. “We obviously know about like, Rose and...Jennifer? Jessica? But were there any guys that you, um, hid?”

Shane probably should have predicted that this conversation would come up eventually. Maybe he was hoping it wouldn't. He glanced at Ilya, who didn't seem bothered at all. Probably because he knew he was the only man Shane had really cared for. The only person Shane had ever been in love with.

“Yeah, there were other guys,” Shane finally mumbled, sounding like someone was literally forcing the words out of his throat. “Nothing major, though.”

Hayden nodded, and Shane wondered if he'd expected that answer at all. Jackie, on the other hand, didn't seem surprised in the slightest. Sometimes she reminded Shane a bit of Rose, rarely ever fazed during conversations like this. Maybe it was just a quality of men to be surprised by unsurprising things.

“It must've been difficult,” Jackie commented. “To find someone who would keep it a secret?”

Shane pressed his lips together. “Yeah,” he agreed, very much wanting to avoid specifics. A random man in Mexico and Los Angeles were probably not the best options, for whatever reasons, but like Shane had told Ilya—he'd needed *something*.

Then Jackie spoke again. “Ilya, everyone knows all about your history. Well, what the media speculates. What's it like on that side of things?”

Shane watched as Ilya rubbed his nose, just a brief motion, and knew he was about to lie. “Is no big deal. My past is mentioned so much, I just brush it off. Everyone should just be happy that I am with my sexy husband.”

“Everyone knows about your history with women,” Hayden observed, apparently realizing that Ilya probably slept with other men at some point too. “Were you hiding men too?”

This was always a topic that Ilya deliberately avoided. Shane knew about plenty of things, but Ilya kept that part of his history so close to his chest when it came to others. Svetlana was probably the only other person in the world who really knew anything.

But now, Ilya gave his casual, carefree shrug. “Sometimes. I knew I liked men before I met Shane, and so I was with men before that too. After...nothing important ever happened.”

“I remember when Hayden and I started dating,” Jackie crossed one leg over the other, and Shane was grateful for the change of focus. “One of my ex boyfriends from high school messaged me on Facebook. He was trying to seem interested in my life, pretending he didn't know I was dating anyone. Then when we got engaged, he posted all of these weird things about how there's more people to meet, more chances to try. It was really funny.”

From the look on Hayden's face, only one of them found it particularly amusing. “Well, why was he your ex?” Ilya asked, definitely just to make Hayden squirm.

“Oh, God, he was so boring. He didn't seem to understand that dating required conversation, and when we did talk, it was like he had never experienced anything interesting in his life.” Jackie laughed a little. “I think he got married eventually, though. I avoided him at our last reunion.”

Shane hadn't dated much in high school. He'd had one girlfriend at the end, who he'd barely remembered when they'd been together. He definitely didn't think of her much now. One time a girl asked him to a school dance in front of a bunch of people, and Shane had politely said no. It was horrible, and also pretty much the only thing that happened to him when it came to teenage romance. Until he'd met Ilya and a *lot* of things changed.

Thankfully, the conversation moved on and he didn't have to worry about it anymore. Jackie brought up the touristy things that she and Hayden planned on bringing the kids to, and Shane was relieved to have an easier topic.

“What are you thinking about?”

Jackie turned around at the sound of her husband's voice. She'd been sitting at the side of the pool with her legs in the water, watching the kids swim, but they'd gone inside to get a snack about five minutes ago. When Hayden took a seat beside her, Jackie leaned against him, her head on his shoulder.

“I don't know,” she shrugged. “I think I just zoned out.”

“This trip has been great so far, huh?” Hayden hummed, nudging her side. “I didn't expect to actually relax so much. I guess it's helpful to have four adults with the kids.”

Jackie hadn't been expecting to relax either. Even though Hayden was there too, and he really was an amazing father, the kids went to her by default. She'd fully been expecting that to remain, but Jade and Arthur seemed to drift towards Ilya pretty often and Ruby just wanted to be near anybody she could be. Amber was always at Hayden's hip, so Jackie had found several moments of peace so far.

Then, she'd worried that the three grown men she was stuck with would cause problems. Particularly Hayden and Ilya. Jackie loved them both to death, but sometimes their bickering had her ready to spend the rest of her life in prison. But so far, they'd both behaved pretty well, only making small jabs at one another.

“It's nice.” Jackie agreed. “It feels like we're just one big family. I think the kids actually believe they're related to Shane.”

Hayden smiled. “Well, he's always been around. That's really thanks to you, though, not me. I mean, I probably would have invited him over eventually, but you really pushed for it. So thanks for my best friend.”

Jackie couldn't help but smile back. She had probably lucked out with Hayden, in a way. She knew quite a few other WAGs who had similar “love stories” to hers and many of them did not end up together for very long. Jackie met Hayden in 2011, was married in 2012, and had two children in 2013. Now it was 2023 and things have worked out well so far, which many women Jackie knew could not relate to.

“You're welcome,” she answered, grinning at her husband. Hayden leaned down and kissed her, just a quick peck.

“Shane and Ilya are making dinner tonight.” Hayden mentioned. “Something fancy, probably. Shane told me what it was, and then Ilya was a douche so I forgot what Shane said.”

Jackie shook her head, about to say something about how Hayden really needed to work on ignoring Ilya. But then she took an opportunity she'd been looking for since a few days ago. “Did you two bond or something when you took the kids for ice cream? I feel like there's been more peace than anyone was expecting.”

Hayden made a face, some weird mix between a scowl and a grimace. “No, not really. Some guy hit on me at the bar, and I asked him about it. I still don't like him, and he still doesn't

like me.”

Jackie wished Hayden and Ilya would just come to terms with the fact that they didn't dislike each other and were pretty much friends already. She'd learned that both of them were too stubborn, and while Hayden wouldn't pull his head out of his ass, Ilya was definitely avoiding letting too many people see the *real him*, or whatever. How ridiculous.

“Wait, someone hit on you?” Jackie asked, leaning back to get a good look at Hayden's face. “And I wasn't there? Ugh, this is horrible.”

Hayden's brows furrowed. “What do you mean ‘this is horrible?’ I didn't do anything!”

Jackie laughed, shaking her head. “No, I know, Hayden. It's horrible because, and don't get offended, no one ever hits on you.”

“What? People hit on me! That is so mean, Jackie, I am absolutely offended.” Hayden was grinning back at her, and that only made Jackie laugh harder. “Stop laughing at me!”

“Okay, okay,” Jackie calmed down, still able to feel the smile on her cheeks. “So a man flirted with you. How come you didn't ask Shane about it?”

Hayden shrugged. “I don't know. He doesn't like talking about that stuff, and I feel like I bother him about it enough. Rozanov is so comfortable with literally everything, I figured I could get an actual answer out of him.”

“What did you want to know?” Jackie asked. She was mostly surprised that Hayden asked questions at all, but maybe he was even more worldly than anyone thought. She'd never thought Hayden would turn out to be a horrible person, but it had still felt like a relief when he'd accepted Shane.

“Mostly, I thought he was fucking with me. I didn't realize the guy was flirting, I guess, but then even Shane said he was, so.” Hayden shrugged again. “Then I wanted to know how the guy would think to flirt with me. Rozanov just told me I should let it go.”

Jackie nodded, pushing her lips out, something she tended to do when she wasn't sure what to say. Ilya teased Hayden all the time about having a crush on Shane, and somehow Hayden had still felt like he could talk to him about something most men they knew wouldn't even bring up. But sure, they hated each other and aren't friends in any capacity.

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When Hayden received a text from Shane telling him to come up to his room, it was a bit of a surprise. He'd been skeptical, mostly because Rozanov was nowhere to be seen and therefore must also be in Shane's (their) room. But he went anyways, because there couldn't possibly be anything he'd want to avoid if Shane explicitly told him to go up there.

The door was cracked, so Hayden pushed it fully open. The first thing he noticed was that the doors to the balcony were open. The second thing was Rozanov, who was sprawled on the bed in what appeared to be a very deep sleep. He looked so calm and peaceful that it almost

felt unnatural. It was probably difficult to look cocky while asleep, though. Hayden snuck past him, like he was avoiding waking a sleeping dragon, and found Shane on the balcony.

“What's up?” He asked, still unsure of why they weren't in a common area. “This feels like when they used to pull me out of class to read in grade school.”

Shane gave a little laugh, motioning for Hayden to sit down in the chair beside him. “I just wanted to hangout. Figured it'd be easier if we were alone.”

Hayden sat down and understood. If they were in a common area, there would almost certainly be at least one child there with them. “Rozanov's completely zonked out, huh?” He glanced back, barely able to see inside the room from the glare of the early evening sun against the windows.

“Yeah, his sleep schedule is kind of weird sometimes.” Shane looked back at the windows as Hayden looked back at him, something like worry in his expression. “He'll be exhausted at four in the evening, but wide awake in the middle of the night.”

“Insomnia?” Hayden asked, because this type of conversation had recently become easier for Shane. Hayden could talk about Jackie, so Shane could talk about Ilya.

Shane frowned. “Something like that.” He sighed. “Anyway, he won't bother us either. He probably won't even wake up for a bit, to be honest.”

Hayden nodded. He didn't really have anything to say about Jackie's sleep habits, so he pushed the conversation to something they both could talk about forever. “You looking forward to training camp?”

“Yeah,” Shane answered. “Well, as much as you can be excited for that much conditioning.”

“Don't act like you don't love it. We both know you're a freak of nature. You'll be the first one on the ice and the last one off.”

Shane smiled, his real *I know I'm awesome* smile. “Okay, you got me. But I mostly just like the team building aspects of it, especially since I still feel new.”

Hayden bit the inside of his lip. He never knew how to talk about Shane's new team and how much happier he was with them. *Everyone* on the Centaurs seemed happier, like a family. Online, people called them ‘Ilya Rozanov and Friends’ and it was so obviously true. Watching a Centaurs game was like watching a Disney movie where the moral of the story is that friendship makes everything better.

Just like at the airport, Hayden felt envious of everyone on the damn Centaurs. Shane had a great group of guys that he got to play alongside all the time, the Centaurs got both Shane and fucking Rozanov. They even had a team dog.

After Shane left the Voyageurs, things had just felt so wrong. Hayden and JJ were still close, but the rest of the team seemed to view Hayden as some kind of traitor too. Probably because

he was still friends with Shane, had defended him, would still defend him, and probably many other stupid reasons.

"I'm sure it's fine with the Centaurs." Hayden kept his tone light. He didn't want to make Shane feel bad for making the right decision. "They're a great group."

Shane nodded in agreement. "I'm still getting used to the dynamics there. Like, everyone participates in team bonding efforts. Pretty much everyone hosts house parties at least once a season. It's just...different."

"I'll bet," Hayden swallowed, almost wishing they were still talking about Rozanov's sleep habits. "You know, I always thought that the dynamic in Montreal was how everyone else was. Guess that couldn't be further from the truth."

"I thought the same thing," Shane admitted. "I guess it all depends on leadership. Coach Wiebe is so much more pleasant than pretty much any coach I've ever had."

"Well, he's willing to have husbands on the same team. And you two are kinda hard to deal with sometimes."

Shane pretended to look offended, smacking Hayden's shoulder. "We are nothing but pleasant to be around! Besides, we're strictly teammates when it comes to hockey."

Hayden raised his brows. "You guys keep it completely professional? I find that hard to believe."

"We kept each other a secret for ten years. You think we can't act like we're not together after so much practice?"

"That's still so fucking crazy to me," Hayden breathed. "I can't imagine...I mean, I know why you guys had to hide and stuff. It's just crazy."

Shane looked at Hayden, not saying anything for a moment. "Not too crazy for you to fucking guess it was happening." He finally said, nudging Hayden. He was smiling a little.

"I'm still proud of that. You guys are on some undercover sex mission and make one wrong move, and I swoop in and figure it out."

This made Shane laugh. "Oh, so in this telling of the story, you're also undercover? You're the big bad who exposes the spies."

"What? No!" Hayden turned in his seat, facing Shane fully. "I'm the awesome side kick, who is worthy of being a protagonist by the way, who doesn't know you're doing the secret mission at first but my smarts point me in the right direction."

Shane shook his head, still smiling. "You should talk to Hayes more."

Hayden sat back. "I should have joined the Centaurs." He said, hoping he didn't sound too mokey. "Never thought I'd say something like that."

Shane was quiet for a moment. “Do you really think you could handle Ilya being your captain?”

Hayden huffed. “Honestly, I think I'd prefer it at this point.”

“Well,” Shane stood up, patting Hayden's shoulder. “There's always a way. Maybe you'll be a Centaur soon. But now it's probably about time to go to dinner.”

Hayden stood, following Shane back into the bedroom where Rozanov was still asleep. Shane leaned down beside him, nudging his shoulder with one hand and tangling the other in Ilya's hair. Hayden continued leaving the room, exiting just as Ilya began to grumble at Shane for waking him.

Downstairs, the kids were running around wildly, apparently excited to go out to a restaurant. This behavior was precisely why Hayden and Jackie tended to avoid it.

“Woah, woah, let's take a giant chill pill.” Hayden put on his dad voice, scooping Ruby up into his arms. She'd been chasing Jade and Amber, Arthur sitting quietly on the couch and watching.

“When is it time to go?” Ruby asked, throwing her head back and dragging out the ‘o’ sound in all her drama. “Where's Uncle Shane?”

Hayden smoothed some of Ruby's hair. “He's waking Uncle Ilya up. He took a big nap, so I'm guessing he's gonna have a ton of energy! You guys should sit with him at dinner.”

Jackie came in then, looking so beautiful that Hayden had a feeling she'd have a lot more men to turn down than the one Hayden had tallied. “Hayden, don't encourage them.”

“What?” Hayden said innocently. “He loves them. He tells me all the time how much better they are than me. It's the only thing he's ever been right about.”

Of course, at that moment, Shane and Ilya came down the stairs. “I am right about everything.” Rozanov said, barely looking like he'd just woken up.

“Come on, children, all seven of you. We are not going to be late for this reservation!” Jackie shooed everyone out the door, and they all piled into a rented Chevy Suburban.

Rozanov drove, and Shane sat in the passenger seat. Jackie was behind Ilya, Hayden behind Shane, and Arthur between them. The twins sat in the “way back,” which they had bickered over before realizing they both could, with Amber joining them.

Hayden supposed Jackie was probably right. This was basically a family vacation, and they'd probably do it again, maybe even annually. It was kind of awesome, even if he'd never say it out loud.

End Notes

thanks so much for reading! i hope you enjoyed and also that my jokes landed. sometimes i read heated rivalry fics and it's the funniest shit i've ever read, i love this fandom
if you feel so inclined, please let me know what you think! i also have a [tumblr](#) where i share random thoughts about heated rivalry/game changers, if you'd like to visit me there!

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