

Mic'd Up

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Mic'd Up

by [recension](#)

Summary

Lily: This is the kind of thing we could be more obvious with.

Lily: Miked up 🙄🙄

Lily: We could talk wedding plans during the game.

- * The league decides the next Montreal v. Ottawa game should be Mic'd Up.
- * After, Shane and Ilya talk jealousy and make a sex tape.
- * Years later, the Pikes make amends for the FanMail debacle.

Notes

I don't know hockey and my grip on the not-main Centaurs'/Voyageurs' personalities is loose but I couldn't resist.

A sort of The Long Game insert scene post-engagement and pre-FanMail leak, messing violently with the season schedule for fluff reasons.

Hope you enjoy :)!

Chapter 1: Recording 1

“Well fellas, we hoped it wouldn’t be soon, but it’s our turn.”

Coach Theriault tapped at his clipboard with a Sharpie. He was holding court at the boards as the boys stretched at center ice, readying for practice.

“The League has requested every franchise make a little more content for the die-hards,” he said the ‘c’ word like it disgusted him. “So our next game we’ll be doing a *Mic’d Up* installment.”

Panic settled into Shane at a very low temperature, but distinctly simmering. They played Ottawa at home next.

“I’m giving you plenty of notice, so you can get the swearing out now and keep your minds on chirps that won’t get you cancelled. Looking at you, Comeau,” Theriault made pointed eye contact. “And focus on fucking winning.”

“Hollander,” his attention switched with intensity. “Keep ‘em in line?”

“They know the score, Coach.”

It wasn’t his teammates he was worried about in the slightest.

Voyaguers fans didn’t care if their players were foul mouthed, rampantly sexist, casually homophobic, or all of the above. Ottawa would be a stark contrast. According to Ilya, they spent most of their games complimenting one another. The smallest of consolations was that since Shane had come out to his team, it seemed unlikely that anyone, including the newly-out Troy Barrett, would be subject to a barrage of slurs.

The league will cut most of it anyway, Shane tried to remind himself. But what the fans would care about very much was how Ilya spoke to him on the ice. The Hollander-Rozanov rivalry was sure to be in focus. A rivalry entirely contained to the rink, and entirely obliterated off-ice by the solid love that had taken them both by surprise and their shared fondness for filthy, intimate, near-constant sex.

Shane leaned into his stretch until it hurt, trying to center into the pain and the feeling of ice under his knee. He exhaled, slow, focusing on presence to overcome the panic. It would be fine, they could get through this. Ilya could behave.

Practice was so normal he almost forgot about the whole thing, but after his shower Shane glanced at his phone.

Lily: This is the kind of thing we could be more obvious with.

Lily: Miked up 🙄🙄

Lily: We could talk wedding plans during the game.

In the Centaurs locker room, the same message had been relayed to the Ottawa team with a much warmer reaction. Luca seemed the most pleased, admitting to learning how to chirp in English via YouTube compilations over the years. Boody confessed he'd won over his wife after she'd watched a clip from his rookie season, intrigued by the way he'd politely collected a team mate off the ice offering gentle encouragement.

Ilya was referring to their current PR plan of action and, in Shane's mind, hopefully joking.

While the Centaur Center had been wearing his engagement ring on his chain now for a few weeks, their recent run-in with Crowell had Montreal's Center spinning in mental circles. Throwing microphones onto the ice almost seemed like a punishment. Maybe it was.

"You like almost getting caught," Ilya reminded him over the phone that night.

Shane was picking up after himself in his place in Montreal, doing the ritual pre-clean he always attempted before the housekeeper he paid arrived in the morning. He lazily dragged a duster around his shelves, returning items to their right places. Ilya was in the lounge of his home in Ottawa, lights dimmed and SportsCenter on mute, ignored.

"At the All-Stars, and with Hayden on the phone that time," Ilya expanded. *And at Mom and Dad's anniversary party. And in the men's room of the Esso station near Sainte-Adèle. And at camp.* Shane's mind betrayed him with easy additions to the list.

"This is different," Shane countered, trying to make his insistence clear. It was delicate, this threading the needle of rivals to friends to forever. They were so close to pulling it off. "We'll be at work. I don't want to *like it* at work. The very fun job they pay us millions of dollars to do."

"I find it less tough than you, playing with a hard-on," Ilya countered. It was annoyingly true, and Shane knew that.

Reclined on his sofa in Ottawa, Ilya brushed his fingers through Anya's soft belly fur. She'd fallen asleep against his chest, the picture of sweetness. He didn't even mind her breathing stale salmon-treat dog breath against his chin. He missed Shane, but she helped. He was tired of the conversation, so he changed it.

"Anya fell asleep on top of me."

Shane was punted from dusting and worry over microphones into the image, catching the deep reverence and calm in Ilya's voice all at once. It meant: *'Enough about the fucking game.'* And, he hoped: *'Alright, you win.'*

"It's good. That means you're bonding," Shane felt his shoulders drop. He moved for a glass of water, returning the duster to his cleaning closet along the way. "She knows you're Papa," he added for Ilya's benefit. He'd seen the browser tabs full of sports cars, certain he'd get a texted image of a brand new baby blue Lotus in Ilya's garage any day now. This was better.

The night they'd snuggled in Ottawa with Anya had opened up a string of deep desires Shane wasn't sure they were ready to talk about in full until the season was over. Kids, and how, and when. It meant talking about surrogates or adoption and nannies. It meant talking retirements and injury contingencies and living wills.

"I ordered so many dog things for your house," Ilya admitted, a bashful note in his voice. "Priority ship."

Shane couldn't help a smile tugging at the corner of his mouth with the confession. He'd expected nothing less. "I'll keep an eye out. And I got the food you told me to buy," he shut his eyes, wanting to stay in the mental picture a little longer. Ilya, sunken into the couch, relaxed and happily pinned down by unconditional love. Shane felt a tingle in his own scalp, a phantom sensation of being stroked there.

Anya's existence was teaching Shane the difference between envy and jealousy.

"Thank you," Ilya's voice was soft. That was exactly the other kind of talk the microphones could not pick up on if they wanted to remain a secret. "Anya thanks you too."

"Two more sleeps until you are here," Shane opened his eyes to his empty house, gaze falling on the pair of plastic heart-shaped rings in his fruit bowl beside the bananas. He'd been moving them around the room since the 'wedding' orchestrated by Hayden and Jackie's kids. "I miss my husband."

Ilya shut his eyes to let the words echo in his mind. "I am here," he offered, leaning his lips toward the base of the phone as if it was Shane's ear. "On the ground."

"How has flying been, since...?"

Of course Shane would leap on that. Ilya regretted giving the bait, knowing his boyfriend's tendency to worry. It was the most recent time Ilya very well might not be there anymore.

He didn't want to tell Shane he'd needed a few drinks to get on the flight home after the incident on the way to Florida, or a few to get him back on a plane to Tennessee. Then Dr. Galina's voice prompted him in his head and he swallowed hard.

"Bad," he admitted, tempted to get up and pace if Shane wanted to discuss *this* but Anya snuffled a contented puff of air in her sleep. He stayed put. "I have a drink in the airport and put my headphones loud for landings. The team is the same." *And I talk to Mama at takeoff*, he thought, but kept to himself.

"But," he looked to the brighter side. "The last flight," from Buffalo back home to Ottawa, "I was more excited about picking up Anya than I was afraid of crashing."

"Mm," Shane resisted saying something corny about fear and love, sure he would trip over the words paraphrasing Scott Hunter. "None of that excitement to see me?" He couldn't help offering the scrap of insecurity.

“Always plenty of excitement for you, Hollander. But you are not a poor defenseless princess who was abandoned in the woods to die like Anyushka Rozanova,” Ilya dragged his fingers through the fur again, marveling at the creature warming his belly.

“I know what it’s like to be saved by you, Ilya,” Shane had been trying harder to pour love into every moment, to offer more words than sex on the phone. “It’s wonderful. She is a very lucky pup.”

“*Bastard*,” he murmured in Russian. “*You will not win in competition of romance.*”

“What does that mean? I caught ‘bastard’ and something about winning,” the rest had been lost on Shane completely.

“It means time to go to sleep, you are getting syrupy,” Ilya lied coolly.

It *was* getting late. Shane glanced at the clock and sighed heavy. “I think you mean sappy,” he corrected gently, downing the last of his water.

“No. You are Canadian, your sap is syrup. Sometimes I am making a joke, Mr. Dictionary.”

“Fuck you,” Shane felt his cheeks flush, but his smile grew wide.

“In two days,” Ilya promised. “Blowjob first,” he added, unable to resist the cheek.

“*Time to wake up, Anya. Last walk,*” he mumbled the Russian into a kiss on the dog’s silken hair, gently sitting up to wake her. She startled and wiggled, righting herself before letting out a yawn from his lap, not eager to leave his warmth.

“*I know, I’m sorry, my darling. Come,*” Ilya reached for his phone, clicking it off of speaker and bringing it to his ear.

“Goodnight, Ilya,” Shane began shutting off his lights, making his way up the stairs to his bedroom, “I love you.”

“Goodnight, my syrupy Shane,” Ilya offered back, “I love you too.”

He waited for Shane to be the first to hang up.

The game would be tense enough. The last time the teams met before playoff contention. The morning of, Shane moved extra slowly and thoughtfully through his pre-game routine. *I am in this moment. I am fully present.*

“Hey,” Hayden interrupted his calm in the locker room, settling down beside him to begin lacing up. “I can run a little interference today, with the Mic’d Up stuff,” he offered. “Make

myself a target for...you know who..."

Shane frowned, shaking his head very slightly, "All good, but thanks Hayd." He was confident his concerns had gotten through to Ilya. After the season ended, the nightmare of hiding would be over. They were so close.

"Cap?" Theriault's assistant waded into the locker room, careful of the pads being swung about by other players dressing. He wiggled, avoiding the touch. "Just a heads up, a reporter's here tonight. Laurent something? From *La Presse*. Coach was wondering if you could sit down with him for a few minutes after the regular recaps. Playoff prospects, fourth cup potential, that sorta questioning."

Fuck.

"Okay," Shane agreed, because anything else seemed impossible. *Laurent*. From that summer. With the beautiful olive skin and the cute Quebecois accent and the puck Ilya had shot into the glass.

It would be fine. The man would be up in the press box. Shane would tell Ilya about it after the game, teasing him about the 10 minutes of extra time handsome-but-not-Rozanov-handsome Laurent was in his orbit. They'd settle it off the ice, at home. It would be funny, maybe even sexy, to goad Ilya's territorial side.

Except Laurent was not in a box. He was not hard to spot. He was right behind the glass at the home goal blue line in a brilliant blue Hollander jersey. The handsome journalist flashed a beaming smile right at Montreal's #24 as he took the ice, quick to cheer heartily and #81 on the visiting team definitely noticed.

NHL YouTube | Mic'd Up: Montreal Voyageurs v. Ottawa Centaurs — March 14 2021

Transcript

DYKSTRA: You're gassed. Gassed, brother. Get at it today.

PIKE: Old Mother Hubbard for a [censored] goalie. Hayes should be in a pasture by now, eh?

LAPOINTE: You think his pubes are grey?

PIKE: Wait, does that happen? For real?

ROZANOV: You showing off, Hollander? Big fan in the stands tonight?

HOLLANDER: Lots of them, you [censored]. Play the game.

BOIZEAU: (singing along with arena music) ...*kicking your can all over the place...*

HOLLANDER: Stay on your feet, J.J., (in French) *keep it alive!*

BOYLE: Simmer, Rook. Simmer, simmer.

HAAS: It was a penalty! (Unintelligible Swiss-German) [censored] ref is blind!

COMEAU: Check out my insta, bud, yer girl just followed me. Think I might get a DM from her after that embarrassment.

ROZANOV: I think maybe you are very good at hockey, Luca.

HAAS: Roz...

BARRETT: And you are very bad at receiving compliments.

BOIZEAU: You lost there, [censored]-stra? Your goal's that way.

DILLON: Pretty sure I forgot to close my garage door.

CHOUINARD: Bit late to do anything about that now, eh?

DILLON: Yeah.

DILLON: My neighbor's gonna steal my snowblower again.

LAPOINTE: Cap, you keep looking in the stands like the puck's on the other side of the glass. You good?

ROZANOV: This belongs to me. (In Russian) *Thank you.*

BOIZEAU: (singing along with arena music) ...*Ice on my neck that's incoming. I'm a pretty boy, I'm stunning, super-speed, Sonic, I'm running, super, super, super-speed, Sonic, I'm running...*

HAYES: I don't know where they go after *Wandavision*, it's like...reality can bend any way now I guess. Hey, score a goal, eh?

ROZANOV: Oooh...(sic, broken French) *Parle avec moi*, please, Mr. Hollander. *Quebec je t'aimes you*, Mr. Hollander.

HOLLANDER: Maybe just keep to Russian, Rozanov.

ROZANOV: (Unintelligible Russian)

HOLLANDER: You want Rosetta Stone for Christmas? (In French) *[censored]*.

BOYLE: Hazy, I love you. I want to have your babies, you talented son of a *[censored]*!

COMEAU: Watch where your stick's going, *[censored]*-A, keep the wood where it belongs.

LAPORTE: Get it together, boys! Zipper it up.

BARRETT: Cap, it's okay. *[censored]* him. You good?

ROZANOV: Make him pay for it. See you in 5.

PIKE: Best goal all year. Makin' it look easy, Holzy.

HOLLANDER: Your assistance is always appreciated.

HOLLANDER: Thanks for the power play.

ROZANOV: [censored]

HOLLANDER: Take a [censored] lap.

HAAS: Your net looked lonely.

DRAPEAU: Go [censored] yourself with a fondue fork, Haas.

HOLLANDER: Pick it up! Let's [censored] go! Let's [censored] go!

BOODRAM: There's always fourth period.

ROZANOV: Not funny.

BOIZEAU: (singing along with arena music) ...*make 'em go OH! OH! OH! As you shoot across the SKY-Y-Y! 'Cause baby you're a—*

Chapter 2: Recording 2

Chapter Summary

After the game, Shane & Ilya come back together.

The Voyageurs won the game 3-2.

Ilya drove to Shane's from the arena in silence, never once touching the radio.

Every emotion seemed to be streaming through him at once.

They'd gotten through the mic'd game without anything too bad slipping out. He hadn't called Shane beautiful, or teased him about wedding plans. He'd mostly been able to stay in control. Ilya was relieved.

His jaw ached from Comeau's elbow but maybe he'd reconsider teasing Troy. That Ilya had gotten a penalty over the fight was one of those grating moments he'd have to live with. Ilya was angry.

Luca's goal had been beautiful, subtle and artful, like he was really finding his style as a player. For the first time, he hadn't looked around for Rozanov's approval after the shot, just let the others celebrate him. Ilya was proud.

In the locker room between the second and third periods, Troy had taken a video call from his mother. She was watching the game from Ottawa, keeping their seats warm at Monk's. She told them all she loved them. Ilya was sad.

Shane had skated circles towards and around Laurent, smiling bashfully into the stands. He'd been showing off, even if he didn't know that was what he was doing. Ilya was jealous.

Despite the loss ending their hot streak, his team had come together, vowing to make up for the close game next time. When it really counted. In the Playoffs. Ilya was happy.

Most of the Ottawa team had driven themselves to Montreal and were heading back to enjoy their day off at home, it was easy enough to sneak away. He pulled into Shane's garage and parked, leaving his bag to be tomorrow's problem.

Ilya fired off a quick text and tucked his suit jacket over his shoulder on his way out of the car. He didn't expect an immediate response, Shane was likely still doing press at the arena. One came through almost instantly.

Ilya: Home. See you soon.

Jane: ❤️ can't wait

If he didn't have his arms around Anya the very first instant he could he was sure he would die.

Anya, angel of his life, gave happy tail wags as she greeted him at the door. Her wet nose sniffed at his thighs for smells of the arena and Chiron from the last home game, desperate for the attention of her owner. Ilya pet her silky head and ears happily until she moved to retrieve one of her new toys to play with.

He tried to leave the game behind, moving for sweats and a snack and the fireplace first before a raucous game of tug commenced on the living room floor.

When Shane made it home he found them like that. Killer Captain Rozanov had been shucked with the suit. Shane didn't resist standing at the edge of the room just to watch them wrestle. "Laurent says hello," he opened the conversation.

"*Bawn-Jour?*" Ilya teased sourly as he let go of the toy he was tugging back, letting Anya have the satisfaction of squeaking to her hearts content over the won battle. Letting himself lose.

"Let me change first, then we can have this out," Shane climbed up the stairs quickly not waiting for a response.

Ilya felt his heart race at the serious words, reaching instead for the dog toy again. *Married. We will be married. This will be fine.* Anya leapt for it with a happy flop to her ears.

The Shane that came back down the stairs in sweats was far more lovable. Younger-feeling and less dauntingly great.

Ilya recognized his own favorite designer hoodie immediately. He'd spilled a bit of a chocolate milkshake on the sleeve while driving to Montreal and had not-so-successfully sucked it out of the fabric at the elbow. It looked criminally good on Shane, sleeves scrunched up, bagging at his waist in delicious black folds.

Ilya let the dog win again, his eyes tracking Shane on his approach with a wolfish sort of hunger. It had been a long few weeks, and a punishing game. He'd rather fuck than fight.

Shane straddled Ilya's thighs, pinning him to the floor with one hand at his sternum.

"You were right."

Ilya's eyebrow raised, but he said nothing. Not a bad start.

"I do think that journalist guy is hot," Shane continued. Immediately bad follow-up. But Ilya appreciated Laurent being demoted from a first name basis.

"He's got good skin and smells nice and works out," Shane explained—all traits the man shared with Ilya, it was worth noting.

“And he wore my jersey, because someone on the team can’t keep their mouth shut,” Shane suspected J.J. had attempted the matchmaking, but kept it to himself.

Ilya stayed silent, seething a little. Anya squeaked her toy.

Shane’s fingers twisted in Ilya’s shirt, above his belly button as he tried to put it all into words. The light caught his cross and ring, gravity having tugged them to the side of his gold chain. They rested on the floor beside Ilya’s neck.

“He really did come for an interview and he was professional,” he pressed on. Ilya’s gaze hardened like it was a challenge to his own character, “but there was a *vibe* and it was flattering. Being wanted like that by another guy,” Shane’s cheeks went rosy just under his freckles.

Shane hoped Ilya understood, given the mess he had collapsed into after Troy Barrett came out so fearlessly. Ilya did. There was a tantalizing freedom in being out, one that was so very close for the both of them.

“It felt like a huge breakthrough to even pick up on someone flirting with me that isn’t you,” Shane’s face scrunched up as if he was in pain, stilling his own hand. “I still mostly think it’s a joke, when someone tells me I’m hot or whatever.”

“Shane...” Ilya brought his hand up to stroke his lover’s wrist, needing the skin-to-skin contact. It was a ridiculous notion. Shane’s beauty had been selling luxury watches and underwear and soft drinks and sports gear for years. Shane’s beauty had eaten every inch of his resolve time and time again. He opened his mouth to pour compliments on the man but was interrupted.

“I know that’s stupid,” Shane opened his eyes again, daring to look at Ilya’s face. “And I hate that it might have hurt you. But also...and you can’t laugh...”

A rare glint of intrigue came across Ilya’s eyes. Shane always gave the best secrets like this. Ilya always laughed anyway. He let his silence serve as agreement.

“...sometimes I jerk off thinking about you shooting that puck at the glass.”

At the time it really had infuriated Shane and his reaction hadn’t been a lie, but the reasoning might have been. He’d said it was the childish lack of professionalism that bothered him. Eventually Shane realized his anger was far more grounded in the fear that Ilya might boil over unable to keep their secret and frustration over the way Ilya could bend the rules in ways Shane still felt he could not. Ilya could blame his open lust and playfulness on needing attention, on being impulsive, on being an asshole. Shane didn’t have the same reputation as cover.

Once Shane better understood Ilya’s impatience and the depth of his feelings—God, the fucking *DMs*—that day at camp read more like a modest outburst in hindsight. After that it was a turn on.

A sort of epiphany rolled over Ilya, the exact same one he had over and over as their relationship had unfolded year after year. Shane *liked him*. Really really liked him. All the parts of him. Even the messy parts of him. Even the mistakes. He'd never known that before except maybe with his mother.

After a lifetime of Ilya arriving first: first to be with a man, first to make a move, first in the draft, first to win the cup, first to say 'I love you'...Shane had stepped forward and been the one to propose but Ilya had been 'all-in' since the 2017 Cup.

Shane reached for Ilya's arms and pinned them back at the elbow, bringing their faces closer together.

"So as long as you know I don't really *care* about anyone else, I don't want to fuck *anyone* else, would it be ok if I flirt a little with men? Sometimes? So I can let my inner teenager, or whatever, feel a little more okay about being gay and I can enjoy watching you sweat about it knowing it's because you really love me?"

His eyes flicked back and forth between Ilya's paying careful, devotional, attention to the Russian's micro-expressions.

"You don't know how to flirt," Ilya pointed out, kindness in his voice.

Shane huffed and flushed, embarrassed, but he didn't argue and let his question stand. Ilya wanted to kiss the blush off of him, devour his mouth and make him forget his own name.

He knew Shane could get jealous too, especially when women tried it on with him, but Ilya didn't get the same thrilling pleasure out of watching Shane's deadly territorial moods turn prickly. It was meaningful to Ilya, but it wasn't something he liked bringing out in the other man. Ilya only liked him angry on the ice.

Once or twice he'd tried to get Shane to admit his stilted love life outside of Ilya might be a regret, but the mood often turned. They were both too obsessed with one another to see a way exploration didn't take more than it gave, and Shane always mistakenly thought it meant Ilya was seeking other partners in turn. A little flirting, just for Shane, as a compromised solution seemed far more easy to live with.

"Yes, okay," Ilya agreed, not fighting the pin or the proposition as his heart began to race, anticipating a kiss. "Only until we are married. Then you are mine to everyone. And I can be upset?"

"Yes," Shane gave the permission freely. "As long as it leads back to *us*. You'll remind me why I'm with you."

Ilya understood. He longed to drag fingers up Shane's strong forearms toward the milkshake stain, to grip his waist or turn him over and claim him with fingers in his clean hair. Ilya let that desire build in wait, not wishing away the precious moment of being stared at by Shane's unblinking focus. God, those dark pools could end him, and the way they caught the fireplace made him burn. Shane never gave anyone that kind of gaze: unwavering, exposed, hungry.
Laurent who?

Ilya's jealousies died in that moment. His gaze softened and his dick hardened.

"You are very hot. Sometimes I cannot blame others, you are just too precious to me to share like that, Hollander." Shane clocked the surname use immediately. This was a truth from the beginning, and Ilya meant to evoke the person he was in public too.

"Sometimes I feel it, yeah," Shane admitted, letting their noses just barely graze, "Mostly because I've been Ilya Rozanov's favorite fuck for years."

Being among the company of some (to borrow a term from Hayden) total smokeshows was weirdly affirming. One night years back in a New York City cocktail bar on overlapping schedules, he and Rose—his actual ex who had actually slept with him and, in theory, found Shane attractive—had scrolled through a thread of all the women Ilya had ever been photographed with. She'd turned to Shane after taking in the uncomfortably-lengthy string of glamorous women with a scrunched face offering a teasing, "*And you? I don't see it.*"

Shane didn't know how to explain how much hotter he felt, was, naked and letting his lust breathe. In those hotel rooms, and everywhere since, he turned into that person around Ilya.

"Favorite fuck ever," Ilya corrected, lifting his heavy head off the floor for emphasis, bringing their mouths nearly together. The wedding ring and cross jangled back into the shadows behind him. "Last fuck forever."

Shane's heart soared to hear it, unable to resist bending to meet the kiss in confirmation and reward. They kept it gentle, tender and tame. Ilya had a slightly drunken look on his face when the kiss broke, eyes opening with such fondness that Shane's blood raced for his cock. Ilya's curls flopped back as he rested again.

"And are you wearing my clothes because you are mine?"

Shane sat up, drawing his grip back to let Ilya's arms free, ass brushing against the erection growing underneath him. He did it a second time to prove it was intentional. "What do you think? That game sucked. I could feel my asshole clenching the whole time," he squeezed at Ilya's obliques to emphasize the word, "just waiting for them to collect the mic packs. I couldn't wait to get *here*."

A place away from the eyes and ears of strangers. A place for just the two of them...and Anya.

A laugh of relief bubbled out of Shane's chest and his face relaxed finally. Ilya couldn't help his own smile, relieved that Shane was relieved. Ilya's mind drifted to his fiancé's clenched asshole and the pleasure it could bring in the right contexts. His erection grew with promise as his hands fell to Shane's muscular thighs, squeezing each in symmetry.

"But we got through it. And you made us really work for the win," Shane tried to relay the compliment before they got lost in sex and he forgot. There had been lots of talk in the Montreal locker room after about how far the Centaurs had come. The game so easily could have gone the other way. Ilya had played wonderfully.

Ilya did not want to talk about Montreal or Ottawa or hockey at fucking all anymore.

“I have an idea as consolation for my loss. A special episode of *Riding with Rozanov*,” Ilya joked about the social series Harris had talked him into, “Audio only. No cars, just for us, no holding back,” he grinned, planting his feet to rock his pelvis, fingertips digging into Shane’s muscles.

Ilya Rozanov’s iPhone

VM_012_20210314.m4a

Transcript

HOLLANDER: I can’t believe I agreed to this.

ROZANOV: This is history. This is historical.

HOLLANDER: We’ve done this a lot.

ROZANOV: Shane.

HOLLANDER: If iCloud gets hacked tomorrow we’re going to feel really stupid.

ROZANOV: Yes. So? You want me to call you Jane? Tape goes into the Hall of Fame as Rozanov and Jane?

HOLLANDER: Ilya.

ROZANOV: Riding with Rozanov and Jane?

HOLLANDER: Fuck off. Are you sure it’s just audio?

ROZANOV: Yes. Stop worrying. See?

BOTH: (*Rustling*)

ROZANOV: One day when your knees are bad you will be happy we have proof.

HOLLANDER: What are you...? Just kiss me.

ROZANOV: Pushy. Where did my syrupy husband go? Hm?

BOTH: (*Kissing*)

ROZANOV: He doesn’t want to be adored? He just asked me to adore him.

HOLLANDER: He asked to fuck.

ROZANOV: Already leaking... (Unintelligible Russian)

HOLLANDER: Please. Fuck.

BOTH: *(Kissing)*

HOLLANDER: Mm.

ROZANOV: Open. Wider.

UNKNOWN: *(Suckling)*

ROZANOV: (in Russian) *Best mouth in the world.*

ROZANOV: Fuuuuck. Yes.

BOTH: *(Unintelligible pants and moans)*

HOLLANDER: Holy shit.

ROZANOV: Can you take more?

HOLLANDER: Mm.

ROZANOV: Of course you can. (In Russian) *Why do I ever doubt you?*

ROZANOV: (In Russian) *Slut knows his angles.*

ROZANOV: Shane.

ROZANOV: Holy shit. Your throat.

BOTH: *(Unintelligible groans)*

HOLLANDER: Tastes so good.

ROZANOV: Come here.

BOTH: *(Kissing)*

ROZANOV: Such a mess for me.

BOTH: *(Slaps and rustling)*

UNKNOWN: *(Suckling)*

HOLLANDER: Fuck yes.

HOLLANDER: I love when you do this at the same time.

BOTH: *(Unintelligible pants and sighs)*

HOLLANDER: (In Russian) *Three.*

HOLLANDER: Fuck, I love you. (In French) *I love you, even in French.*

ROZANOV: I fucking love you.

BOTH: *(Kissing and rustling)*

ROZANOV: Where's...?

HOLLANDER: Here.

HOLLANDER: Need you.

ROZANOV: Okay.

HOLLANDER: Ow. Other hip. Fucking Dykstra.

ROZANOV: Was clean, don't complain.

HOLLANDER: Not complaining, just—fuck.

ROZANOV: I will get ice after. Sit. Fuck yes.

BOTH: *(Kissing)*

ROZANOV: Okay?

HOLLANDER: Uh! Fuuuck.

ROZANOV: Stay there. Let me.

BOTH: *(Slaps and rustling)*

HOLLANDER: Ilya, god. Just like that.

ROZANOV: Mm. Yes.

ROZANOV: You are so beautiful.

HOLLANDER: Fu-u-u-u-ck.

ROZANOV: (In Russian) *I love you.*

HOLLANDER: I fu-cking lo-ove yo-ou.

ROZANOV: Touch yourself. Think of my slap shot.

HOLLANDER: Mm.

ROZANOV: Fast enough to kill.

ROZANOV: (In Russian) *I would kill for this perfection.*

HOLLANDER: Fu-uck.

BOTH: (*Slaps and rustling*)

HOLLANDER: Close.

ROZANOV: Too fast?

HOLLANDER: No. Fast is good.

ROZANOV: Hand off. My turn. Slower. Not a race.

ROZANOV: Mine.

HOLLANDER: Yours.

HOLLANDER: Fuck-ing mine.

ROZANOV: Fucking *yours*.

ROZANOV: No one else.

HOLLANDER: No one else.

HOLLANDER: Fuck, Ilya. I'm gonna —ah!

BOTH: (*Unintelligible groans*)

ROZANOV: Mm.

ROZANOV: Good. So much, (in Russian) *my fountain*.

ROZANOV: You saved it for me? It's a river. (Unintelligible Russian)

BOTH: (*Kissing*)

ROZANOV: How is (Unintelligible)?

HOLLANDER: (Laughter) Much looser now.

BOTH: (*Kissing*)

ROZANOV: Let's shower. Hit the square.

Chapter 3: BONUS: Recording 3

Chapter Summary

Three days after their Mic'd Up game, the FanMail video leaks.
Three years later, another recording puts it all to bed.

Chapter Notes

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

Shane doesn't get to flirt much in the end.

The Brad video hit Twitter and everything else narrows.

They fight with the league, Shane *doesn't trip on purpose*, and they get married.

Three years later, the world finds Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov in far different circumstances: contented and playing for the Ottawa Centaurs together.

When Ilya's Canadian passport comes through on New Years' Day, it's mid-season and there's no time to celebrate. Shane lets him eat a whole box of TimBits and David makes chicken parm and that seems enough for awhile. Most of their friends forget the horrible transition, the accidental outing and terror that followed. Ilya did not forget.

He did not blame Pike, but that didn't mean restitution was not due.

In March, the evening before the third anniversary of the FanMail incident, Shane was already asleep. Under the light of one bedside lamp, Ilya scrolled for something leather. According to the internet, it's the theme for a third wedding year and Ilya refuses to fuck up the opportunity to see Shane turn new shades of pink with something absurd. Whatever it ends up being Shane will resist it, then wear it, look incredibly fuckable in it, then cutely clean it of sweat and cum.

A notification dinged into life at the top of the screen.

Harris: Link: [STICK NEWS | 3 YEARS SINCE THE #HOLLANOV KISS]

Ilya clicked in immediately.

It reads like AI-penned garbage but most of it is vaguely accurate, charting careers and charity business alongside the scraps of league improvements. Near the bottom of the page is an embedded photo from his own Instagram: Scott and his husband, Eric and his boyfriend, and Shane and Ilya at the Kingfisher. Everyone is kissing under colorful lights. It's so very gay and so very joyous.

A simple line ends the article: *“As of reporting, the NHL has 28 openly LGBTQ players.”*

A bloom of pride streaked through Ilya immediately, then one of visceral memory.

He swiped back to contacts, thanked Harris, and selected “Pike #2,” tapping out a wishlist with no context given.

Ilya:

Royal Ossetra Caviar

Blinis

Crème Fraiche

Minced Chives

Minced Cornichon

Fresh Dill

Boiled Eggs

Dom Perignon

Peach Purée

Lotus Root

Just for good measure, and because being terrifying is fun sometimes, he added:

Ilya: ASAP

Ilya sort of doesn’t expect anything, maybe a response that says “wtf” or “👉”, but one doesn’t come at night and he forgets about it and goes to sleep.

“Hey,” Shane shook him awake around 8 the next morning. Violently, boyish, not the way he asks for sex. Disappointing.

It was an off day, the last one as playoff travel was finalized. They’d both wanted to sleep in and spend the afternoon with game tape and Theraguns.

“Do you wanna tell me why Hayden and Jackie are here making us some sort of crazy caviar spread?” There was a note of alarm in his husband’s voice which was an adorable overreaction.

A wild sort of smile grew over Ilya’s face into the pillow as he opened his eyes fully. Pike is too easy.

“Kids too?”

“Yes. The girls are terrorizing Anya. Will you come help?”

He could hear them now, the girls laughing loud and racing through the corridors, Arthur's littler steps following. Anya let out a playful bark and a snuffy sneeze. No one was being terrorized except maybe Shane.

"Put them outside," Ilya grumbled, still pleased he would be greeting the day with caviar for breakfast. "They will run around making snow people."

"It's -6," Shane laughed, tugging the blanket from around his husband, waking him up with the shock of a slight chill. "Are you going to explain?"

"Clothes," Ilya pouted, moving slow. Shane huffed but dutifully moved to grant the request, tugging neat items from the wardrobe into a pile beside him on the bed. "Three years we spend telling Hayden not to worry. We forgive him for the video, yes? But I knew we still had a favor."

"So you asked for caviar?"

"And the lotus I forgot to pick up for you," Ilya happily explained, tugging on wool socks before the other things Shane had selected for him, rising to steal a kiss off Shane's scruffy unshaven playoffs-just-beginning cheek before stepping into his pants and hopping out to join the company.

Jackie was rummaging for bowls and platters when they arrived in the kitchen, comparing the spread to a photo off Pinterest on her phone. "That goes there," she pointed, directing Hayden.

Amber, six and shy, wiggled and smiled around the antler of her favorite stuffed moose as Ilya passed. He couldn't resist picking her up onto his hip as he went to examine the gift. He took spinning steps, towards and around the furniture, making a flapping buzz noise with his mouth as if he was an airplane.

"This was meant as amends from Hayden, not family project," he explained, moving to make a coffee with Amber still on his hip. "Good morning, Missus Pike," he greeted Jackie with a tender kiss to her cheek that he knew would piss off her husband.

Sure enough, Hayden piped up. "Shane! He's doing it again!"

Shane, tugging the dog's favorite toy from Jade's hands was pinned in by children and uncomfortable looking. "I promise, he's only doing it to piss you off."

"It's working!"

Jackie rolled her eyes and reached for her youngest out of Ilya's arms. "He doesn't appreciate how sweet you are."

"He has no sense of romance," Ilya conspired with her, dryly, as he began making his coffee.

"Hey!" Hayden and Shane shouted at the same time, neither quite sure who was being talked about.

“Did we get it right?” Jackie nodded to the spread. “I didn’t know what to do with that...” She pointed to the shrink-wrapped lotus root with her free hand.

“Shane will braise later. Unrelated. Curveball,” Ilya winked quick in her direction, setting the coffee to brew, “I almost asked for toilet paper.”

“Fu—dge off, Rozanov,” Hayden barely caught his swear, letting out a huff of air. Angrily he shoved empty grocery bags into the trash. “We drove all the way from Montreal this morning, went to four different stores for your stupid list. Are we square now?”

“You could have not done it,” Ilya could resist no longer. With maddening patience he built a bite, topping his blini (store-bought but fine) with a bit of everything across the spread. He let a full-throated moan escape with the taste, and a shit-eating grin cross his features as he opened his eyes to Hayden.

Ilya held his gaze, chewing thoughtfully, before swallowing. He milked the moment, running his tongue along his upper teeth to suck and savor.

The coffee machine whirled for a bit with a hum that added tension to the silence. It went quieter after a few seconds.

“One thing, then we are square.”

Shane had settled the dog a little, and looked almost amused as he eavesdropped hard. It was somewhat like this between Hayden and his husband all the time, but this was a new level. Whatever theatrics Ilya was unfolding was forming a friendship with Hayden, inducting him fully, with antics on his terms.

“Fuc—*fudge* frickin’,” Hayden groaned, fidgeting like one of his many hyperactive children, “what do you want now?”

“I have been thinking three years about your recording,” Ilya moved back to his coffee now that it was brewed, tipping a little sugar into the cup, “And what it meant for me and Shane.”

Hayden shut up then, worried suddenly that Ilya might deck him or something.

“What did Daddy do?” Ruby asked, popping her head up from behind the sofa.

“Nothing, baby, go back to your homework, okay?” Jackie dismissed the question, not willing to miss wherever this conversation was leading. She carried Amber back to the sofa to free herself further.

“Anyushka, *come here*,” he called to the dog in Russian, building her a dog-safe blini and grinning as she snapped it happily between her jaws, licking her chops and sitting dutifully at his side for more.

Shane seemed to follow the command too, following Jackie back to the caviar.

“Since you like recordings so much...” Ilya moved for his AirPods and slid the case across the counter towards Hayden. “It’s time you listen to one.”

“Ilya...” Shane’s voice was severe, his mind reeling, gaze narrowing. “What are you doing?”

“*Trust me, my love,*” Ilya reassured him in Russian, reaching for his phone to navigate to the voice notes app. “One earbud each, since you will tell her all about it anyway,” Ilya gestured to the case and waited for each of the Pikes to plug in.

“You are so fucking weird,” Hayden begrudgingly slipped the other earbud into his own ear, trying not to notice how wide Jackie’s smile was just to be along for the ride. He tugged her close territorially.

“Swear jar,” she mumbled sweetly, stroking back his hair.

Hot fear was bursting in Shane’s stomach as Ilya scrolled a little and selected a file. He could only remember Ilya ever using the voice notes app twice: both of them recordings of their sex (the night of the Mic’d Up game, and an evening at the cottage last year when they’d given each other prostate orgasms to see who could come fastest). Both were mostly strings of curse words, wet sounds, groans, and highly personal words of devotion.

Hayden was like a brother.

“Ilya...”

The Russian-*Canadian* pressed play.

Ilya Rozanov’s iPhone

VM_013_20210317.mp4

Transcript

ROZANOV: I can’t sleep.

ROZANOV: And you know I don’t do the pills.

ROZANOV: I still feel wired and exhausted at the same time.

ROZANOV: We just talked but I still can’t stop thinking about you and the FanMail video so I will talk to you like this.

ROZANOV: I don’t think you’re asleep either but if I call again then there’s no hope.

ROZANOV: I want a cigarette but I can hear your voice now like a fly on my ear. You worry about eating a snickers bar one time, I can’t chain smoke on the deck and pretend it is nothing.

ROZANOV: I live for you now. Not just for you but...

ROZANOV: *(Pause)*

ROZANOV: Feels so strange laying awake knowing how many people know.

ROZANOV: Andrei knows.

ROZANOV: They are having meetings about us somewhere. Ordering pizza at headquarters with our names on a white board.

ROZANOV: *(Long pause)*

ROZANOV: Maybe FSB has a memo too.

ROZANOV: I deleted my social media apps, the notifications were making my phone hot.

ROZANOV: Or maybe that is FSB wire tap.

ROZANOV: *(Pause)*

ROZANOV: I almost ordered Hayden a fruit basket. The nice pears from Harry Davidson. Is an awful, stupid way for us to be public but I can breathe again.

ROZANOV: I hope you feel the same. Fuck, I do. I know it is awful now, your team...

ROZANOV: But you...

ROZANOV: *(Long pause)*

ROZANOV: Maybe it's just fate. Asshole Brad orders birthday greeting from second-rate Voyageurs player but really Brad is just imp demon, made-up force of the universe, to push this.

ROZANOV: Plane engine explodes but is fine so I can get your ring and kiss you in FanMail reflection.

ROZANOV: *(Pause)*

ROZANOV: I keep thinking about Hunter.

ROZANOV: Not like that. Obviously. I have younger model in you.

ROZANOV: But that kiss meant everything to me.

ROZANOV: Maybe ours will mean something to someone.

ROZANOV: Stolen in the alley, but real.

ROZANOV: And now if either of us wins the cup we can kiss like that.

ROZANOV: *(Pause)*

ROZANOV: If you feel brave.

ROZANOV: If you want to.

ROZANOV: *(Pause)*

ROZANOV: I may never stop kissing you now, because I don't have any other choice. Because I cannot resist.

ROZANOV: Brad keeps me from Russia forever but gives me your kisses.

ROZANOV: (In Russian) *I'll gladly take all of them. They are mine now.*

ROZANOV: (In Russian) *God, you're mine now.*

ROZANOV: *(Pause)*

ROZANOV: Maybe not pears, for Pike. Maybe caviar. Siberian. With whole spread. Eggs. Herbs. Pickles. Champagne.

ROZANOV: Maybe only if they let us back on the ice soon.

ROZANOV: Of course they will, though. You're Shane fucking Hollander. I am Ilya fucking Rozanov.

ROZANOV: *(Pause)*

ROZANOV: Would be nice, for our kids to grow up with Hayden's. Cousins, ones they like.

ROZANOV: Maybe we should do something about that soon. When I have citizenship.

ROZANOV: Because we can now. Put our names side by side on government form. Damage is done. I'd marry you tomorrow if you could stand the spontaneous.

ROZANOV: But I am okay waiting.

ROZANOV: I would wait forever for you.

ROZANOV: *(Pause)*

ROZANOV: I would try, at least.

ROZANOV: *(Long pause)*

ROZANOV: No more flirting. Just with me now. Sorry.

ROZANOV: *(Pause)*

ROZANOV: I might go for a run while it's still quiet. Maybe that will help me sleep. If not, I will listen to our sex tape and stroke my dick. If that does not work, I will finally read *The New Yorker* until English is a waterfall I am under but not understanding.

ROZANOV: *(Heavy sigh)*

ROZANOV: I wish we could skate tonight.

ROZANOV: Our brains would be quieter on the ice together.

ROZANOV: *(In Russian) I love you.*

ROZANOV: *(In Russian) I love you more than...anything else.*

ROZANOV: Goodnight, Shane.

ROZANOV: My sweetheart.

Shane watched with intensity as Ilya ignored him, sipped his coffee and made himself another stacked blini. What an asshole.

He met Shane's gaze as he swallowed the bite, glancing pointedly to the couple to draw his husband's attention.

Neither of the Pikes had tugged the earbuds out which was revealing. After forty seconds, Jackie had tears in her eyes, her head pressing tenderly against her husband's. Hayden had a sort of game day intensity to his own expression, focusing hard on absorbing.

At the two minute mark, both of their eyes tracked the caviar spread but neither said a word. Soon after, Jackie rose and wrapped her arms around Ilya, squeezing tighter than Shane had ever seen. Watching his husband's arms twitch and wrap around her in return felt like a strange settling of it all.

Hayden glanced Shane's way, eyebrows up at the middle in an expression of deep sympathy. "Wow," he finally said, tugging the bud from his ear and returning it to the case politely when the playback ended.

"So we celebrate, yes? Canadian dream coming true?" Ilya mumbled, face tucked over Jackie's shoulder. She hadn't let go which he enjoyed. Belatedly he sensed her tears and began stroking over her spine.

"Hayd's an idiot, he didn't really think about..." she mumbled.

“But you did,” Ilya squeezed her again. “Miss Political Studies,” he teased her, knowing Jackie had never finished her degree but had a greater grasp than most gave her credit for. No one had helped him study for the citizenship test more when the time had come for it.

To be fair, Shane had tried, but his glasses and boring serious teacher persona had proven far too much of a distraction.

“It’s okay,” he reassured her. “Let me make you a bellini, and you eat caviar, and then we will take the kids sledding down the hill.”

The two of them moved conspiratorially toward the bar to select glassware and check on the children.

“What the fuck?” Shane murmured to Hayden. “What did he play for you?”

“Some sort of voice memo for you? From after the tape leaked,” Hayden ran a hand through his own hair, still processing. “I knew he loved you, like I knew this was real, obviously, but...”

It was a massive relief to Hayden to know for sure that Ilya had really never been angry about it all even if it had put him in real danger. It was an equally big relief for Shane to know his husband hadn’t played audio of him begging to be fucked.

“He wants kids,” Hayden glanced at his best friend, wary he might be revealing a secret.

“I know,” Shane felt a smile tug at his lips. This was not news.

“No,” Hayden shook his head, laughing despite himself. “There’s wanting kids,” he waved his hand in the air, like it was a fleeting unserious thing, “and there’s really really wanting them.” Shane trusted Hayden would know what that difference was.

“Too bad you can’t make them yourself. Jack turned into a sexual phenom trying to get pregnant when she got the bug.”

Shane was pretty certain despite the biology they’d been ‘trying’ with an unspoken note of that desperation for years now. The plan had been another 5 seasons before a surrogacy, but Ilya bent to let Anya lick the scent of caviar off his finger and wiped at her snout with tender affection and Shane knew plans had never really worked for them.

When the Pikes had left for their drive back home in the late afternoon, the house fell calm again. Anya had disappeared to one of her many dog beds to sleep off the morning playtime, Ilya tidied the kitchen without complaint, and Shane vacuumed up after the mess of having kids run wild in the living room.

The Pike kids always left a trail of glitter somehow everywhere they went like little fairies. It drove him nuts.

A familiar chirping bleep rung out overhead: a device connecting to their speaker system. Seconds later, Ilya's voice filled the room.

"I can't sleep."

Ilya sounded tired, gruff the way he could be in the middle of the night. Shane killed the vacuum's power and stilled to listen.

"And you know I don't do the pills. I still feel wired and exhausted at the same time. We just talked but I still can't stop thinking about you and the FanMail video so I will talk to you like this. I don't think you're asleep either but if I call again then there's no hope."

Three years ago on that very day around that time, Shane was having a panic attack into his mother's arms. His world was crashing down. It felt impossibly good to listen to the rushed bittersweet words of his husband in the home they shared.

"I want a cigarette but I can hear your voice now like a fly on my ear. You worry about eating a snickers bar one time, I can't chain smoke on the deck and pretend it is nothing. I live for you now. Not just for you but..."

Shane held his breath, listening intently. It reminded him instantly of that call after Ilya's father's funeral, when a wave of Russian had cascaded over him and he just knew this was love.

"Feels so strange laying awake knowing how many people know. Andrei knows."

It had been a long time since Shane had heard that name.

"They are having meetings about us somewhere. Ordering pizza at headquarters with our names on a white board."

"Running revised Q scores," Shane voiced in response, aloud. That's what his mother had said at the time, anyway.

"Maybe FSB has a memo too. I deleted my social media apps, the notifications were making my phone hot. Or maybe that is FSB wire tap."

"Ilya..." They'd never talked about that, even jokingly.

"I almost ordered Hayden a fruit basket. The nice pears from Harry Davidson. Is an awful, stupid way for us to be public but I can breathe again. I hope you feel the same. Fuck, I do. I know it is awful now, your team...But you..."

"Fuck Montreal," Shane said, barely meaning it anymore. He shut his eyes to better focus, feeling a warmth in his chest.

"Maybe it's just fate. Asshole Brad orders birthday greeting from second-rate Voyageurs player but really Brad is just imp demon, made-up force of the universe, to push this. Plane engine explodes but is fine so I can get your ring and kiss you in FanMail reflection."

"I'm glad you did."

"I keep thinking about Hunter."

"Jeez!" Shane opened his eyes, delighted to see Ilya had joined him in the room, a mischievous sort of grin on his face. "Always with fucking Hunter."

"Not like that. Obviously."

Ilya's grin grew. He knew his Shane.

"I have younger model in you. But that kiss meant everything to me. Maybe ours will mean something to someone. Stolen in the alley, but real. And now if either of us wins the cup we can kiss like that."

"We're going to win together," Shane promised, taking in Ilya's playoff scruff and feeling the potential roar alive. It felt like their year.

"If you feel brave. If you want to."

"I want to."

Ilya crossed the room slowly, timing his arrival. His gaze never left Shane.

"I may never stop kissing you now, because I don't have any other choice. Because I cannot resist. Brad keeps me from Russia forever but gives me your kisses."

"Я с удовольствием заберу их всех. Теперь они мои. Боже, теперь ты мой."

"Yours forever," Shane promised in Russian of his own, rewarded with strong hands on his jaw and waist, tugging him close. A kiss traced on his brow and he resisted collapsing but only just.

"Maybe not pears, for Pike. Maybe caviar. Siberian. With whole spread. Eggs. Champagne. Maybe only if they let us back on the ice soon. Of course they will, though. You're Shane fucking Hollander. I am Ilya fucking Rozanov."

Shane imagined their trophy room.

"Yes we fucking are," he grinned, dazed as he watched Ilya descend on him, tilting his head back to attack his mouth with a fierce kiss. Ilya's hand held firm, not letting Shane move an inch as he was devoured. It was a filthy intense clash, tongues dueling. They pulled back for air, Shane more reluctantly than his husband.

A soft little moan bubbled up from the back of Shane's throat, but it no longer made him embarrassed.

“Would be nice, for our kids to grow up with Hayden’s. Cousins, ones they like. Maybe we should do something about that soon. When I have citizenship. Because we can now. Put our names side by side on government form. Damage is done. I’d marry you tomorrow if you could stand the spontaneous.”

Their breaths filled the silence. Shane tilted his head into the crook of Ilya’s neck.

“But I am okay waiting. I would wait forever for you.”

Shane laughed, incredulous. Even three years ago they had waited long enough.

“I would try, at least.”

Ilya’s fingers traced over his neck, tugging to keep him close.

“No more flirting. Just with me now. Sorry.”

“I don’t care.”

“Good,” non-recorded Ilya interjected, the singular word rumbling his chest.

“I might go for a run while it’s still quiet. Maybe that will help me sleep. If not, I will listen to our sex tape and stroke my dick.”

“Jesus,” Shane picked his head up to laugh again, mostly at the fact that Hayden had listened to this first. Ilya couldn’t help his own smile, stroking at his husband’s freckles then.

“If that does not work, I will finally read The New Yorker until English is a waterfall I am under but not understanding.”

The sound of Ilya’s sigh that followed was the exact resonance that made hair on the back of Shane’s neck prickle.

“I wish we could skate tonight. Our brains would be quieter on the ice together.”

“Mm,” Shane agreed. They got plenty of that now as teammates and it did help.

“Я люблю тебя. Я люблю тебя больше, чем...что-либо другое.”

“Goodnight, Shane. My sweetheart.” The recording cut off and silence filled the room.

“You never sent it,” Shane pressed his nose into Ilya’s jaw, pulling him into a hug. He smelled good, like pine sap and cold from the day.

“No. I ran and I jerked off and I fell asleep. Crowell meeting was called and I forgot,” Ilya explained, holding Shane with an unhurried strength.

“Let’s adopt a kid.”

The words bubbled out of Shane like they’d been on the surface of his mind all day. Maybe they had, watching Uncle Ilya give piggy back rides and pull a sled around. There was more

than enough love between them to spread now.

A spark of hope bloomed at the back of Ilya's eyes, but he held control of his expression, hedging his reaction.

"Say more," Ilya requested.

Shane would do anything for that light.

"I know we thought surrogate, in a few years, but we can't predict if it'll take or when it'll come. If we adopt...we have a little more control to make sure we can be around, off-season...?"

It would still take time and cost a fortune, next year at the earliest, but it was possible sooner. Sooner felt right.

"This is what you want? Will be a big change. Not just us anymore, Hollander."

"It's the scariest thing in the world! But you make me brave. Yes, I want it, I want us to have a kid," Shane assured him, barely finishing his sentence before Ilya's mouth was on him again. A hand buried in his hair and steered him with the kiss. Shane melted.

They kissed like that for awhile, sweetness swinging to hunger and back again to tenderness.

Ilya formed the plan quickly, confidence in his certainty, pressing his forehead against Shane's as they caught their breath. "We win the cup, then we call the lawyers, yeah? And you know...?"

Shane frowned, his blood immediately cooling. He did know. In that shorthand they'd had for awhile now. Ilya would retire.

"We could figure it out, you know you don't have to."

"I want to," Ilya's face pulled forward in gentle insistence. He brought his hand up to cup Shane's jaw, erasing the frown there with gentle strokes of his thumb. "What more do I have to prove? I want every minute and you are too good to walk away."

"We win this year. We win next year. Then I become King of WAGs and watch you win every year until your knees go bad with baby on my lap," Ilya stroked through Shane's hair, soothing him into the idea. "I do camp and become stay-at-home dad. This is what I want."

"Now who is syrupy?"

Shane hated the idea he might one day play without Ilya, but it was where they'd been headed. He could walk away too, he supposed. There was more than enough money if they were smart about it. Maybe he would. What fun would any of it be without Rozanov to watch on the ice?

"Me, always. I am always syrupy about you, Shane," Ilya mumbled, laying gentle kisses across his husband's unshaven cheek. "Should I have shared our sex tape with the Pikes?"

Would you have preferred that?"

Shane gave a groan, 'resisting' Ilya's touch by squirming into it, leading Ilya's kisses down his neck.

"Could teach them a thing or two. Maybe Jackie could peg. See if Hayden could cum hands-free faster than either of us."

Shane squinted, disconcerted by the mental image.

"If you had your way it would be an All-Stars event."

"Now that is not a bad idea," Ilya gave a toothy grin as he gripped hard at Shane's asscheek before pulling back to slap. "You would win. Every time you would win."

Chapter End Notes

Didn't intend to do more than a 2-shot but couldn't stop!

Apologies for auto-translated Cyrillic and, yes, Jackie is "Pike #1."

Thanks for reading and recommending <3

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