

Everything We Were Too Scared to Reach For

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Everything We Were Too Scared to Reach For

by [oceandeeppmind](#)

Summary

Shane's suppressants fail mid-game and his secret comes out. He's an omega, and not only that, he's been with Ilya Rozanov for a decade and is now bonded permanently.

Shane loses his team but gains everything he never let himself want: a public relationship, a baby, and a life that's messy and real and his.

Notes

This is my first story under the gay NHL tags, and honestly, I'm so excited (and nervous!) to share it with you all. This is not a work of AI, she's just an autistic girl who loves writing and yapping online. My education system didn't failed me and I have media literacy!

Important note about the omegaverse mechanics: This is NOT your typical omegaverse setup. I've borrowed heavily from the manhwa *Love Is An Illusion*, where bonding works very differently from traditional ABO fics.

There's no bite marks or neck marking here. Instead, the bond is a biological/pheromonal connection that forms between compatible Alphas and Omegas who've been together long enough—it's an involuntary physical and psychological contract that permanently ties them together for life.

In this universe, prolonged intimate contact can trigger a bond that fundamentally changes both partners' biology (like how Ilya's presence affected Shane's suppressants). It's permanent, life-altering, and comes with serious consequences.

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

The cramping started in the third period. Shane had felt off all day, stress maybe, or the fact that he'd slept like shit, but when he took the ice for the final twenty, his skin felt wrong. Too tight. Heat crawled up his spine and something low in his belly twisted hard enough to make him miss an easy pass.

The scent blockers failed.

He didn't realize until he saw the ref's face change, nostrils flaring. Around him, players slowed. Turned. One of the Bruins defensemen actually stopped mid-stride.

Omega.

Shane barely made it to the bench before his legs gave out. Someone caught him. Ilya, he knew from the scent and the way those hands always landed just under his ribs. Then there was shouting, and the tunnel lights were too bright, and Ilya kept saying his name in that specific tone he only used when he was trying not to panic.

When Shane woke up, everything smelled like Ilya. The sheets, the air, his own skin.

"You're awake."

Shane turned his head. Ilya sat in the chair beside the bed, still in his jersey from the game. His eyes looked like he'd been crying for hours.

"What happened?"

"Your heat. Middle of the game." Ilya's accent was thicker than usual, which meant he was barely holding it together. "Was very bad, Shane."

"I didn't... the suppressants always worked. I don't understand what..."

"Bond." Ilya said it quietly, looking at his hands. "Doctor says is bond. We've been together so long, my biology triggered yours. Made the suppressants stop working."

Shane stared at him. Outside, he could hear traffic. Someone's TV through the wall.

"We're bonded?"

"Yes. I'm sorry. I know we never... we didn't plan for this. But you were in so much pain and I couldn't..." Ilya's hands twisted together. "I didn't mean to trap you."

"Trap me?" Shane's laugh came out wrong. "We've been together for ten years."

"Is not the same. You're omega, I'm alpha, I should have had control but I just..." Ilya's voice cracked. "And now everyone knows. They know you're omega. They know we're together. Everything we've been hiding."

Shane closed his eyes. Ten years of sneaking around. Of hotel rooms with the deadbolt thrown. Of pretending to hate each other on the ice while Ilya's scent was still on his skin under the pads.

"What do we do?"

The bed dipped. Ilya's fingers laced through his, thumb rubbing across his knuckles the way he always did when he was thinking too hard.

"We stop hiding," Ilya said finally. "We tell the truth. If they don't like it..." He shrugged. "Fuck them."

Shane's throat felt tight. "You'll lose sponsorships."

"I don't care about sponsorships."

"Ilya..."

"For ten years I watch you take extra pills. See you in pain. See you hide every part of yourself just to play hockey. I say nothing because you ask me to say nothing." Ilya's grip tightened. "But now? I'm done. I'm so fucking done pretending you're not mine."

Shane pulled him down by his jersey's collar, kissed him hard. When they broke apart, Ilya was crying again.

"I love you," Shane said, and it felt like the first time he'd said it out loud in years. "God, I love you."

"I know," Ilya whispered. "I've always known."

The Metros dropped him two weeks later. Not because he was an omega, they insisted. Conduct detrimental to the team. Failure to disclose his status. All the corporate language that meant the same thing.

Shane took the call with Ilya behind him on the couch, arms wrapped around his chest. He felt hollow. "Their loss," Ilya said into his hair after Shane hung up, nose pressed to Shane's neck, scenting him slowly, deliberately calming.

"What about us?" Shane's voice came out flat. "What about Boston?"

"What do you mean what about Boston?"

"Your contract. Your team. If we're public now..."

"Let them try something." Ilya's jaw set in that stubborn way that meant he'd already decided. "You're more important than hockey."

"Don't say that."

"Why not? Is true."

Shane turned in his arms. "You don't mean that."

"I love hockey. But I love you more." Ilya touched his face. "Always you more. I'll always choose you first."

Shane pressed his forehead against Ilya's shoulder and didn't say anything. What was there to say?

Ottawa came through three weeks later. Three years, decent money, a promise they'd work with his omega status. It wasn't Montreal, but it was hockey.

Two weeks after Shane signed, he woke up wrong. His stomach churned. The smell of Ilya's coffee made him gag and he barely made it to the bathroom.

When he came out, Ilya was waiting with water and the crackers Shane's mom always kept in the pantry.

"You okay?"

"Yeah. Something I ate."

But it happened again the next morning. And the next.

"I think I might be pregnant," Shane said in the car on the way to practice.

Ilya nearly drove into the median. "What?"

"The timing's right. The heat was three weeks ago. I've been nauseous every morning, I'm exhausted, my chest hurts." Shane touched his chest, which had been tender for days. "I think I'm pregnant." Shane swallowed, his voice trembling with nervousness.

Ilya pulled over onto the shoulder, cars whipping past them. He turned to stare at Shane, hands shaking on the wheel.

"You're serious."

"I have a test in my bag."

"We should..." Ilya looked around like he'd never seen a highway before. "We take it now. Right now."

They found a gas station two exits down. Shane peed on a stick in a bathroom that smelled like piss and bleach while Ilya paced outside the door. Three minutes felt like three hours.

Two lines appeared.

Shane opened the door. Held up the test.

He pulled Shane into his arms right there in front of the station and buried his face in Shane's neck, breathing deep. Shane's scent had shifted, sweetened with something new—something

that meant baby, meant theirs.

"We're having a baby," Ilya choked out. "Shane. We're having a baby."

"Yeah," Shane whispered. His own eyes were burning. "Yeah, we are."

The media found out within a week. The headlines were brutal.

OMEGA HOLLANDER KNOCKED UP BY RIVAL PREGNANCY SCANDAL ROCKS NHL

CAN AN OMEGA PLAY PROFESSIONAL SPORTS?

Shane stopped reading after the first day. Ilya took his phone away, threatened to throw it in the lake behind their apartment.

But as the pregnancy progressed, things got worse. The morning sickness didn't ease up. It intensified. By week twelve, Shane couldn't keep anything down. Not water, not crackers, not even ice chips. He lost eight pounds. Got dizzy standing up. Spent more time with his head in the toilet than anywhere else.

And Ilya started falling apart.

Shane woke at 3 am to an empty bed. He found Ilya on the bathroom floor, head in his hands, shoulders shaking.

"What's wrong?"

"You're sick." Ilya didn't look up. "You're sick all the time and I can't... I can't help. I can't do anything except watch you."

"It's not your fault."

"It is my fault!" Ilya's voice cracked. "It's my baby making you sick. My biology that triggered your heat. It's me. All me." His breath hitched. "I look at you and I see what I'm doing to you and I want to... I want to bang my head through the fucking wall. I want to fix this and I can't and it's..." He stopped. "Maybe you shouldn't have to do this. Maybe I'm being selfish, wanting this when you're..."

Shane's blood went cold. "What are you saying?"

"Maybe you should have a choice. Maybe..."

"Do you want this baby?"

Ilya's face crumpled. "Yes. God, yes, so much it hurts."

"Then stop." Shane slid down beside him on the cold tile. "Stop talking about getting rid of them. I want this baby too. I'm sick, yeah, and it's hard, but I want them. I want us. Our

family."

"But you can't eat. You can't even drink water. I watch you waste away and I can't... I can't protect you from this. From me."

"I don't need you to protect me from this. I need you to help me through it." Shane grabbed his face, made him look. "My body is creating a whole human being from scratch. That's not weakness. The sickness is just... it's just part of it. But I need help. That's not the same thing as being weak."

Ilya's hands came up to cover Shane's. "I hate seeing you hurt."

"I know." Shane leaned their foreheads together. "But you're here. That's what matters."

Shane tucked himself under Ilya's chin, letting Ilya scent him, grounding them both. They sat on the bathroom floor until the sun came up. At 9 am, Ilya called the doctor. By noon, Shane had an IV pumping fluids and anti-nausea medication into his system.

"This is completely normal," His doctor said, checking the flow. "Severe morning sickness happens in about two percent of pregnancies. It's manageable with the right treatment."

"Is safe?" Ilya asked. "For the baby?"

"Completely safe. We'll monitor both of you closely."

Shane watched Ilya sag against the wall, all the tension draining out of him at once.

The next few weeks fell into a rhythm. Shane took his medication. The morning sickness eased. Not gone, but manageable. He started keeping food down. Started gaining weight back.

Ilya hovered.

"You need water? Crackers? I can fluff your pillows..."

"Ilya." Shane looked up from his book. "I love you. But if you ask me one more time if I need something, I'm going to smother you with one of these pillows."

"Is joke?"

"Only mostly."

Ilya sat down on the edge of the couch, looking chastised. Thirty seconds later: "But do you need water?"

Shane threw the pillow at him.

Mira Hollander-Rozanov entered the world screaming at 3:47 am on a Tuesday in October. Seven pounds, four ounces. Full head of dark hair with a slight wave to it, somewhere between Shane's straight black and Ilya's loose curls. Her skin was pale but had a warm

undertone, lighter than Shane's but not quite Ilya's fairness. Ilya took one look at her and started sobbing.

"She's perfect," he choked out, holding her like she might dissolve. "Shane, look at her. Look at her fingers. She has your eyes. The shape." He touched her tiny nose carefully. "And maybe my nose. I think. Is hard to tell."

"You can't tell that yet."

"I can tell. I know." Ilya kissed her forehead. "She's the most beautiful baby in the history of the world."

"You haven't even seen other babies."

"Don't need to."

The nurse came over to take Mira for her checkup. Ilya's arms tightened.

"Where are you taking her?"

"Just across the room, dad. We need to weigh her and do a quick exam."

"I'll come."

"Ilya," Shane said from the bed, exhausted and sore and wanting nothing more than to sleep for sixteen hours. "Let them do their job."

"But what if she's scared?"

"She's been screaming since she came out. I don't think she knows what scared is yet."

"Exactly! She's scared! She needs her papa!"

It took the nurse plus Shane's firmest voice to get Ilya to let go. He stood next to the examination table the entire time, narrating everything in a mix of English and Russian.

"Is okay, printsessa. Papa's here. They're just checking you. You're doing so good. So brave, my girl."

When they handed her back, Ilya held her against his chest and swayed, pressing kisses to her tiny head over and over.

"I love you," he whispered. "I love you so much already."

Shane watched from the bed, eyes burning. This was his family. This screaming, beautiful chaos was his family.

The first week home was a disaster. Mira had opinions about everything and she expressed them loudly. She screamed when she was hungry, when she needed changing, when she was

tired but fighting sleep. She screamed because the room was too bright, too dark, too quiet, too loud. Every time she cried, Ilya panicked.

"Shane! Shane, she's crying! Something's wrong!"

"She's hungry. It's been two hours."

"Only two hours? That's too soon, isn't it? Maybe she's sick."

"Ilya, she's not sick. She's a newborn. This is what they do."

But Ilya couldn't help himself. He checked on Mira every fifteen minutes when she slept. Held her for hours even when his arms shook with exhaustion. Refused to put her down.

"You need to sleep," Shane said on night three, finding Ilya in the nursery at 2 am, just watching Mira breathe in her bassinet.

"What if she stops breathing? What if something happens when I'm not watching?"

"She has a monitor. It'll beep if she stops breathing."

"Monitors can fail. I read an article. One in a million chance but it's still a chance."

Shane wrapped his arms around Ilya from behind, chin on his shoulder. Together they watched their daughter sleep, her tiny chest rising and falling.

"I'm scared too," Shane admitted. "Every second of every day. But we can't watch her every moment of her life."

"Why not?"

"Because we'll die of exhaustion in a week."

Ilya made a sound that might have been a laugh. "Maybe the fear keeps her safe."

"Or maybe we trust that we're doing our best and that's enough."

By week two, they were both zombies. Mira's sleep schedule was nonexistent. Twenty minutes here, wake up screaming, eat, scream more, maybe another hour if they were lucky. The apartment smelled like spit-up and stale coffee. Shane couldn't remember the last time he'd showered.

Ilya refused to let Shane do too much. "No, I'll get her. You rest."

"Ilya, you haven't slept in thirty hours."

"I'm fine. I'm alpha, I'm strong, I can..." Ilya swayed, caught himself on the dresser. "I can maybe sit down."

Shane called his parents.

When Yuna and David arrived the next morning, they took over with the kind of calm efficiency that came from raising Shane and being his manager all at the same time. David took Mira, already screaming, and started walking her around the living room. Yuna pointed toward the bedroom.

"Sleep. Eight hours minimum."

"Mom, we can't just..."

"Shane Hollander." Yuna used her momager's voice. "I raised you. I think I can handle one baby for a few hours. Now go. Both of you. Before you collapse."

Ilya looked at Mira in David's arms, her face red from crying. "But what if she needs me?"

"Then David will wake you up. But she won't need you because I am an excellent grandmother." Yuna made shooing motions. "Go. Now."

They slept for eleven hours straight.

When Shane woke up, light was streaming through the curtains and he couldn't remember where he was for a solid ten seconds. He found his parents in the living room. David was reading the newspaper. Yuna held Mira, who was awake and calm, making those weird gurgling sounds newborns make.

"See?" Yuna said. "Still alive. Still perfect. We're not completely useless."

Ilya stumbled out of the bedroom, hair sticking up in every direction. He zeroed in on Mira immediately, crossing the room in three strides.

"Is she okay? Did she sleep? Did she eat?"

"Three times," David reported, gesturing to a piece of paper on the coffee table covered in Yuna's handwriting. "Finished every bottle you pumped. Like clockwork."

"Of course I made him write it down," Yuna said. "How else do you track?"

Ilya took Mira from her carefully, like he was handling glass. The baby made a small sound and his face melted.

"Hey, printsessa. Papa missed you. Did you have fun with your babushka and dedushka?"

"She's two weeks old," Shane said. "I don't think she knows what 'missed you' means yet."

"She knows. Look at her face. She's saying 'Papa, where were you? I looked for you everywhere.'"

"That's gas."

"It's not gas! It's love!"

Yuna patted Shane's arm. "Let him believe. It's sweet."

They stayed for a few more hours. Yuna showed Ilya how to swaddle Mira properly, her hands guiding him until he got it right. David held the baby while she slept, told her quiet stories about when Shane was little. Then they left with promises to come back in a few days.

The apartment felt different after they left. Still chaotic. Still exhausting. But like maybe they could actually do this.

At three months, Mira developed a personality. She smiled. She cooed. She had opinions about which toys she'd play with and which ones she'd ignore. And she was absolutely, without question, a daddy's girl.

She'd tolerate anyone holding her. Would even smile for strangers. But the second Ilya walked into a room, her whole face lit up.

She'd kick her legs, reach for him with her tiny fists, make excited sounds until he picked her up, even though she'd just finished eating and Shane's shirt was still damp.

"It's not fair," Shane said one evening, watching Mira snuggle into Ilya's chest like he was the only safe place in the world. "I literally grew her inside my body for nine months. I went through labor. I'm the one feeding her. But she likes you better."

"Is not better. Is different." Ilya grinned. "But yes, she does like me very much."

"You're not supposed to agree with that."

"Why not? Is true." Ilya kissed Mira's head. "She's daddy's girl. Right, printsessa?"

Shane threw a burp cloth at him. It hit Ilya in the face and Mira laughed. An actual laugh, the first real one. They both froze.

"Did you hear that?" Ilya's eyes were huge. "She laughed. Shane, she laughed."

"I heard it."

"Do it again." Ilya threw the burp cloth at Shane. Shane threw it back. Mira laughed again, this delighted little giggle that sounded like the best thing Shane had ever heard.

They spent the next twenty minutes throwing the burp cloth back and forth while their daughter laughed. It was stupid. It was perfect.

One evening, Shane walked into the living room and stopped in the doorway.

Ilya was stretched out on the couch with Mira on his chest. Both of them caught in that space between awake and asleep. Ilya was humming something low and soft, one of those Russian lullabies he'd taught Shane bits and pieces of over the years but never the whole thing. The melody was sad, the kind that made Shane's chest ache.

Mira's eyes were half-closed. Her tiny fist was curled in Ilya's shirt. Every few seconds, Ilya would press a kiss to her head, then continue humming. His hand was splayed across her

back, covering most of it. Afternoon light slanted through the window, caught them both in gold.

This was the man who'd cried on the bathroom floor at 3 am. Who'd panicked every time Mira sneezed in those first few weeks. Who'd been so terrified during the pregnancy that he'd suggested not having the baby at all. And now here he was, humming lullabies, creating safety out of nothing but his presence and his voice.

Shane's eyes burned.

Ilya's eyes opened. "Hey. You okay?"

Shane couldn't speak for a second.

"Shane?" Ilya's brow furrowed. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing." His voice came out rough. "You're singing to her."

"She likes it. Helps her sleep." Ilya looked uncertain. "Is that... is that bad?"

"No." Shane crossed the room, sat on the edge of the couch. His hand settled on Mira's back, then moved up to cup Ilya's face. "You're such a good father. Sometimes I can't believe this is real. That I get to have this."

Ilya turned his head, kissed Shane's palm. "Is real. I promise."

"I see you with her. How gentle you are. How much you love her even though it terrifies you." Shane's voice cracked. "You thought you'd fail her. But you're not failing. You're exactly what she needs."

"Shane..."

"I'm serious." Tears slipped down Shane's cheeks. "Sometimes I watch you two together and I can't breathe because I love you both so much. Because this is what I spent ten years being too scared to reach for. And now I have it. I have everything. Because of you."

Ilya's eyes shone in the fading light. "You deserve everything."

"I have everything." Shane leaned in, kissed him carefully so he wouldn't disturb Mira. "Right here. This is everything."

"Yeah," Ilya whispered. "Yeah, it is."

They sat like that until Mira woke up hungry. Until the evening bled into night and they had to figure out dinner and bath time and all the small chaos of their life. But Shane kept thinking about that moment. Ilya humming on the couch, Mira's fist in his shirt, light slanting through the window.

At night, after Mira finally went down, Shane and Ilya would collapse on the couch together. Shane would curl into Ilya's side, nose pressed to his neck, while Ilya's arm wrapped around

his shoulders and his face buried in Shane's hair. Scenting each other, grounding, recentering.

"We made it through another day."

"Best day," Ilya would say, and Shane would laugh because Ilya said that even on days when Mira screamed for four hours straight. "Every day with her is the best day."

"Apparently," Shane said, and kissed Ilya deeply. They smiled in between kisses, foreheads pressed together, breathing the same air.

The cramping started in the third period. Shane's suppressants failed in front of thousands of people. He lost his team, his privacy, his carefully constructed life.

But it led him here. To this couch, this man, this baby sleeping in the next room. To everything he'd been too scared to reach for. It was all worth it.

End Notes

Thank you for reading, and I hope you loved Shane, Ilya, and baby Mira as much as I do. ❤️

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