

a future that's worth the effort

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/77543206) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/77543206>.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Heated Rivalry (TV)
Relationship:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Shane Hollander , Ilya Rozanov
Additional Tags:	Reset January 2025 , POV Shane Hollander , Canon-Compliant , Shane Hollander's Cottage , Showering Together , Hair Washing , horny but not actually explicit! , Day 11: Soft Boundaries
Language:	English
Series:	Part 11 of reset january
Collections:	Reset January
Stats:	Published: 2026-01-12 Words: 1,391 Chapters: 1/1

a future that's worth the effort

by [The_IPRE](#)

Summary

That eyebrow creeps higher, and Shane is overcome with the desire to kiss it. “You worry about water waste? This way, we are having one shower instead of two. It’s more- what do you call it?” A moment, and then a blooming smile. “Economical.”

“Sure,” Shane says, and there’s a laugh to his words. He scrubs his hands through his hair, working up a lather, and Ilya just leans against the wall and watches. He isn’t touching himself, but there’s a look in his face that makes Shane want to preen. He wasn’t lying about wanting to conserve water, though, and he knows that it’s only a matter of time before the spray goes cold, and so he squeezes out another dollop, gestures for Ilya to approach. “Let me get your hair.”

Instantly: “No.”

Notes

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

Shane never thought that he'd be allowed any of this.

He's spent the past week with Ilya at the cottage, rediscovering one another under the bright sunlight, swimming in the lake and playing soccer and spending as much time as they can pressed skin to skin without having to worry about anyone seeing them. Shane's parents know about them now and that went better than he could have ever imagined, and every now and then, he can almost imagine that it'll stay like this forever.

Tucked into the steam-fogged shower with Ilya, he lets out a breathless laugh as the water washes their release down the drain. The water's warm as it runs across their skin and Shane pulls Ilya close, presses a kiss against his shoulder.

"Should do this more often," Ilya says, resting a kiss against Shane's wet hair.

Shane hums, nuzzles against his throat. "You're running up my water bill, Rozanov."

"Oh, no, rich hockey player with a well on his property doesn't make enough money to have shower sex with his boyfriend?"

"I never said that," Shane says, hand sliding down to squeeze at Ilya's perfect ass. There's still a thrill that runs through him at the fact that he gets to have this, the intimacy and the comfort and above all, the permanence of *boyfriend*. "Just that we probably shouldn't waste the water."

Ilya squeezes Shane's bicep in response, pulls back so that he can look at Shane with a raised eyebrow. "You touched my dick first, Hollander."

He's not wrong. Ilya had been sudsing himself slowly, keeping intense eye contact the whole time in a mirror to the moment that had, if not started this all, kicked it into motion. This time, though, Shane could do something about it, and he's been working on taking what he wants. He's not going to *say* that, though, so instead he just reaches past Ilya for his shampoo. "You're the one who followed me into the shower."

That eyebrow creeps higher, and Shane is overcome with the desire to kiss it. "You worry about water waste? This way, we are having one shower instead of two. It's more- what do you call it?" A moment, and then a blooming smile. "Economical."

"Sure," Shane says, and there's a laugh to his words. He scrubs his hands through his hair, working up a lather, and Ilya just leans against the wall and watches. He isn't touching himself, but there's a look in his face that makes Shane want to preen. He wasn't lying about wanting to conserve water, though, and he knows that it's only a matter of time before the spray goes cold, and so he squeezes out another dollop, gestures for Ilya to approach. "Let me get your hair."

Instantly: "No."

"What?" Shane's taken aback by the clear offense in Ilya's voice, doesn't know if this is some cultural thing that he's stepped in, but it's not like Ilya doesn't like Shane running his

fingers through his hair normally. “Why not?”

“This hair takes effort,” Ilya says with a gesture, and Shane snorts. “I do not want your all-purpose jelly to ruin it.”

Shane can't stop the laugh that bursts out of him at that. “All-purpose jelly?”

Ilya waves a hand at the 3-in-1 shampoo, conditioner, and body wash in Shane's hands, the same kind that he's been using ever since his mom picked it out when he was younger.

“Cannot be good at all three things.”

Shane laughs, gestures towards Ilya with the glob on his hand, and Ilya ducks. “I've used this since I was a kid, it works.”

“Yes, this is why your hair is always crispy.”

“It's not crispy,” Shane says, combing through his hair with one hand. Sure, his hair isn't as soft as Ilya's, but that's an impossible standard to meet. “It does what it needs to do, it's fine.”

“Do you want *fine*, or do you want *actually good at what it does*?” Ilya doesn't actually look upset, just opinionated, water dripping off one of his curls onto his forehead. “Let me put this in terms you understand. You would be *fine* as wing. You may even be *fine* as goalie. No one wants you to be wing or goalie because you are good at center. Not as good as me, but-”

Ilya is cut off by a squawk as Shane tries to rub the rest of the handful of shampoo on him. He dodges, stumbling as his foot slips on the wet tile, and Shane reaches out to catch him.

“Truce?” Shane asks, hand still tight on Ilya's arm.

“I am not the one who is making a fuss,” Ilya says, but pats Shane's hand. “I accept your forfeit.”

Shane snorts. “Whatever you say.” Ilya just smiles, a sort of *I do say* that should be infuriating but is endearing instead. “Pass me your shampoo.”

“Oh, you are deciding to take good care of your hair now?”

“Not mine,” Shane says, accepting the bottle. “Close your eyes.” Ilya does, and Shane squeezes some of the shampoo into his hands, rubs it into Ilya's wet curls. “My shampoo is more economical,” he starts, and Ilya groans, petulant.

“I will tell ref you cannot honor your truces.”

Shane scratches at Ilya's scalp, smiles at the way his put-upon expression melts. “There's no ref here.”

“Mm, is for the best,” Ilya says, leaning into Shane's touch before glancing up through his eyelashes. “Means I can play dirty.”

“That's-” Shane clears his throat, makes sure his focus is just on his hands in Ilya's hair and nothing else. The wink that Ilya throws him before he shuts his eyes again is not helping.

“You play dirty even when the ref is watching.”

“Not like this.” Even with his eyes closed, Ilya’s hands effortlessly come to rest on Shane’s hips, fingers pressing into the skin and pulling him forward a step.

Now it’s Shane’s turn to make a truly embarrassing noise as his grip tightens in Ilya’s hair. “We aren’t having round two in the shower.”

Ilya’s hand creeps down, tracing along his spine until he brushes over Shane’s hole. “Would be round three, technically,” he says, the tip of his finger just barely dipping in. Shane bites back a gasp and Ilya grins, eyes cracked as he watches Shane’s expression through the steam.

Then, he yelps, and Shane does a moment later as the water goes cold in an instant.

“What the fuck!” Ilya presses against Shane as he tries to step out of the freezing water. “Your shower is- is broken!”

“It’s not broken,” Shane says. “We just- fuck that’s cold- we used up all the hot water.”

“Rich hockey player runs out of hot water,” Ilya grumbles.

Shane shoots him a half-hearted glare before he takes a deep breath and dunks his head under the cold water, washes the suds out of his hair as fast as he can. “Aren’t you supposed to be good at dealing with the cold?”

“‘Good at dealing with’ does not mean I like it.” Ilya grits his teeth, scrubs at his hair quickly before turning off the shower. “Besides, you are always bragging to me how cold Canada is. Where is that pride now?”

Shane grabs two towels, passes one to Ilya. “It’s different when you’re not expecting it,” he says, scrubbing at his hair.

Ilya just gives a *hmm*, towelling off as he steps out of the shower. “Now I see why you use your all-purpose jelly. You do not have enough hot water to do all three steps.”

“Fuck you,” Shane says, knocking his shoulder into Ilya’s, who leans in to drop a kiss on his cheek, whip-quick.

A few minutes later finds them curled up in bed together, Ilya’s head resting on Shane’s chest and leaving trails of water to drip across his skin. Shane can’t find it in himself to complain as he combs his fingers through Ilya’s hair, leans down to place a kiss on his head. Ilya makes a contented noise and Shane smiles. “You smell nice.”

“Is perks of nice shampoo,” Ilya says, thumb tracing along Shane’s hipbone. He’s warm against Shane’s front, a comforting weight, and Shane knows that he’ll get to have him for the rest of their lives. “Now, what were you saying about round two?”

End Notes

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