

i'll find a new place to be from

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by Anonymous

Summary

“Lyubimyy, you are worrying me. I know facing Montreal is big deal...”

Oh, yes.

They have practice later, and a game on Saturday. He knows this.

They have a game on Saturday. Against Montreal.

Against.

For the first time in his career, the Montreal Metros will be his opponents, and he has to win.

or; shane handles the fact he has to play against his former team... not very well

Notes

hi <3

this technically contains spoilers for the long game so just a warning in case you haven't read it/have only watched the series

I used voyagers instead of metros originally as a book reader first, and because metros low-key sounds goofy to me, but a lovely commenter has informed me about the history of the original name used and I'm absolutely not about that so they now get the goofy name. It's not like they don't deserve it.

either way, metros or voyagers they still SUCK and I'm going to break down when I see them abandon Shane in season 2 (or 3 perhaps?)

mind the tags, content warning for discussions of shane's issues with food. the implied/referenced SH tag is because it is very briefly mentioned in one line of dialogue but I just wanted to be cautious, but shane isn't particularly kind emotionally and physically to himself in this fic so could be interpreted as a form of SH.

title from i know the end by pheobe bridgers

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

Shane is fine.

He is. He's *better* than fine. The opening games of his first season as a Centaur have them on a winning streak; he's finally living full time with his husband; he gets to see his parents *way* more often; he's bonding with his new teammates, *sort of*. There's time for that, Shane supposes. They're great, they're trying, *he's* trying.

Ilya was right, the Centaurs are pretty fantastic, all raring enthusiasm and warm comfort. He knows the team is still adjusting to his... intensity, but Shane can tell that they respect his passion for the game. Coach Wiebe is not just brilliant, but *kind*, and remarkably easygoing, which is something that never really occurred to him as realistic or sustainable for a successful team.

Still, they keep scoring, and then winning, and Shane gets to celebrate these goals and wins with his husband. He can be hugged and have his cheeks kissed in celebration by Ilya and not have to pretend he hates him, or feel that crushing fear that someone will figure out something they shouldn't.

Admittedly, Shane tried to put in place some rules around him and Ilya acting, well, *married*, while at the rink. It is work, after all, and though hockey is hardly a typical 9-to-5, it is still their job and jobs require professionalism. Even if said jobs often involve literal fist fighting.

Ilya had pouted pathetically (and rather adorably) when Shane had decreed there be no PDA anywhere hockey-related, and had spent every possible moment expressing how much he disagreed with his husband's reasoning.

("What is point of everyone knowing I married beautiful and second-best hockey player if I cannot show him off, Hollander?")

Of course, Ilya had dutifully kept a respectful distance, though Shane had caught him wearing those sad puppy eyes more than a few times when he clearly wanted to touch or kiss him, and never once crossed the line he had set out. Shane knew, deep down, that Ilya truly would do anything – *within reason* – he asked him to, and this had been no exception.

In the end, however, the rule lasted only until their opening game. Shane had scored a hat-trick, and who was he not to let his husband swoop him into an enthusiastic kiss in the locker room? He himself had been the one to lean in first, after all.

So yeah, Shane Hollander is better than fine. The thought rattles around his head like an affirmation as he surveys the two plates of food he's prepared for him and Ilya's breakfast with a noticeable pit in his stomach. The fat from the bacon pools slightly beneath the rashers onto the ceramic, greasy and bubbling and—

A pair of strong arms wrap around his stomach, one hand slipping under his tank and resting a palm flat on his abdomen. "Good morning, *moya lyubov*," Ilya murmurs into his ear, pressing a kiss to the sensitive skin just below it. "I am upset I woke up alone, but you have made us breakfast so I guess I forgive you."

“Oh wow, lucky me.” Shane rolls his eyes, but turns his head to lean in for a kiss, pausing at the last second. “Have you—”

“Yes, Shane, I brushed my teeth. You think I do not know my husband by now?”

Shane smiles, and presses their lips together for a long moment. “Good morning.”

With a pleased hum, Ilya pulls him back in, two hands now on his hips to turn them until they are chest to chest, then roaming up the muscles of his back. When Ilya's lips start to nip at his jaw, Shane buries his fingers into his husband's hair and separates them.

“Breakfast, Ilya.”

Predictably, Ilya pointedly ignores him and continues kissing and nibbling down along his jaw and neck, until finally relenting with a huff and a blown raspberry at the stern and final “*Ilya*,” Shane gives him. Letting go, he scoops up the two plates and carries them to the table, pulling out Shane's chair before flopping unceremoniously onto his own.

Shane sits, and Ilya wraps an ankle around one of his beneath the table. The domesticity of it all does something fluttery to his chest, but when Ilya digs into his array of bacon, eggs, and toast, Shane finds himself staring at his own plate with creeping unease.

He's been playing in great form recently, even if he's far from the sprightly young rookie he was now that he's in his thirties. If anything, Ilya tells him he's the best he's ever been, but even if that's true he has to continue to prove it. To prove *himself*. They have practice later, and a game Saturday, and...

And he can see the pools of grease on his bacon.

“Shane?” His husband's voice breaks him out of whatever trance he was in, and he realises he has been sitting twirling his fork in his hand, probably looking at his food like it personally offended him.

He blinks, looking up, and he hates the concern he sees reflected in Ilya's expression. It makes him want to hide away, to lock himself somewhere small and dark and wallow in that feeling in his gut that seems a lot like shame.

“Sorry,” he croaks, “I zoned out.”

Ilya gives him a not-quite-there smile, and nods towards his plate. “You should eat, da? Before it gets cold.”

“I don't think I'm that hungry, actually,” Shane finds himself saying before he can stop himself, pushing back in his chair and standing quickly, grabbing his plate and carrying it over to the counter beside the sink. Ilya is behind him by the time he turns around, his own plate abandoned on the table.

“You need to eat, Shane. We have practice later, you need energy.”

“I'll just eat a protein bar or something in a bit, okay?” He shrugs with carefully practiced ease, before wrapping his plate up and placing it into the fridge. It's frivolous to do so, really, because none of the foods he had prepared were particularly left-overs material, and even if they were he knew he wouldn't touch them. But still, it feels better than throwing it away.

Ilya is still behind him when he's done, looking a little bit helpless. “Shane—”

“I'm going on the treadmill.” He pecks Ilya's cheek, “You should finish eating.”

Shane doesn't know how much time has passed when Ilya appears, but his legs are burning and there are droplets of sweat running through his hair and down his cheeks and neck. It's the best he's felt in days, and if he thinks too deeply about that the pit in his stomach grows, so he doesn't.

“Shane, *stop*.”

“What?” He pants, annoyed at Ilya for interrupting his flow.

“It has been 90 minutes, Shane. On too high speed. You are pushing too hard.”

“I'm fine. I'll finish up soon.”

“*Hollander*.”

“*Rozanov*.”

Ilya is quiet for a moment, and then Shane can hear him move closer. He resolutely ignores him and continues, knocking the speed a level higher, then Ilya is slamming on the emergency stop with one hand, and wrapping the other around his waist, lifting him into the air as the treadmill shudders to a halt. Shane flails, but Ilya now has both arms around him. He's carried across the room and placed down on one of his yoga mats, his husband falling gently on top of him.

“What the fuck are you doing?” Shane heaves, voice raised and angry between heavy breaths. “You could have hurt me.”

Ilya makes a gruff, indignant noise. “I would not.”

“Let me go.”

“No. Would have been better if you had done your cool down so your muscles do not hurt so much later, but you are stubborn and would not have stopped for another hour.”

Shane tries to buck Ilya off of him, but his aching muscles protest. Maybe he did push too hard, practice later could be uncomfortable. “Ilya—”

“*Lyubimyy*, you are worrying me. I know facing Montreal is big deal...”

Oh, yes.

They have practice later, and a game on Saturday. He knows this.

They have a game on Saturday. Against Montreal.

Against.

For the first time in his career, the Montreal Metros will be his opponents, and he has to win.

Because if he doesn't, maybe they were right to get rid of him. To throw him out. Maybe it really was worth them cutting their losses.

It's the same thoughts that have been bubbling in his mind since the day he knew they were done with him, and he can't bear to have them validated.

"...pushing yourself this hard is not going to help the team win. It will only— ah, burn you out? Yes, burn you out."

Shane is quiet, eyes on the ceiling as he catches his breath.

"Shane? Talk to me," Ilya murmurs, releasing the grip he has on one of Shane's wrists in favour of cupping his flushed cheeks gently. "Tell me what is happening in *here*," he drags his fingertips up to his temple and taps twice, before placing a kiss there.

Swallowing, he finally makes eye contact with his husband, whose expression is clouded with such deep devotion and concern that he has to squeeze his eyes closed for a second. When he feels Ilya's lips press to the tip of his nose, he opens them again.

"I can't lose to them," is all he says at first.

Ilya smiles a little sadly. "I know. We will not."

"You don't know that. *I* don't know that. And if they beat us— Then, I don't know. *I don't know*, Ilya. I feel so out of control, thinking about Montreal and what they did to me and how desperate I am to prove them wrong is making me fucking spiral and I can't control any of it."

"So you control it like this?" Ilya nods his head back towards the treadmill. "Or through food?"

Shane feels himself stiffen. Tears sting in his eyes, and he tries to turn his head to the side, but Ilya has a firm hand under his chin. "It's okay, Shane."

"No it's not. I can't control feeling like that, but it makes me *feel* in control, and that doesn't make any fucking sense. I don't get it, Ilya." He forces out a harsh breath and feels a frustrated cry fall from his lips. "Jesus, they were my *friends*. Most of them didn't even come to my fucking wedding. I gave them everything. I gave them three cups. I gave them most of my career, I gave them the years I could have had loving you publicly. And for fucking *what*?"

The devastation in Ilya's eyes is almost too awful to look at, but his hand is still holding Shane's face, so he drinks it in instead.

"I love being a Centaur. I love playing with you instead of against you. The team is great, the guys are great. But I *miss* them. Montreal. The team, the city, my friends. And I feel so fucking guilty all the time because of it. I miss them, and I *hate* them. So I have to beat them. That's it. I have to, or they were right about me."

Ilya is close to crying, Shane thinks, and he sort of resents himself for that. He lets his head fall back out of Ilya's grip, hitting the mat below him with a soft thud as he closes his eyes. For a quiet moment, they lie there, and Shane feels his husband tuck his own face into the crook of his neck.

"Okay," Ilya says firmly, suddenly, and Shane finds himself being spun until he's straddling Ilya's hips, both of them sitting upright, a strong hand on his back holding him steady. "Shane Hollander, I want you to listen. Very carefully, da? Montreal, big part of your life. Big part of your career. Just because they were very stupid and very cruel to you does not mean you cannot miss them. Most of them are bad, but you are good."

Shane, for all his attempts to keep his tears at bay, cannot stop them finally falling down his face. He sniffles, feeling the pad of Ilya's thumb brush oh-so-gently under his eyes. "Ilya," he whispers.

"I know we will beat them. But losing does not mean they were right to throw you away, solnyshko. I have lost games I should have won. I have won games I should have lost. What happens during game on Saturday does not change that you are second-best hockey player in entire league."

"Fuck off."

"Okay. Fine. Joint best. With me. I am nice, see?"

"Fuck you, Rozanov."

"Hmm, no time. Having big emotional talk with husband and then hockey practice. Busy schedule, I'm afraid. No time for fucking," Ilya sighs.

Shane snorts derisively, "When have you ever said there's no time for fucking?"

"Ah, you are right. There is always time." Shane rolls his eyes at that, and watches Ilya's face turn serious once more when Shane goes to wipe his eyes. "Shane. I mean it. There is nothing wrong with how you feel about Montreal. But I worry a lot about how you handle what goes on inside your head. I am scared you are going to hurt yourself--"

Shane feels himself open his mouth to protest.

"Not like *that*. Not on purpose. But today, on treadmill? That was not healthy. You could have been very hurt if you did not stop. And sometimes, I think... I think your brain tells you something will hurt you when it will not. Like breakfast."

He looks away, and shrugs a little helplessly. “I don't know. Maybe.”

“Okay. You do not have to talk to me about everything, but maybe to someone, uhm, professionally? Like how I have Galina. It is nice to have someone who can try to make sense of things inside my brain. Maybe it could be nice for you too?” There's a desperate sort of look in Ilya's eyes, and Shane feels desperate too just from seeing it.

He nods. “Maybe. I– Maybe.”

That seems to be enough for Ilya, who has perhaps decided that that is the best answer he could have hoped for from Shane. He leans in and seals their lips in a salty and slightly uncoordinated kiss, then helps him to his feet, supporting his shaking, overworked legs.

“Okay, do you think you can eat something? We will try, da? And a shower, you are very sweaty. I *would* like to take you to bed and show you exactly how good you are, but like I said, no time. Maybe I give you blowjob in the shower, you do not take long anyway–”

Shane smacks his bicep, but smiles genuinely, and does not protest when Ilya picks him up and carries him to the bathroom.

SATURDAY NIGHT SHUTOUT: OTTAWA CENTAURS DEFEAT MONTREAL METROS 5-0

by Owen Grady

Ottawa has plenty to celebrate tonight after a stunning home victory against their newest signing, three-time Stanley Cup champion Shane Hollander's former team...

HAT-TRICK FOR HOLLANDER AS CENTAURS SECURE 7TH BACK-TO-BACK VICTORY

HOLLANDER PRAISES NEW TEAMMATES FOLLOWING 5:0 VICTORY: “NOTHING BUT SUPPORTIVE”

“TONIGHT PROVES MONTREAL IS NOTHING WITHOUT HOLLANDER”: CENTAURS' CAPTAIN ILYA ROZANOV SHOWS NO SYMPATHY AFTER SHUTOUT

End Notes

moya lyubov: my love
lyubimyy: darling/beloved
solnyshko: little sun/sunshine

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