

first barbeque

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Summary

"Is okay now?"

Shane swallows and nods. "Yeah, I think. I'm probably worrying for nothing."

Ilya nods too. "Yes. You are very good at that."

Shane punches him in the shoulder lightly and they smile at each other.

or, Shane and Ilya's first barbeque as a married couple playing on the same team. Shane is totally fine.

After another last look into the mirror, Shane sighs and calls out to his husband. "Ilya! We have to leave in a few minutes. Are you still getting ready?"

Anya comes into the room and Shane kneels down to pet her.

"It'll be fine, right?" he whispers to her and she answers by licking his face.

"Thanks girl" Shane winces and goes to wash his face at the sink.

He dries his hands with a towel and wants to call out to Ilya again when the man in question appears in the doorway, looking so handsome that Shane almost wants to suggest that they just stay home tonight. But he couldn't do that, because tonight was important.

The first barbeque at Bood's house that they would be attending together. As a married couple and players on the same team. Shane totally wasn't freaking out or anything.

"Finally" he says and Ilya frowns.

"Relax, Hollander. If we leave now, we will be 15 minutes early still."

"I just don't want to be late."

"Is okay. I am late often. They don't care. Many people to care about even without us."

"But I care, okay? So can we just leave now, please"

Shane pleads and Ilya looks at him with that searching look in his eyes that tells Shane that Ilya won't let this go anytime soon.

"Come here first" Ilya opens his arms and Shane sighs again, knowing that they won't leave before they've talked about this.

He steps forward, right into Ilyas arms and hugs him tightly. Ilya's arms wrap around him and Shane's brain immediately quiets down a little bit. It's really unfair that Ilya has that affect on him.

"I know you're nervous" Ilya says against his ear and Shane huffs.

"No, listen. Is normal, to be nervous when meeting so many new people. But you're Shane fucking Hollander. Best player in the league. They are all so excited to meet you and get to know you and play with you on a team together. They have reason to be nervous because they're meeting you. I bet I will not be able to talk to you all night because they all want you to themselves. And I'll need to break up fights for who gets to talk to you next."

Shane laughs, a little wetly and looks up into his husbands eyes.

"You'd like that. But I doubt that's gonna happen. I just hope they like me."

"Hey" Ilya grabs Shane's chin to make him look at him.

"They will. I know it. And if they don't, it does not matter. I'm captain. I will make them run laps otherwise."

Shane laughs again. "No you won't. Fuck off."

"My own husband, not believing me. It hurts, Shane."

He grabs his heart but then gets serious again. "Is okay now?"

Shane swallows and nods. "Yeah, I think. I'm probably worrying for nothing."

Ilya nods too. "Yes. You are very good at that."

Shane punches him in the shoulder lightly and they smile at each other.

"Thank you. I love you" Shane says and Ilya replies "I love you too. Now we have to go, or we will really be late."

"Yeah okay" Shane breathes out one last time. "I'm ready." He takes Ilya's outstretched hand in his own and they leave for Bood's house.

A few minutes later, Cassie opens the door with a smile, her arms full of stuff.

"Hey you two! So glad you could make it! It's so nice to finally meet you Shane. Just go through the living room, they're all out back. Ilya, you know the way."

With that, she leaves the door open for them to follow her and with a shared look, they walk inside.

"Will be fine" Ilya mumbles and Shane tries to relax a little bit.

"Hey guys, look who's here" Cassi says when they're standing in the garden and they're greeted by a lot of different voices.

Bood steps forward from the grill. "Cap" he greets with a smile and a clap to Ilya's back. "And you brought Shane Hollander. It's nice to finally meet you. Officially" he held out his hand and Shane grabs it and is immediately pulled into a hug.

"It's nice to meet you too. I'm excited to play with you all" Shane says and Bood's smile widened.

"Are you kidding? *We* are excited to play with *you*. You're a legend, man. This season is going to be awesome."

Someone shouts at him and Bood yells "Coming! Sorry guys, gotta get back to the grill. I have to keep my reputation as the best griller on the team, you know." He grins at Ilya and leaves.

Shane lets out a breath as Ilya turns towards him. "Is fine, yes?"

"Yeah. So far, so good" Shane replies, smiling at him.

Exactly as Ilya predicted, everybody wants to talk to them. Or Shane, for that matter. Ilya mostly stands by, smiling at how good Shane fit right in with everybody, talking about the Centaurs and the families and everything else they could think of.

A while later, Shane excuses himself from a long talk with Wyatt to go to the bathroom and have a few minutes to himself. He's managing everything better than he thought but the Centaurs also make it very easy. They're all very welcoming and excited to talk to him which feels good but it's also a lot. Shane just needs a few minutes of silence.

When he's done in the bathroom, he makes his way to the kitchen to get himself a glass of water. While he searches for a glass, Troy appears in the doorway.

"Hey" he nods at Shane and Shane smiles a little uncertain. "Hi."

He doesn't know a lot about Troy Barrett, other than that he'd always been kind of an asshole but apparently changed a lot since joining the Centaurs. And that he's dating Harris and Ilya and him seemed to get along well. But being alone with Troy, who never seemed to say much at all, kind of makes him nervous because he doesn't know what to expect.

"I know you've probably heard it a lot tonight but we're happy to have you on the team" Troy smiles a little and Shane relaxes a tiny bit.

"Thanks. Glad to be here."

Troy nods. "I can imagine. I'm very sorry for what happened to you in Montreal. But this team is great. We support each other here. I also had to learn that at first, but you can believe it. These are all great guys."

Shane nods. "Thanks for saying that. After everything Ilya told me about the team, I'm very excited to play here. It sounds like a great environment for both of us."

Troy nodded. "It is. I mean, it is for me, so... well, I wanted to tell you something and it's going to sound a little weird maybe. I'm not very good with words, that's more Harris' thing but... anyway, Ilya seems very happy lately and we all noticed. Like, he was always this loud, cheerful person, the perfect captain to hype everyone up, you know? But there was always this quiet, thoughtful, secretive side to him. I mean, now we know what all of that was about with you hiding your relationship, but since you came out, we all noticed that he's a lot happier. Free, in a way. He laughs more."

He smiles at Shane who could just stare. He didn't really know what to say.

Troy clears his throat. "What I meant to say is just- it's clear that you make him very happy and I'm glad he has that- we're all happy for you two. And we will support you and stand behind you, as a team. And I'd like to be friends, Shane. I mean, if you'd like that. Harris has a lot of queer friends but you're like the only other professional gay hockey player and like... maybe we could talk about some stuff. If you wanted to."

Troy blushes and waves his hand. "Okay, sorry for dumping all of that on you. I'll just-"

"Wait" Shane says and Troy stops. "I'd like to be friends" he continued and Troy smiles and nods.

"Great. Do you want to go back to the party?"

Shane has the feeling that Troy is feeling as drained from everything as he is and thinks to himself that maybe Troy Barrett would be a good friend to have.

"Yeah. I'm going to find Ilya, I think."

Troy nods in understanding. "Time to leave soon, yeah? I get it. They mean well but it's a lot. You'll get used to it, though" he smiles and they go back outside where Ilya is talking to Harris.

Troy and Shane move to stand beside them and Ilya immediately finds Shane's eyes, searching for something.

"All good?" He asks and Shane smiles. "Yeah. I'm fine."

Harris beams at them. "I was just saying to Ilya, that maybe once you settled in, with the team and your house and everything is a little quieter, maybe we could go on a double date sometime? Just if you're comfortable with it, of course. No pressure at all."

Shane smiles "We'll think about it, okay? It sounds like a good idea, though."

Ilya smiles at him proudly and wraps his arm around Shane's waist.

Shane stiffens for a moment and Ilya almost wants to pull back, but then Shane relaxes and even leans into it, so Ilya leaves his arm where it is. His heart is jumping out of his chest with joy. This is everything he's ever wanted. His husband, who he loved more than anything else in this world, at their shared team dinner, surrounded by their teammates and their families, being accepted and supported by them and just behaving like a normal, happy couple. Ilya couldn't believe that this was his life.

Shane nudges him and looks at him weirdly. "Did you hear anything of what I just said?"

"No, sorry *moya lyubov*. I was just thinking about how happy I am. And how much I love you."

Shane's eyes soften immediately. "I love you too. It is pretty amazing here. This is good."

Ilya smiles. "Yes, good. Will be perfect when we win Stanley Cup this season."

Shane laughs and agrees with him, but that would only be the cherry on top, honestly. Even if Ottawa would never be a real cup contender, this is their home now and hopefully forever. And Ilya's life would be perfect because he had everything he needed right here in his arms.

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