

Rookie Mistakes

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Rookie Mistakes

by [isto4u](#)

Summary

Ilya pulls back first, breathing hard, eyes blazing down at Shane. He drags a thumb across Shane's swollen lips. "Is your first time with a man?"

Shane huffs a wrecked laugh, chest rising and falling fast. "Definitely not."

Ilya's grin is sharp and almost feral. "Good. I want to hear you."

Shane is two years younger than Ilya and they play for the same team.

But what if Shane was a bit wilder, less afraid to experiment sexually, and a bit more of a typical ice hockey guy?

Get ready for teammates to friends to friends with benefits to lovers.

(Please note that Shane/Hayden are tagged because they're 18/19 and a little bit sexually curious and I'm a believer in over-tagging. Also from Ch4 out it's full of explicit sex, fair warning.)

Notes

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

Chapter 1: Everest

So, Shane isn't *nervous*. Not really. He just feels like he's going to throw up and can't breathe properly. The draft announcement is tomorrow, and there's nothing he can do except wait it out.

Ash texts him.

Thinking of you. Try and sleep, I see you're still online.

Shane huffs and texts his girlfriend back. *Trying to sleep. I feel fine.*

He waits a second and then texts again.

Fine like I might throw up.

I'm gonna call you, she replies.

When he answers, the words come spilling out of him, tangled and rushed, his voice cracking embarrassingly as he tries to swallow the thickness in his throat. "It's just being drafted to the NHL. It's not like I'm going to war or climbing fucking Everest."

"Yeah," the phone line crackles as she sighs. "But this is the biggest deal of your life so far. So it's kind of *your* Everest."

"Whatever. Thanks, babe. You're right. Sorry I'm so shitty, I just want to fast forward to tomorrow and just find out. It's like I'm standing on a cliff and someone is going to push me, and I'm not sure if it's a really big fall, or if it's going to be one of those big bouncy castles below me."

"Reframe it? Maybe imagine it's like a diving board and there's a pool below. Maybe the unknown factor is just the water temperature. You're gonna get drafted to a big league team. It'll be okay, even if you have to move."

She doesn't say the quiet bit out loud, which is *and when you move away from me we'll be over*.

Shane sighs again. "I'm gonna try and sleep. Thanks for this."

"I'll be watching," Ash promises.

—

The NHL Entry Draft of 2025 happens at the end of June. Shane sits beside his mum and dad in a stiff suit, knee bouncing, hands clammy as he wrings them until Yuna bumps his elbow to remind him that all eyes are on him. The first pick – San Francisco Sailors – goes to Harry Demirchyan, like everyone expected. Then the Boston Raiders pick out Aaron Mullane. Houston get Lei Zhou. One after the other, Shane's competitors get up, hug their families,

walk up on stage, put on their new jerseys and pose for awkward hand-shaking photos. It all blurs together until suddenly it doesn't.

Shane Hollander is drafted into the Montreal Metros.

And he can't fucking believe it.

A moment passes and he feels his mum's arms around him, her kiss pressed to his cheek. He has to actively tell his legs to move. He makes his way out of the audience and walks across the stage, shakes the commissioner's hand with the correct pressure, pulls his new red and blue jersey awkwardly over his suit and then smiles for an absurd number of photos, his face aching by the end of it.

Montreal is a long, long way from Vancouver. It's a long way from his family, his girlfriend, his friends, and the life he knows. He's thankful for the opportunity of a lifetime, for sure, but it's just a lot. It's so much.

The whirlwind begins immediately, and Shane can barely keep up. There are flights back and forth from Vancouver to Montreal with his mum, squeezed into a few intense weeks. Meetings with management, where he learns that all they need is for him to keep nodding. A brief introduction to his new coach, Glen. Shane tries very hard to stand tall and not let on that his heart is about to explode. Then there's all the other admin bullshit: medicals and paperwork that makes his head spin. Why is everything so *long*?

He meets the team liaison, Karen, a blonde older woman with sharp eyes, sensible shoes, and a frighteningly organised binder. The name makes him want to laugh even though he knows it's rude, but within ten minutes he realises Karen would absolutely throw down for him if needed. The way she talks about protecting her players makes Shane feel like maybe he could be okay. Maybe.

Karen and his mum help him find a place close to the training facility. His mum asks the real estate agents a million practical questions – all the questions, actually. Heating. Noise. Laundry. Shane mostly just nods. They settle on a grey apartment building about six minutes' walk away. It's not fancy, but it's close, and it feels manageable. Two bedrooms, no personality whatsoever, but it has a pool in the shared gym and a decent view.

Furniture deliveries get scheduled. He flies home with his mum and tries to ignore the sting of knowing his time with his parents is narrowing down to a small window. They watch movies. David grills steaks. They watch another movie as a family and Shane blinks hard when something seems to rise up in his throat. He's honestly fine.

When Yuna and David head out for dinner, Ash comes over. They don't have to be sneaky or anything, but something about sex in his family home has always made Shane feel weird.

They end up in Shane's childhood bedroom anyway, door closed and the side light on. They snuggle on his old bed while Ash scrolls TikTok, showing him dumb videos that make her giggle into his shoulder. The making out starts slow, lazy kisses that turn deeper when she rolls halfway on top of him, hand sliding under his T-shirt.

Ash is always the one who pushes it further and this time is no different. She kisses down his jaw, his neck, then lower, tugging at his sweats with that look she gets. Shane's body responds the way it's supposed to, heat pooling low, but his brain lags behind like usual.

He lets her pull his clothes off, watches her settle between his legs with this small, pleased smile that should probably make him feel wanted and turned on.

Her mouth is warm and wet and good. Like, really good. The way she takes him in, slow at first then finding a rhythm, tongue swirling just right, it feels amazing in that pure physical way that shuts everything else up for a minute. He threads his fingers into her hair, not pushing, just holding, and closes his eyes. He likes this part.

But like always, it drags on. He feels himself getting close, then not, then close again, but never quite there. Minutes stretch. Ash keeps going, enthusiastic as ever, making these little sounds like she loves it, but Shane can sense the shift. He hates taking too long and the pressure to finish so she doesn't feel bad. It's embarrassing.

Eventually he pulls her up gently, kisses her to distract, murmurs "it's your turn" against her mouth. She lights up at that, like she always does, and it's easier this way to be fair. He slides his hand into her underwear, finds her already wet, and focuses on what he knows works: steady circles, the pressure she likes, watching her face to adjust. It doesn't take her long at all. She comes with a soft gasp against his neck, body trembling, clinging to him.

He holds her after, her breathing evening out against his chest, her fingers tracing lazy patterns on his arm. His own release is still hanging there, unfinished. He lies that he doesn't have any condoms, and then jacks himself off while she lies against his chest. Because it's the normal thing to do, probably. He tells her he's just really stressed, she shrugs.

The next day he spends hours watching interviews with the Metros players, trying to get a sense of who they are on and off the ice. He doesn't have to worry about learning names; that part he's had down forever. Hockey is his life.

There's Cliff Marleau, built like a tank. Hayden Pike, only a year older than Shane. Patrice, broad as a barn. Ilya Rozanov, his year's #1 pick, the Russian guy with unreal hands and a reputation for being an asshole. So many others.

It still doesn't fully hit him until he gets off the plane and steps out of the airport alone.

He Ubers to his new place, wheels his suitcase into the elevator, drags it down the hallway, and slams the door behind him. The apartment is quiet and grey and smells faintly of new paint and cleaning products.

He sinks down, back against the door, and hugs his knees. He can do this. He can do this. He can do this. Big breath in, big breath out.

But he's just a boy, only eighteen. A tall, hockey-playing mama's boy who already misses home so badly it makes his chest ache. He unlocks his phone and opens Instagram. His friends back home are out for dinner at the local pizza place.

He takes another deep breath, shaky and far too shallow, like his lungs have forgotten how to work properly. He has to be brave. He's not a baby anymore, he's in the fucking NHL, living alone in a new city. He has no choice. No one's coming to fix this for him.

Ash texts him: *Safe landing? Miss you already.*

He stares at the message until the screen dims. His thumb hovers. He types nothing. Deletes the blank reply. Finally, he locks the phone and shoves it face-down on the floor.

Because if he replies, he'll have to lie and say he's okay, excited, handling it. Or worse, he'll tell the truth: that he's scared shitless, that everything feels wrong, that the thought of not waking up in his old bed again makes him want to throw up.

Then it's all too much. It's actually just too fucking much.

The silence of the apartment presses in from every grey wall. No mum calling him for dinner. No Dad's dumb hockey commentary in the background. No rain tapping the window. It's awful and it's absolutely silent. Just this sterile box that smells like strangers and fresh paint and the end of everything he's ever known.

Shane curls up on the cold hardwood, still in his jacket, knees to his chest like he's trying to hold himself together. The tears start quiet, hot, stubborn... and then they don't stop.

They turn into these awful, hiccupping sobs that scare him with how loud they are in the empty space. He hasn't cried like this since he was a little kid, since nightmares or scraped knees or whatever else felt like the end of the world back then.

He fumbles in his suitcase, fingers shaking, and pulls out the ratty old Snoopy he swore he'd leave behind, but he just couldn't do it; some pathetic part of him still needs him. He presses his face into those floppy ears, worn soft from years of the same thing, and lets them soak up all his tears and everything he can't say out loud.

On his first night alone in Montreal, Shane Hollander, NHL future superstar, cries himself to sleep.

The next morning, he walks to his first training, determined not to fall apart again. The Metros train at a dedicated practice rink attached to the main arena complex. It's early, and the Montreal air is sharp as a skate blade, even for summer.

He spots Ilya Rozanov leaning against the brick wall outside the doors, half in the shadow.

Shane literally does a double take.

Ilya is smoking. Like, dragging on a real goddamn cigarette, the tip glowing cherry red as he inhales, smoke curling lazy and white into the frigid air.

He looks like a fucking movie star.

Shane shakes his head slightly and walks over anyway. "Ilya Rozanov? I'm Shane Hollander. Your new rookie."

He sticks out his hand. Rozanov glances down at it for a beat too long, dark eyes unreadable, before finally gripping it, firm and brief, fingers cold from the morning.

“Hi,” he says, exhaling a thin stream of smoke off to the side.

“You’re really good,” Shane blurts. He means it, but the second it’s out he wants to cringe, and he sounds like a total kiss-ass fanboy.

“Yes.” Ilya taps ash onto the pavement. No smile. No return compliment.

Which is fine. Shane gets it. He is the new guy. Still, the flatness lands cold.

“I’ll, uh, see you in there, yeah?” Shane stammers. *Fuck, great first impression, idiot.*

“Do not say anything about smoking.” Ilya takes another slow drag, eyes steady on Shane’s.

“Oh, I’m no snitch,” Shane chokes out, forcing a half-laugh. “My lips are sealed.”

He turns on his heel and pushes through the doors into the lobby, heart thudding. *Dude, these Russians are built different*, he thinks, the faint smell of tobacco still clinging to his jacket. *How the hell can he smoke like that? What about his lungs? His endurance?* Shane has had a few darts in his life – everyone has, late-night parties or whatever – but he always remembers the thick heaviness in his chest the next morning, the way his legs felt like lead and he was gasping after a casual run. Ilya just stands there looking unbothered, like the smoke is nothing more than morning protein shake.

“Shane Hollander!” a voice says, a little too excited for 7:30am. It jerks Shane out of his pondering about Ilya’s habits.

“Oh, hi.” Shane looks up to see Hayden Pike.

Holy shit. Hayden Pike has the roundest, most piercing blue eyes, and really long eyelashes. Like a doll. Or something. *Focus*, Shane.

“So glad to have you on our team,” Hayden says, extending his hand.

Shane goes to shake it and Hayden pulls him straight into a bro hug, smacking him on the back.

Shane swallows. Wow. This guy is so nice. Really friendly. Whiplash from Rozanov.

“I remember being a rookie,” Hayden says. “If anyone gives you shit, just let me know. I’ll try not to let them haze you too hard.”

Shane chuckles. “Appreciate that, man.”

“You get a place near here?” Hayden asks, pulling a stack of protein bars out of his bag and shoving them into his locker.

“Yeah, uh, my mum helped me pick one out. Like six minutes from here. It’s called... I don’t remember. Something Garden Apartments?”

“I know the one,” Hayden nods. “Grey building? Like, eight storeys?”

Shane nods. “Yeah. Nice and close.”

“I’m in the complex across the road. Green roofs.” Hayden starts taping up his stick while he talks.

“Oh yeah, I think I’ve seen that.” Shane remembers looking out from his balcony at the other buildings nearby.

“Let me know if you need help settling in. Also, if you’re an outdoor runner, let me know. There’s a really good circuit I’ve found.”

“Oh yeah?” Shane lines up his tape and gear in his new locker. “Love an outdoor run. Thanks.”

They both reach down to grab their water bottles at the same time and lock eyes for just a beat as their heads nearly bump.

Shane brushes it off and changes into his Under Armour. He notices Hayden chew on his lower lip for a split second.

The rest of the team files in, including Rozanov. Hayden introduces Shane to everyone, and they all seem like normal, nice hockey guys.

The coach comes in and hustles them out to the gym.

They warm up off-ice first, stretching and mobility drills, then move onto the ice. A few dozen laps to get their legs under them, edge work, passing drills that gradually speed up. The coach pairs Shane with Rozanov to run through systems and shooting patterns.

Shane focuses on doing exactly what he’s always done. He shoots clean and fast, picking corners without overthinking it. He notices Rozanov watching him more closely now, something sharp and evaluative in his gaze. Rozanov doesn’t say much, just ‘Yes, good Hollander. Now again’, but he gives Shane a nod every now and then so he must not suck too badly.

Afterward, the coach tells Shane he did a good job. It’s said casually, but it lands heavy in his chest.

Finally, they head to the showers.

The room is already thick with steam and noise, the kind of post-practice roar Shane has known since he was ten. Water hammers on tile, someone has a waterproof speaker blasting old-school hip-hop, and the chirps are flying fast and loud.

“Marleau, move your fat ass, some of us want hot water,” Patrice, the goalie, yells, snapping a towel in his direction.

Marleau doesn’t even flinch, just keeps soaping his chest. “Cry harder, Patty. I scored twice in that drill while you were busy falling on your own fat ass.”

“Twice? No, those were pity goals from the rookie,” Hayden calls, grinning as he tips his head back under the spray. “Hollander carried you, big man.”

Shane feels his face heat, but in a good way. He ducks under his own showerhead, lets the water pound his shoulders. “I just got lucky.”

“Lucky, my fat ass,” Patrice says, pointing a soapy finger at him. “You roofed Rozzy twice. He’s probably crying over it.”

Ilya, three heads down, doesn’t look up. Just flips Patrice off with one lazy hand while water streams down his back, gold chain flashing every time he moves.

Patrice clutches his chest like he’s been shot. “See? He loves me. Deep down, Rozzy’s a big softie.”

“Keep talking,” Ilya mutters, voice low and rough. “I use your face for shooting practice tomorrow.”

The whole room loses it. Even Shane laughs, real and surprised, the sound echoing off the wet walls. It feels good. Like every locker room he’s ever been in, only bigger and louder and full of people Shane’s had posters of on his wall of before.

Then, Shane reaches for the wall-mounted dispenser.

“Don’t you fucking touch that!” Patrice practically dives across the space, grabbing Shane’s wrist like he’s stopping a breakaway. “Rookie, no!”

Shane yanks his hand back, laughing. “What the fuck?”

“Superstition,” Patrice says, eyes wide and serious for half a second before he cracks. “You use the building soap, we’re cursed for the whole season. Lost a playoff series in ‘22 because some idiot rookie did it. True story.”

Hayden snorts. “He’s full of shit, but we all believe it now.”

Marleau fires the communal body wash bottle across the room in a perfect spiral. “Incoming, Hollander!”

Shane catches it clean and one-handed. A couple guys whoop.

“See?” Hayden says, grinning wide. “Kid’s got mitts. We’re keeping him.”

“For sure. At least until he buys the first round of rookie beers,” someone else yells.

“Or fetches towels for a month,” another adds.

Shane shakes his head, smiling despite himself. “Whatever you say, vets.”

The chirps keep coming. Someone ranks the ugliest playoff beards from last year. Another complains the meal-plan chicken tastes like cardboard. Hayden starts fake-scouting everyone’s “summer bodies” out of ten, giving Marleau a generous four and getting showered with water for it. Someone asks Shane if he’s ready for real hazing or if he’s still “too pretty for that.”

It’s stupid, loud, and perfect and that horrible pit in Shane’s stomach is gone and maybe even feels the knot in his chest loosen just a little, for now.

Then his eyes slip sideways.

Holy fucking shit.

Ilya is right there, water running in rivers down a body that looks unreal, chest broad and defined, abs sharp enough to cut glass, ass round and solid, gold chain catching the light. Shane’s brain blanks for one dangerous second before he rips his gaze away so hard his neck protests.

Don’t look. Don’t ever look.

He’s done this dance a thousand times. Eyes front, eyes down, eyes anywhere else. He knows how to play it straight.

But the picture burns behind his eyelids anyway, and something hot and wrong and terrifying coils tight in his stomach. He cranks the water colder, scrubs harder, starts reciting multiplication tables under his breath until his heart stops hammering. He’s never been good at math.

The guys are still going strong around him, someone now doing a terrible impression of Coach Glen’s pre-drill speech, another planning a team poutine run tonight.

Shane shuts off his water fast, grabs his towel, wraps it tight, and heads for the locker room before anyone clocks that he’s suddenly quiet.

“So, plans tonight? How’s your apartment setup?” Hayden asks, bent at the waist, rough-drying his wavy dark blond hair with a towel.

“I’ve got furniture deliveries coming. Gotta organise groceries, and my girlfriend wants to FaceTime,” Shane replies.

“Nice,” Hayden says, throwing his towel into the hamper as he pulls on black Calvins. “Is it a serious thing?”

That’s a normal question. It doesn’t make sense that Shane’s stomach suddenly hurts a little.

Because Ash is the best. She's beautiful. She's Japanese-Canadian like he is. They've been together about four months. She makes him laugh. They like the same dorky movies. She likes to cook with him. And they sometimes do sexy stuff together, like in Vancouver a week ago. Which felt fine. And in the past, it's definitely sometimes been good sex. Even if it's not as good as—

Nope. Those thoughts are not allowed right now. Back in the vault.

Shane takes a deep breath and huffs a small laugh. "Nah, not that serious."

"Sure," Hayden says, whacking him on the arm.

Chapter 2: Chicken

Chapter Summary

- Shane makes friends (everyone cheers)
- Shane drinks vodka (everyone cheers)
- Shane has a gf still... (crickets)
- Shane has a temper.

Chapter Notes

Thank you to Chocolate_Freckle, Infinite_reads and Pikelet for the beta xx

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

Shane settles into the grind faster than he expected. Mornings start brutal and early: alarm blaring at 6am, quick coffee and protein shake, then the six-minute walk to the rink while Montreal's summer-cold air still bites like winter.

Sessions kick off with bag skates, laps until his legs are jelly and lungs on fire, then edge work that makes his ankles scream, passing drills ramping up until pucks are zipping tape-to-tape like machine gun fire. Coach Glen prowls the bench, whistle shrill, barking "Faster!" or "Read it!" while pairing guys for systems: breakout patterns, forechecks, shooting reps where Shane picks corners clean and gets those quiet nods from the vets that feel incredible.

Off-ice is just as punishing: gym circuits with squats that leave him walking funny, core work, mobility drills that have everyone groaning. But Shane thrives on it. The burn shuts his brain up. No room for homesick thoughts or whatever the fuck else lurks in the vault in the back of his mind when he's dripping sweat and chasing that next rep.

After one particularly savage session – a full scrimmage where Shane roofs two on Ilya and draws a rare "Not bad" grunt – the locker room turns into its usual zoo: guys stripping off gear, chirps flying thicker than the steam from the showers.

"Hollander, you trying to show up Roz already?" Hayden calls, peeling off his soaked base layer and chucking it at his stall. "Those hands are disgusting, rook. Where'd you hide 'em in juniors?"

Shane shrugs, unlacing his skates with a grin he can't quite hide. "Just don't wanna get sent down for being useless."

Patrice howls from the showers doorway. “Useless? Kid’s making Rozzy look slow. Russian’s gonna start smoking doubles to cope.”

Ilya, toweling his dirty blonde hair, shoots a lazy smirk.

“I don’t smoke,” he lies. “Keep talking, Patty. Today, you play like dog that cannot see. Go jerk off.”

“Fuck off, Roz,” Patrice booms, flexing dramatically, “I do it good and I do it looking pretty. Dinner tonight, boys? That Italian joint downtown. Pasta load-up before preseason beats us dead. My treat, if Hollander snipes Roz again tomorrow.”

“Bet,” Shane says quickly, and the room erupts, side bets flying, someone yelling they’ll pay cash on the spot. They pile into Ubers, ending up at this cozy spot with red check tablecloths and the thick smell of garlic. Plates of carbonara and pizza, a few rounds of beers which Shane is more than happy to pay for. Stories get louder: old hazing tales, playoff war stories, someone’s disastrous Tinder date last week. Shane sits back soaking it in, laughing till his sides hurt. Feels like family already, maybe.

He’s doing fine. Better than fine; he’s playing sharp, reading plays ahead, earning actual minutes in scrimmages. Preseason games start late September, which is just weeks away now, with the regular season kicking off early October.

Most importantly, though, there have been no big breakdowns since that first lonely night crying on the floor with Snoopy. Thank fuck.

It helps that his teammates are legit great. No real assholes, just the classic hockey mix of protectiveness and nonstop shit-talk.

Coach Glen had cornered him one day post-ice. “Rozanov’s your buddy. Learn the systems from him. How we play different from juniors. He’ll help you fit right in.”

Well, it turns out Ilya’s version of “buddy” is just dudes being dudes, or something. Once a week or so – never enough to tank recovery – he hosts the younger guys at his place, a ridiculous penthouse a couple kilometres from the arena which has these wild floor-to-ceiling windows with the whole city glittering below, sleek black furniture, fridge stocked like a bar. They blind-taste vodkas until the room spins a little, and then it’s old Playstation hooked up for SingStar karaoke. Shane sings off-key while Patrice harmonizes worse, Hayden duets some ancient Britney, and Ilya deadpans Russian pop no one understands but everyone yells along to anyway.

The vodka tastings always wind down the same way: someone mentions Ilya’s “busy calendar” and the chirps start rolling in, soft and easy. “Rozzy’s gonna be late to morning skate again,” Hayden says with a smirk. “Got another ‘meeting’ lined up?” Patrice snorts and adds, “Yeah, meeting with legs, probably.”

Ilya always just leans back, smirks that slow, unbothered smirk of his, and shrugs like it’s no big deal. “What can I say? Ladies keep calling. I answer.”

Shane laughs along with the rest, but there's a small, weird tug in his chest he can't place; he's never quite figured out how to make it look so effortless like Ilya does.

When they aren't training, Shane goes for runs with Hayden around the local park. They match each other's pace easily and chit-chat along the way. Sometimes they get a bite to eat after. Hayden might be the most pure-of-heart and yet dumb-of-ass man Shane's ever met. It's a good thing IQ tests aren't mandatory for the NHL. Hayden had confessed that up until last year, he didn't understand how dolphins could be mammals, on account of them not being fluffy. Shane hadn't known what the fuck to say in response to that. But Hayden is nice, and he's gentle, and he sticks up for Shane. Hayden doesn't talk about sex much either, unlike the other guys, and it's nice to have a break from all the crude shit-talking.

All of it combined means it's kind of dumb and perfect and all that Shane could ever ask for. It also means Shane clicks with the rest of the crew really fast, what with all the inside jokes piling up and the group chat blowing up daily. Even if Ilya rags on him hardest.

To be very fair though, Shane gives plenty of ammo. Like the laundry apocalypse: wrong kind of detergent, washer going nuclear, whole utility closet flooded with suds up to his ankles. Panics, snaps a pic of the bubble sea, sends it to Larrikins (the young guys' chat).

Ilya hits first: *Your mother did not teach you laundry? Or did you try to make bubble bath for your girlfriend? I think she will not be impressed!*

Hayden: *LMAO rook's having a foam party solo* 🧼🧼🧼

Patrice: *Call 911 or just Mummy? Need a rescue?*

Marleau: *Shane can you swim? I'll call the coast guard*

Then there's a fucking emojis and gif storm. Shane fires back a soggy middle-finger selfie from ankle-deep, but he's cracking up alone in the mess.

Then there's the horrific chicken disaster. Shane accidentally leaves raw chicken breast on the counter overnight to thaw, then he totally spaces in the morning and doesn't put them in the fridge. He comes home from training and cooks it all up anyway. Shane then wakes up at 3am, projectile vomiting while shitting water, curled on the bathroom tile, sweating, and praying for mercy.

Because he's a team player and also delirious, Shane sends a weak "send help" selfie. Ilya renames him Double Fountain Chicken Disaster 🧼 in the chat. When he's finally back to being alive and comes to practice, Ilya has made him a 'chicken' friendship bracelet, and the boys hoist Shane onto their shoulders and chant 'Chicken! Chicken! Chicken!' until Shane threatens to throw up on them.

So now, Shane is 'Chicken'. Or worse, 'Little Chicken'.

Shane rolls with it, even if that's the dumbest nickname ever.

And he rolls with it because, quite frankly – on the ice, at least – he’s fucking killing it. Wrists snapping, vision sharp, nailing it again and again.

It’s all going amazing!

Then Ash drops a bomb via text: *Been thinking... maybe I come visit soon? Miss you like crazy. Could make it work for a weekend?*

Shane stares at his phone in the penthouse elevator, post-vodka-and-karaoke, stomach sinking. He should be thrilled. Planning the visit, counting days. Instead, dread hits him so hard. He’s dodged her calls too much lately, too busy yelling ‘Buttons’ lyrics off-key with the guys, too ‘tired’ after practice. *And the Worst Boyfriend Award goes to...*

They finally talk that night, him pacing his grey apartment. As expected. It starts awkwardly – like, how’s training, how’s home. Then she brings up the visit again, her voice hopeful.

Shane’s throat closes. “Ash... I don’t think that’s gonna happen.”

Then there’s the silence. Fuck. Then the unraveling bullshit just starts coming and doesn’t stop: Shane rambles on about how the distance is killing them, schedules are just impossible, of course he throws in the classic “It’s not you, it’s me” crap.

He also blames time zones, the move, everything but the quiet truth, which is that his feelings faded to friend-zone deep (if they were *ever* there – but that isn’t something Shane’s going to think about right now, thank you very much).

She gets upset, voice wobbling, asking why he let it drag. He feels like absolute garbage. *Because he is.* It all ends in Shane muttering about if they can “stay friends”, knowing it’s bullshit no one believes.

After he hangs up, Shane stands in the middle of the apartment, staring at his reflection in the darkened window, his phone heavy in his hand. Fuck. Why is he like this? Why can’t he just be normal and want the things he’s supposed to want? He cuddles Snoopy to sleep, but he doesn’t cry.

The next morning, he’s a walking storm cloud. Shane stomps into lockers, kicks his bag across the floor when it tips and shit goes absolutely everywhere. Then his locker jams, so he punishes it by slamming his stall so hard the door bounces back and hits him in the arm. “Fuck!”

Ilya clocks it immediately, smirking.

“What, sad face again? Laundry flood part two?”

“Fuck off.” Shane yanks on his compression top.

“Just asking. You are usually sunshine boy. What happened, little Chicken?” Ilya asks, apparently trying to fight a smile.

Shane glares daggers. “Stop.”

“You are adorable when you are cross. You look like angry kitten,” Ilya tries again.

“I said, fuck. Right. Off, you asshole.” Shane shoulders past to the gym.

Shane heads straight for a bike, earbuds blasting trash music he hates. He pedals furiously, with the resistance cranked, sweat pouring, lungs searing, thighs on fire. He keeps on going way past reason.

Eventually, the gym fills with teammates finishing lifts. He doesn't notice till Hayden taps his shoulder gently.

Shane groans and yanks one bud out, breathing ragged.

“What.” He feels bad immediately, Hayden doesn't deserve this. To be fair, no one does.

“You good, man?” Hayden asks, hopping off his own bike, handing over Shane's forgotten water. “We're teammates. Talk to us.”

“Don't,” Ilya warns from the free weights. “Chicken is sensitive today. Will bite your head off.”

Hayden flips him off. “Fuck off, Roz.”

Shane slows on the bike, now completely wrecked, and then gets off the bike and slumps himself against the wall. He feels pathetic. “Fuck, it's just— it's nothing. Dumb shit.”

“We're your family here now,” Hayden says quietly. “Buddies. We care, dude.” Hayden's hand rests on his shoulder. Shane swallows. The contact is kind of nice.

But then Shane drops his head between knees, groaning as it all comes back to him.

“Now he talks,” Ilya snarks. “I already tried.”

“Shut up, Roz,” half the room mutters. But everyone is listening now.

Shane finally mumbles, “Broke up with my girlfriend last night. I did it in a phone call. I know. Coward move.”

The room goes respectfully quiet. There are nods all around.

“I just, ugh. I feel like a total asshole,” he adds. “Because I am. But it just wasn't working. And she wanted to come and visit, but I didn't wanna string her along.”

“Doesn't sound like you're an asshole,” Hayden says. “Sounds honest. You let her down gently.”

Marleau ambles over, towel around neck. “Pulling the trigger's harder sometimes. You're the bad guy by default.”

Ilya scoffs. “Is puppy love. Will be fine in a week.”

Shane's glare could melt ice.

"What!" Ilya shrugs. "He's eighteen!"

"Was she hot, at least?" Patrice asks, a valiant attempt at breaking the tension.

"Yeah," Shane sighs, that's what everyone had always said, anyways. She's definitely pretty. And then groans loudly. "Fuuuuuck my life."

"Then prove it," Ilya pushes, grinning like he knows he's an ass.

Shane, because why the fuck not, unlocks his phone, scrolls Insta, hands it to Hayden. "Look for yourself."

Hayden's eyes go wide. "Jesus. You dumped her? When she was gonna fly here? You are the dumbest fuck in the world."

There's instantly a massive mob, all the guys crowding, grabbing the phone from each other. Shane recognises that this is probably a low move from him – he was raised better than this – but at least the attention is kind of off him for the moment.

"Fuck me," Patrice whistles. "Our little Chicken just fumbled a straight baddie."

"Don't say that," Shane mutters, smacking his shin with a water bottle. "I told you. It wasn't working."

Ilya peers last. "Idiot. Why not keep her for the sex?"

Shane's stomach knots and he clenches his fists. "You know that's fucking disgusting, right Rozanov? I wasn't going to, I don't know, fucking use her."

Ilya snorts. "I bet one hundred bucks you are still virgin then. Time for you to get your dick wet."

Red flashes behind Shane's eyes and he surges up in one move, launching himself full speed, grabbing Ilya's collar, and shoves him hard against the weights rack. "Take it fucking back." The weights go tumbling back in a big crash.

Ilya grabs Shane's collar back and gives him a hard push. "No. Fuck you. Is fucking joke."

Shane lifts his fist to deck Ilya in the mouth.

From zero to a hundred in two seconds, the whole room explodes, guys lunging, pulling them apart quickly.

"Stop!" Patrice yells. "Coach'll hear."

"Let go of him," Hayden pulls on Shane's hands. "He's just fucking chirping you, bro."

Shane is heaving his breath as he tries to calm down. He steps back and spits. “I said, take it back.”

Ilya throws his hands up, eyes wide. “Sorry. Fuck. Sorry. I take back, I take back. Whatever, little Chicken.”

The guys all look around, obviously wondering why a remark so dumb had flared Shane’s little temper up so hard.

Marleau claps Shane’s shoulder hard. “You know what you need? Night out. Tonight. This might actually be an emergency.”

Ilya goes to speak, and then shuts his trap. One of the vets eyes him wearily.

“Sorry. I’m sorry.” Shane hangs his head. “I just didn’t sleep well. Yeah. Let’s go out. I’ll buy you all drinks.”

Later on, in the locker room, when everyone else has already gone home to get ready to go out for the night, Shane leans his forehead against the cold metal locker and tries to will the embarrassing memories of the morning away.

Ilya walks in and pauses, clearing his throat so as not to startle Shane.

“I should not have said you should use women,” Ilya finally says, quietly.

Shane turns his head and glares. “Yeah. You don’t know anything.”

Ilya nods once, like he understands the weight of that. “I am sorry. I am your buddy. We are on the same team.”

He sticks out his hand, a little awkwardly.

Shane reaches for it, and Ilya pulls him into a bro-hug.

And then the hug just keeps going, like it doesn’t know when to stop... weird.

It’s suddenly kind of a long hug. Too long. Too close. Shane’s brain goes fuzzy for a second, because he’s touch-starved and Ilya smells clean and like something expensive, and his shoulders actually loosen.

He jerks back. “Yeah. Same team. Friends?”

“Friends,” Ilya repeats, voice flat and steady. Then he pauses, choosing his words carefully and speaking slowly. “And I will... respectfully, of course, help you find women in the club. I will show you how to do this, kid.”

[rambling author end note deleted]

Chapter 3: Smoke

Chapter Summary

The boys hit the Club.

Shane and Ilya are normal and there's nothing to see here.

Shane and Hayden are also normal. There is nothing to see here.

Chapter Notes

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

The nightclub is so full of people that Shane genuinely worries there might not be enough oxygen for everyone crammed inside. The air is thick with sweat, perfume, spilled beer, and that pulsing bass that rattles his ribs even through the Loop earplugs he slotted in the second they walked through the door. He does like to dance, and he's pretty good at it. He knows when to swing his hips just enough, shuffle his feet in time, and also keep his shoulders loose so he doesn't look like a robot trying to have fun. He googled tutorials, watched YouTube breakdowns – sue him, he's type A and he owns it, albeit secretly.

Marleau's suggestion to go out hadn't been a bad one after all. The pregame that Shane had bravely decided to host at his apartment had turned into a chaotic, laughing mess.

Hayden had rummaged through Shane's closet, declaring the plain black t-shirt and slightly baggier dark jeans 'clean', and 'not trying too hard', so 'perfect rookie energy'. Then, Shane had stammered on the phone, ordering enough booze to sink a small ship, and then been standing at the door welcoming guy after guy until his living room felt like a sauna full of hockey players.

Ilya had shown up last in a basically see-through garish leopard-print button-down, handed Shane a bottle of vodka with a polite nod, and said low, "My offer stands, I watch out for you tonight," which made Shane's stomach jump in a completely normal way he refused to examine. (We don't have time to unpack *all of that*.)

Shane made everyone take off their shoes at the door. His house, his rules. Asian household things. And yeah, he took the chirps for it, but nobody argued too hard.

Organising Ubers for eight drunk hockey players was a nightmare of lost phones and wrong addresses, but now they're finally here, the club lights strobing purple and blue, bodies pressed close, and Shane buys everyone who showed up a round of shots because who the fuck cares, there's no training tomorrow.

“Thanks for coming out with me,” he yells over the music, passing out the glasses. “Sorry I was such an annoying sack of shit this morning.”

The chirps come fast and affectionate. Hayden slings an arm around his shoulders, already slurring a little. “Nah, Chicken, you were just dramatic. Classic rookie meltdown, happens to the best of us.”

Patrice raises his shot. “To Hollander finally growing a pair and snapping on Rozzy. Proud of you, kid.”

Marleau claps him on the back hard enough to make him stumble. “You shoved him into the rack like a pro. That’s how you earn respect around here.”

Someone else, maybe one of the older guys, JJ, laughs and adds, “And you didn’t even cry after. Big boy points.”

Ilya, leaning on the bar with his leopard shirt half-unbuttoned, smirks and lifts his glass. “You’re welcome, our Little Chicken. Next time I will make you really mad.” The whole group hoots, glasses clink loud against the bar, shots go down burning, and Shane laughs with them, the tight feeling in his chest loosening just a fraction.

They knock back another round of shots and Shane finds himself on the dance floor, trying really hard not to think about the Ash disaster.

Maybe the guys were right, he just needs to get it out of his system. Casual sex isn’t new to him, but now his name’s attached to the Montreal Metros and it suddenly feels higher stakes, like every move could end up on some gossip site or group chat or something that ends up on management’s desk. A girl with short dark hair grabs his arm, pulls him in close, and he dances with her for a bit, hips moving, hands light on her waist. She’s not really his type, and the back of his mind whispers, *if he even has a type anymore*. He glances across the room and catches Rozanov watching him, leaning against a pillar with a drink in hand. Shane gives the tiniest shake of his head, *no, not this one*, and yells over the bass to the girl, “I, uh, I gotta go, I’ll be back.” She shrugs, already turning to someone else.

He squeezes through the crowd to Ilya. “Smoke?”

Ilya stares for a beat then cackles. “Yes! Smoke!”

They push out the side door into the freezing night air, not winter yet, but it’s Canada, so it still bites. Ilya pulls a cigarette from behind his ear. It’s quite a hot move. Shane reaches for it but Ilya yanks it high over his head.

“Oh? You want a smoke? Mr. Good Boy wants a smoke?”

“Come on,” Shane grumbles. “I’m drunk. Share with me.”

Ilya rolls his eyes but pulls out the carton and hands him one. “Of course I share with you.”

Shane flicks his lighter.

“You have no smokes but you have a lighter?” Ilya looks genuinely flabbergasted. “You surprise me, Hollander.”

Shane shrugs. “I smoke weed. Mellows me out. Am I that one-dimensional to you?”

“You have attitude problem,” Ilya says, taking a drag and blowing smoke up into the dark. He watches Shane smoke his cigarette like a joint, long, slow pulls, and laughs low.

“And you’re an asshole. Isn’t it wonderful we can all be different.” Shane snarks. He exhales, the nicotine hitting quick. “Fuck, I’ve missed this.”

“You don’t have to get drunk to smoke. Is fine sober too, you should try.”

Shane shakes his head and laughs. “No. Because then I’ll be like you.”

“Nothing wrong with being like me. I’m excellent hockey player and the women love me.” Ilya taps ash on the concrete, other hand in his pocket. “Is cold. Not as cold as Russia though.”

Shane sighs. “Okay, so I have a real question. As my buddy, I’m hoping you can help me out.”

Ilya snorts. “Please, Hollander. I am well of knowledge.”

Shane corrects automatically. “Wealth of knowledge. Now that I’m, you know, an NHL player... how does that work with...” He gestures back toward the club. “Like, am I gonna get in trouble if I take someone home? What if they tell someone?”

Ilya laughs, really laughs, then leans over his knees. “You are killing me. I have been killed!”

“I’m serious! I don’t want to get in trouble! What if she tells someone?” Shane whines now. “I’m being serious.”

“Do not worry. You do what you normally do. Is just plan to find someone to fuck, why are you having panic attack?” Ilya sighs, still chuckling, mutters something in Russian under his breath.

And now for the real question. Shane steels himself. “I... what if I don’t want to go all the way. What if I just want... a little something.”

Ilya squints and shakes his head slightly. “What do you want?”

“What if I just want a blow job?”

Ilya rolls his eyes and mutters in Russian before finally saying, flatly, “You just want someone to suck your dick, is okay.”

“Seriously!” Shane groans. “Do I really bring someone all the way back to my house for that? And then... kick them out?”

“You are such a fuckboy, not even thinking about returning the favor,” Ilya scoffs. He stubs his cigarette on the concrete wall. “Stop being crazy. This is what you do. You say, hi, I am Shane Hollander, I am NHL hockey player. Would you like to suck my cock?”

“Whatever,” Shane scoffs, copying him and grinding his stub out. “That’ll never work.”

“Mm.” Ilya nods. “It will work. You go back into club, you try it, you let me know.”

Shane goes back inside, heart hammering from the cold and the nicotine and the alcohol and everything else. The music swallows him again. He weaves through bodies, spots a girl near the bar, long hair, easy smile, already looking his way, and figures fuck it, maybe Rozanov is wrong. He leans in close enough to be heard. “Hi, I’m Shane Hollander. I play hockey for the NHL. Would you like to suck my cock?”

She blinks, laughs, looks him up and down like she’s deciding if he’s joking. Then she smiles slow. “Yeah. I would.”

They end up in the bathroom stall, lock clicked, bass thumping through the walls. She drops to her knees on the tile without hesitation, hands on his thighs, mouth hot and wet and skilled. Shane leans back against the door, eyes closed, trying to focus on the feeling, the slide, the suction, but his brain scatters. He doesn’t feel guilty thinking about whatever he wants, flashes of broad shoulders, smirks, lower voices, the way certain hands might feel instead, or if the mouth around his cock maybe belonged to someone else, and it hits him that maybe that’s the point, there’s no guilt now because there’s no lie here, just this.

But when he gets close, thighs tensing, breath hitching, he mutters, “Pull off,” because it feels courteous and almost respectful not to come in her mouth when he’s not even thinking about her. She does, surprised but cool about it. He grabs tissues from the dispenser, jacks himself off and finishes into them with a muffled groan, head tipped back. She stands, wipes her mouth, gives him a quick kiss on the cheek. “Nice meeting you, hockey boy.” Then she’s gone.

Shane’s not sure if he feels amazing or like a 200 pound sack of shit. Oh well. It felt good to come, he muses to himself.

When Shane emerges from the bathroom he knows he must be as red as a tomato, face flushed, shirt sticking to his back. He spots Ilya across the room. Ilya sees him and gives him a thumbs up, and a look that says ‘yeah?’. Shane, still blushing, lifts his hand and gives him a thumbs up back.

Hayden also spots him from across the room and slurs loud enough to cut through the noise. “Chiiiiiiiiiiiicken!” Hayden is absolutely fucked, eyes glassy, hair a mess, swaying like he’s on a boat, one arm slung over Patrice’s shoulder for balance while he tries to dance and nearly takes them both down. “Where you been, man? Missed you! I was gonna... gonna do a backflip but the floor said no.”

Shane laughs despite himself. “Oh, Hayd. I think we need to get you home.”

Patrice shakes his head. “All yours, Hollander.”

He orders an Uber ASAP, pours Hayden into the back seat, apologizing to the driver the whole time, and climbs in beside him. It occurs to Shane, in that blurry moment, that while he knows what building Hayden lives in, he actually cannot remember the apartment number.

Needs must.

“Hayden pretty gone. Taking him back to my place,” Shane messages the group chat. For good order he adds a picture of Hayden smooshed up against the glass.

“Are you starting or finishing?” he asks the Uber driver, doing his best to yank Hayden upright as the blond man groans and slumps against the window again with a thud.

The driver is chatty, thank fuck, and talks about the weather, the news, anything to keep the mood light. He also doesn’t seem to notice Hayden is about thirty seconds from throwing up the entire short ride home. Shane manages to get him out of the Uber, pays on the app, and hands the driver \$100 cash. “I’m really sorry about him. Have a good night.” Shane is determined to keep his Uber rating above a respectful 4.95 stars, and tonight is no exception.

The driver grins big. “Have a good night, bud.”

Shane clenches his teeth at the nickname, wincing internally just a little at the reminder that, to most people, he’s still just a *kid*, NHL or not.

Hayden leans over and braces himself on a power pole.

“I’m cold,” he complains, voice small.

“We should get inside,” Shane sighs. “Come on, you big baby.”

Hayden holds up a hand. “Wait. Wait,” and it doesn’t take a genius to guess what’s about to happen.

Oh fuck, here we go, Shane thinks.

And then Hayden is sick, all over the sidewalk, violent, heaving, the kind of puke that leaves you shaking after.

“Oh, okay, sure, great,” Shane says to himself, because Hayden isn’t taking any of this in now.

After Hayden is done, and Shane is sure he’s done, Shane hauls him up into the grey building, into the elevator, into his apartment. The living room is a complete warzone, bottles everywhere, containers scattered, cardboard from beer boxes crumpled on the floor.

“I feel baaaaad,” Hayden groans.

“You need water,” Shane says sternly.

He plonks Hayden down on his bed; tidying the living room be damned. When his cleaner comes tomorrow, he’ll tip her generously. Shane fills an extra sports bottle with water and

electrolyte powder, walks back into the room. Hayden has slumped onto his side.

“Up we go,” Shane sighs, yanking him upright by his armpits. “Here, drink.”

Hayden does as he’s told. They lock eyes for a moment.

“What colour are your eyes?” Hayden asks, voice thick and sleepy.

“They’re light brown,” Shane replies. Their faces are a little bit too close as Hayden squints to try and see something.

“They’re...” Hayden pauses. “they’re nice.”

“Yours are nice too,” Shane whispers. “They’re very blue.”

“Everyone says that,” Hayden sighs.

“I’m gonna tuck you into bed here,” Shane says finally. “I’ll go clear off the couch.”

“No.” Hayden flops down. “Please. Just stay with me.”

Shane sits on the mattress. He doesn’t say anything back.

Hayden reaches over and grabs Shane’s hand. Shane tries not to flinch at the contact. “You are my best friend,” Hayden states. “And you’re a good hockey player. And you’re not an asshole. And also, Roz was rude to you today. I wish I had told him to lay off you before he made you mad.”

“You did plenty,” Shane sighs.

“You were so mad,” Hayden sighs.

“I was so mad,” Shane repeats back. Hayden’s eyes are starting to close.

“I hope you feel better now,” Hayden sighs. And then he’s out like a light.

Shane sits there a minute longer, hand still in Hayden’s loose grip, staring at the wall

Chapter End Notes

[rambling author end note deleted]

Chapter 4: Ilya's Night after the Club

Chapter Summary

A short POV of Ilya after the club.

What the fuck was that? (Ilya voice)

Ilya thinks about Shane.

Ilya jerks off.

Chapter Notes

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

Ilya falls into bed and takes a deep breath. What a weird day it's been.

The mental breakdown from Shane in the gym in the morning had made no sense. While he had apologised later for being disrespectful or whatever, Ilya had known that there was something else going on.

When Ilya had first met Shane, he had had two thoughts.

Firstly, Shane was pretty. His dark eyes and dark hair and that little smattering of freckles across his nose were almost too much. He looked pretty in a way that not many people did, Ilya had decided. Distinctively boy-pretty.

And secondly, Shane was going to be annoying.

He was annoyingly good at ice hockey. Annoyingly good at being on time. Annoyingly *reverent* about everything. He took it all so fucking seriously. He hung off every word the coach said. The team also loved him immediately, which hadn't been Ilya's experience.

Shane was smart, but lacked the general life skills that most people had by the age of twelve, at least in Russia. He couldn't do laundry. He couldn't cook chicken without getting sick. He didn't know how to organise his grocery delivery. All of this, to Ilya, meant that Shane was probably a spoiled brat.

But he hadn't acted like that. He'd be friendly. He'd been polite, always humble and ready to learn. He'd done whatever the fuck he was told to do by the staff, or by the coach, or if Karen made him film Instagram videos for the social media account. He was eager to please.

And unfortunately, and maybe most importantly, Shane was fucking hot. And Ilya knew he hadn't imagined it when he'd caught Shane's gaze lingering a little too long in the changing

rooms he was sure of that much. But Shane had, at least up until a day ago, had a girlfriend, even if he never took part in the crude banter or didn't share his own sexual victory stories.

Ah.

Now Ilya remembers.

The chirp that had set Shane off had been when he had called him a virgin.

And that's a *really* weird thing to react like that to.

When he'd apologised to Shane, it seemed that Shane was happy to accept that apology in relation to his snarky remark about using his ex-girlfriend for sex only, but surely, Shane had to know that it hadn't been what had set him off in the first place. Guess they were both going to pretend. And that hug had been kind of long. Whatever.

But then, in the club, they'd probably had the longest conversation they'd ever had.

Like, *ever*.

And it was about how Shane could get laid.

Or, maybe how Shane could *avoid* getting laid, anyways. He'd basically said to Ilya, "I want to have my cock sucked. Nothing more."

Which was also weird. Not very typical. And hot. So hot.

Ilya doesn't know what to make of that strange conversation. If Shane cared about disrespecting women, why had he asked Ilya about how to go about getting a blowjob with no strings attached?

Is Shane worried about women knowing where he lives? He'd seemed comfortable enough having all the guys crammed into his boring, grey-beige apartment. The season hasn't even begun, why the paranoia?

Shane is a complete enigma.

And then there's Shane smoking. And admitting he smokes weed. Like, sure, who doesn't? It's Canada. But Shane? Of all people? Ilya supposes he had probably stereotyped Shane wrong.

Stereotyped. Ilya whispers the word in English out loud.

Yeah, that's the word.

But then the conversation with Shane outside was so nice. And funny. And Shane had looked fucking hot in that tight black T-shirt.

Really fucking hot.

But nothing had prepared Ilya for seeing Shane stumbling out of the bathroom. His pink cheeks were blooming, and even his ears looked red. His face had been so sweaty, and he'd had that sex-drunk look in his eyes.

It wouldn't take a genius to work out that Shane Hollander had just had his cock sucked.

It had probably been a while between blow jobs, Ilya muses. Maybe months, he thinks, if he'd moved to Montreal for training and been long distance with whatever-her-name-is.

Fuck, Shane would have come *so* hard.

And then Ilya is pushing the sheets out the way and idly playing with his cock recalling the look on Shane's face. He's getting hard already.

Based on how Shane stutters and blushes and fumbles his words when he gets flustered around the other guys, Ilya imagines that Shane would have been quite vocal in that bathroom stall.

He imagines a girl on her knees in front of Shane, pulling his cock out of his Calvins.

He imagines how Shane would have groaned and leaned back against the wall, and how he would have moaned as she'd sucked him off.

Ilya's fully fucking hard now.

He strokes himself slowly, because for some reason it's already starting to feel good.

He wonders if Shane would be chatty, saying things like "Fuck that feels good. Just like that."

Ilya's hand speeds up. Without thinking about it, he puts two fingers in his mouth and suddenly it's him on his knees for Shane.

If Shane had asked Ilya to suck his cock in that dark alleyway, Ilya might have done it. Actually, he definitely would have done it. But he would have made Shane ask nicely.

Fuck.

And now he's stroking harder. He imagines how Shane could be gripping his hair, fucking his face.

He imagines Shane saying, "Stop, fuck. I'm about to come. Fuck!"

He imagines how Shane would have come down his throat. And Ilya comes, fucking his fist.

Wow.

He doesn't even have to imagine what Shane's post-come glow looks like. Because he'd seen it for himself.

When Ilya's cock stops pulsing, his brain starts to work again.

Was it possible that Shane wasn't straight?

Definitely possible, Ilya decides.

There's also the other factor: Shane's close friendship with Hayden. The other guys lovingly call them 'Shayden'. Always hanging out *together* and going for runs *together* and getting breakfast before training *together*. Ilya's not jealous. Okay, maybe a little. It would be nice to hang out with Shane, just the two of them.

There's nothing gay about Shane and Hayden being team besties, of course. Having friends is normal and good. But there is also the way they squeeze in together in the locker room to giggle at penguin videos, or how when they were hopping into Ubers, Hayden had made a comment about choosing Shane's outfit, and it sounded like they had gotten ready, *together*:

And Hayden looks at Shane with those ridiculously big blue eyes and Ilya swears that sometimes he sees something familiar and, just maybe, queer in that friendship.

Oh, and Hayden had gone home with Shane. Granted, Hayden had been fucking wasted and falling over his own feet. But still. Whatever. Ilya wonders if they slept in the same bed. The thought makes his stomach feel a little tight.

Ilya's exhausted, so the puzzle won't be solved tonight. But there's something there. Ilya's not usually wrong about these things.

Chapter End Notes

[rambling author end note deleted]

Chapter 5: Sober

Chapter Summary

The morning after the club.

A big game.

A hotel room arrangement.

A sober cigarette.

Chapter Notes

Shane speaks Japanese and I'll say it with my chest.

However, I do not. My year 11 Japanese is getting me half way there and my beta Chocolate_Freckle who went and lived in Japan during a moment of crisis fixed it up as best they could.

If you speak Japanese and think it's terrible, just comment how we should change it because we DO care and want it to be right. I am happy to learn!

As someone with non-white cultural heritage I couldn't in good faith ignore his Japanese heritage.

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

Hayden wakes to darkness so complete it feels like someone turned off the world. His mouth tastes like sour metal. He's in a bed, obviously, but whose? The sheets are cool against his bare legs. A thin blade of light slips under a door somewhere to his left, just enough to remind him eyes exist.

By some miracle, he doesn't feel that hungover. Maybe it's just being nineteen. Maybe he had some water before bed.

He rolls onto his side, slow, waiting for shapes to emerge. There's a body next to him. Breathing softly. Close enough that he can feel the faint heat radiating off skin.

Last night was... not great. He remembers the tequila shots; maybe three too many, actually. Definitely. The memories are coming back in wet, blurry Polaroids: strobe lights, bass

thumping in his ribs, laughter that sounded too loud, even then. An Uber. Puking on the sidewalk. Shane's arm around him, hauling him upright like he weighed nothing.

Fuck. *Shane*.

His eyes are finally adjusting. The room is big—sparse, modern, with floor-to-ceiling blackout curtains and a sleek nightstand. A sports bottle sits next to him. He grabs it, takes a cautious sip. Electrolytes. Salty-sweet relief floods his tongue. Thank Christ. Thank Shane.

More fragments slot into place. Shane's voice cutting through the noise outside the club. Shane's hand steady on his back in the elevator.

Hayden sets the bottle back down, but he fumbles it carelessly. It tips, rolls, hits the hardwood with a sharp plastic clatter that echoes in the quiet room.

Shane stirs and rolls over. His voice is rough with sleep.

“Can you not?” he grumps.

Hayden freezes. Right. Shane's apartment. Shane's bed. Shane could have crashed on the couch, heck, he could have crashed on the couch, and yet, he's here, in Shane's bed, sheets tangled around both of them.

He swallows. This is... not standard teammate behaviour. Not even close.

“Was I the worst last night?” Hayden asks, voice coming out high and squeaky, barely above a whisper.

Shane lets out a low, sleepy chuckle. “Yeah. You were white-girl wasted.”

“Fuck.” Hayden buries his face in the pillow (Shane's pillow) and groans long and low, the sound muffled by down and cotton that smells faintly of cedar and whatever cologne Shane wears. “And I slept in your bed,” he groans again, quieter, mortified.

“You wouldn't let me leave you,” Shane says, matter-of-fact, no edge to it. “You wanted me to stay.”

Hayden's stomach does something complicated—maybe half nausea, half something warmer and more dangerous. He keeps his face smashed into the pillow so Shane can't see the flush creeping up his neck. It's too dark, and he wouldn't be able to see it anyway.

God. Please let Shane have been too drunk to remember the rest. The hand-holding. The earnest drunk compliments. The part where Hayden probably said way too much and way too sincerely.

He risks cracking one eye open. Shane's watching him in the dim light, expression unreadable, one arm tucked under his head like this is just another morning, and not the morning after Hayden turned into a walking disaster.

“We should get some breakfast,” Shane finally says.

Something snaps and Hayden sits up quickly. “Yep! I could go for eggs. My treat.” Hayden pauses. “Why the fuck do you smell like cigarettes?”

“Blame Roz,” Shane chuckles.

By Monday morning skate, the locker room hums with the usual pre-ice energy: tape ripping, sticks clacking, someone’s phone blasting a terrible EDM remix. Shane sits at his stall, lacing his skates with deliberate focus, telling himself the weekend is already ancient history. The blurry, soft moment in his bed with Hayden? Drunk nonsense. Forgotten. Normalcy has resumed.

Hayden shuffles in last, looking a little sheepish already. The boys smell weakness immediately.

“Good to see you alive and kicking,” Marleau laughs. “Especially after your back flip attempt on the dance floor.”

“*Everyone get outta my way,*” Patrice imitates Hayden. “*Imma do it!*”

Hayden drops onto the bench with a groan, head in his hands. “I don’t remember any of that. You’re all full of shit.”

“Nah, we got receipts,” one of the fourth-liners pipes up, waving his phone. “Video in the group chat: you’re swaying like a palm tree in a hurricane. You spill your drink on three different people at once. Then you’re hugging the wall and dropping it low and dirty.”

The room erupts with sticks banging lockers, hoots bouncing off the walls. JJ picks up the chirp and keeps it going. “And the best part? Shane had to bail early like a responsible dad. Cut his own night short to Uber your blackout ass home. That’s love, boys. That’s teammate sacrifice.”

Hayden’s face goes from green to red. “Fuck off. I hate you all. I’m never drinking again.”

The teasing circles back eventually, lighter this time.

Ilya, taping his stick two stalls down, glances over at Shane. There’s quick eye contact, his eyes flicking to Shane’s face, then away. Then that slow, knowing smirk curls his mouth, the one that lingers just long enough to feel mischievous as hell.

Patrice catches the look, turns. “Speaking of responsible... Hollander. You dipped out early to play babysitter, but we all saw you come out of that bathroom looking way too pleased with yourself before the great Hayden rescue. Spill, Chicken. Get any action before dad duty kicked in?”

Shane laughs, quickly deflecting. He’s never been one for this kind of chatter but saying nothing isn’t going to be enough.

“Hilarious. Very funny. Need I remind you that my pathetic breakup was the reason we went out in the first place?”

“Go on, Hollander. One detail!” Hayden pleads. “Please.”

Shane laughs. “Yeah, yeah. Fine. I got my dick sucked. In a tiny bathroom stall.”

The boys hoot. JJ slaps the bench. “Little Chicken finally got some! Proud of you, kid. But next time, maybe let your drunk baby fend for himself so you can finish the job properly.”

Shane waves them off, cheeks warm. “You’re all degenerates. Move on.”

The chirps fade as guys filter toward the tunnel. Ilya hangs back, waiting until it’s just a few stragglers. He slides over to Shane’s stall, still acting casual, like maybe he’s just grabbing an extra puck from the bin nearby.

He leans in close. His voice low, “So. My line... it worked well for you?”

Shane meets his gaze. He’s holding steady, but his pulse is ticking up anyway. “Yep.”

Ilya’s smirk deepens, slow and satisfied. “I knew it would.”

He claps Shane once on the shoulder, quite firmly. His thumb brushes the muscle a fraction longer than necessary before his hand pulls away, making direct contact with the skin on Shane’s bare neck and the little fuzzy hairs at the base of his scalp. Then he turns and heads for the ice.

Shane exhales and shakes it off.

October

The Montreal Metros are six games into the season now, deep enough that patterns are starting to show. They have had a mix of home dates at the Bell Centre and a few early road swings, enough time for lines to be shuffled and reset. The top unit is doing what it’s supposed to do. What’s more interesting is that the second line—Shane Hollander on the right, Ilya Rozanov on the left, anchored by a steady center—have started to find real rhythm in short stretches.

Tonight they are in Boston, playing at TD Garden. Games there are never quiet, and never gentle. The pace is high from the opening face-off, Boston leaning hard on the forecheck and forcing Montreal to play fast whether they want to or not. The first period tilts Boston’s way, but the Metros keep it close, absorbing pressure and waiting for cracks.

They get them in the second. Montreal cleans up their exits, starts getting through the neutral zone with speed, and the game evens out. By the third period it’s tight, tense, the kind of game where every shift matters.

Midway through the third, the Metros get their moment. Ilya pulls two defenders toward him along the left side and threads a pass straight through the slot. Shane is already there. He doesn’t hesitate. One clean swing, a one-timer from prime scoring ice, and the puck is in the back of the net.

The building drops into a collective groan. The Metros bench erupts.

It's Shane's first NHL goal. Ilya gets the assist and grins a huge goofy grin at Shane. Their teammates pile on and bang their helmets. "Yeah, Hollander!" the guys yell. "First one in the bag!"

Boston pushes hard late, throws everything at them, but Montreal holds. When the horn sounds, the Metros skate off with a 4–3 win.

After the game, Shane takes a slightly longer shower to try and calm his heart rate. That had been so intense. The assist from Rozanov was well deserved, and it was like he had known with just a glance, not even a stick tap, where he had to be to receive that pass.

As luck would have it, Rozanov also seems to be taking longer in the shower. It's just the two of them now.

Ilya looks over at Shane. "Too bad we can't celebrate tonight."

Hearing Ilya talk to him alone while they're naked makes Shane's skin tingle and his stomach swoop a little. He tilts away slightly, not because he's hard, but just in case.

"Could have gone out and used my line," Ilya jokes. "I'm Shane Hollander. You saw me on TV tonight. I scored a goal. Suck my cock?"

Shane just laughs, because if he doesn't, he's going to start thinking about how he has replayed the way Rozanov had said that line. Mostly very late at night, when he touches himself.

"Fuck off," he says lightly.

The bus ride back to the hotel is buzzing, in that contained, satisfied way that only comes after a road win. Music plays low through someone's speaker, more background than party, and phones light up as clips of Shane's goal start circulating in the team group chat. Shane is still riding the adrenaline. His suit jacket is slung over the seat beside him and his helmet hair is flattened into something almost respectable.

Room assignments get handed out in the hotel lobby with the usual quick efficiency. On road trips, younger players and guys on entry-level deals often share rooms. It keeps things simple and keeps everyone where they are supposed to be and out of trouble. Most of the team barely looks at the list.

Shane notices that Hayden's pissed. His jaw tightens when he sees he's been paired with a fourth-liner (Connors) instead of Shane. That's annoying, because *Shayden* is joined at the hip and always rooming together.

Shane, meanwhile, is rooming with Rozanov.

Hayden lets out a dramatic little huff as he grabs his key card and duffel, muttering something under his breath about 'betrayal' and 'loyalty' that is *not* meant to be taken

seriously. He refuses to look at Shane in the elevator, arms crossed, performing his disappointment with real commitment like a grumpy little puppy.

Shane clocks it immediately and almost laughs.

“Relax,” Shane says, bumping Hayden lightly with his elbow. “I’ve heard Roz snores like a chainsaw, anyway. You’re not being replaced.”

Hayden finally cracks, rolling his eyes. “Great. Hope you enjoy that. If he sucks, come find me.” He gives Shane a friendly thwack on the arm.

Up on the eighth floor, Shane and Ilya drop their bags inside the room. It’s standard issue. Two queen beds, a desk, a small sitting area, and a narrow balcony overlooking the city lights, the Charles River a dark ribbon in the distance. Ilya kicks off his dress shoes immediately, loosens his tie, and undresses for a shower.

“Good game, Hollander,” Ilya says, apparently purposefully not using Shane’s horrific nickname. He smirks as he pulls two Coke Zeros from the minibar. Team-approved, stocked ahead. He cracks one open and tosses the other to Shane. “First goal. Big moment. You looked good out there.”

Shane catches the drink. He’s still in his suit pants and button-down, sleeves rolled up, pulse only just starting to slow. “Felt good. Your pass was perfect. Set me up clean.”

Ilya shrugs, but his eyes linger. “The line is clicking. If we keep doing that, the coaches won’t have much choice. We’re gonna be first line soon.”

“Whatever, asshole,” Shane laughs. He sips his Coke and then FaceTimes his parents while Ilya showers.

Yuna picks up the call immediately.

“Shane-kun! Hajimete no NHL gōru! Yatta! Hontou ni omedetou. Ganbatta, ne,” she says. *(Shane! Your first NHL goal! Yes! Massive congratulations. You really went for it.)*

“Arigatou, kaa-san,” Shane says. *(Thanks, Mum.)*

“Demou, ne, shīzun wa hajimatta bakari kara, ki o tsukete, ne! Keiga shinaide, onegai, ne?” *(But the season’s only just started, so please be careful. Don’t get hurt, please, ok?)*

Shane just replies “Un, un, wakatteiru yo, kaa-san. Demo, ne, soro soro neru yo, ne.” *(Yeah yeah, I know Mum. But I need to sleep soon.)*

Yuna continues “Hai, hai. Demo, kyou no gōru – ureshikatta, ne! Sasuga ni yoku dekita. *(Alright. But today’s goal really made me happy. Well done, I knew you’d kill it.)* I’m so proud of you.”

Shane, again, automatically bobbing his head in a tiny bow: “Arigatou, kaa-san. Ja, ima beddo ni iru. Rūmumeito ga shawā haitte iru.” *(Thanks. I’m on my bed. My roommate is in the shower.)*

“Sō nano,” Yuna says. (*I see.*)

Shane is kind of keen to cut this short before Rozanov comes back. “Ah... ima modotte kita,” (*Oh... he’s back now.*)

“Dare?” asks Yuna. (*Who?*)

“Rozanov,” Shane says.

Rozanov enters, looks up and smirks. *That’s my name*, he gestures, pointing at himself. Shane mouths for him to fuck off. Oops. His camera is on.

Yuna keeps going.

“Fūn. Nanka asshōru sō da ne. Ano hito, Shane ni asshōru mitai ni shite nai?” (*Hmm. He sounds like an asshole. He’s not being an asshole to you, is he?*)

Shane, worried for a second Rozanov can understand Japanese—he can’t, right?—says “Haha. Maa, tokidoki wa. Demo, warui yatsu ja nai yo. Kekkyoku wa yasashii.” (*Haha. Well, sometimes. But he’s not a bad guy. He’s actually nice.*)

Yuna continues. “Sō... jaa, ii kedo. Demo, chanto karada ni ki o tsukete ne.” (*I see... then that’s fine. But make sure you take good care of yourself.*)

Shane sighs with a smile. “Un. Oyasumi, mama.” (*Yeah. Good night, Mum.*) He hangs up the call and looks up.

Ilya nods and purses his lips. “Ah, so you are... bi... bilingual.”

Shane nods; he caught that subtle joke, but he doesn’t show it. “Barely. I’m so shit and out of practice.”

“Sounded good to me. I heard my name. Are you talking about looking up to me? I am good leader?”

“Just that I’m rooming with you and you’re an asshole. Sometimes,” Shane shoots back.

“You use that dirty mouth when you talk to your mother?” Ilya puts a hand up. “Where is the respect!”

“Hey,” Shane holds his hands up. “She was the one who asked me if you’re an asshole.”

Ilya bites his lip. “You are from Japan? Or Canadian, with Japanese mum?”

Shane nods, “Japanese-Canadian, born in Canada. I did, like, those horrible after-school classes to learn Japanese when I was young, but I gave up when hockey got more important. I speak Japanese like I’m seven, so if anyone asks, tell them I don’t speak it, please.”

“Okay, I got it. Hearing you speak it is... nice. Were you teased for being Japanese?” Ilya asks.

“Yep. A lot.” Shane nods. No one ever asks him that. “They teased me until I got really good at hockey and bulked the fuck up. Then everyone shut the fuck up and left it alone.”

“Good. But not good they teased you.”

Ilya’s towel is still slung low on his hips and he combs his damn hair while checking his phone.

For some reason, Shane is blushing a little. He decides now is probably a good time to shower. He doesn’t need to see Ilya naked again. More shit for the vault.

After Shane’s shower, safely in sweats and hoodies, neither of them felt like a real meal after the game; they skip ordering anything heavy and eat pre-made team meals from the afternoon: just chicken, rice and broccoli with sauce. They need to sleep, but the buzz from their victory makes it hard to sit still.

Around one in the morning, Ilya nods toward the balcony door.

“Want some air?”

Shane follows him outside. The cold hits sharp—that dry New England bite—but the balcony is sheltered enough. City noise drifts up from below. Distant horns, the low hum of traffic. Ilya leans against the railing, pulls a pack of cigarettes from his pocket, and lights one with a quick flick of his lighter. The flame throws his face into brief relief. Sharp cheekbones and that familiar half-smirk. His gold chain shimmers.

Shane watches the ember glow as Ilya takes a slow drag and exhales into the dark. Smoke curls, mixing with their breath.

“You want one?” Ilya asks, holding out the pack.

Shane shakes his head. “No. I shouldn’t. Plus, I’m sober.”

Ilya lets out a quiet laugh. “One won’t kill you. Come on, Hollander, just share mine then. You earned it.” He offers the lit cigarette, filter-first, really casually.

Shane hesitates. The balcony feels smaller than it did a second ago. Their shoulders are almost touching. He can smell the smoke now, mixed with Ilya’s cologne. The city lights reflect in Ilya’s eyes.

“Fuck it,” Shane mutters.

He takes the cigarette. His fingers brush Ilya’s knuckles, lingering just a beat too long. He brings it to his mouth and takes two shallow drags. The burn hits fast, familiar and rough. He hands it back before he’s tempted to have more.

Ilya takes it without stepping away, smiling softly. They stand close, elbows on the railing. Shane feels the warmth coming off Ilya’s arm, the slow, even rhythm of his breathing. Ilya takes another drag, watches Shane watch the smoke, then lifts his eyes.

For a moment, everything goes still.

Ilya's gaze drops to Shane's mouth, then back up, so quickly he could have imagined it—but he *didn't*, because it was *definitely* there, heavy and unreadable. The cigarette burns down between his fingers, forgotten.

Nothing happens.

Finally, Ilya exhales and crushes the cigarette against the railing. "It's freezing. Come on. Cannot have you catching pneumonia, little star player Chicken."

Shane nods, throat tight.

They step back inside.

Fuck it, Shane thinks.

Chapter End Notes

 oh who likes to be edged. (Shane, canonically).

Chapter 6: Spark

Chapter Summary

It's porn. Not sorry.

They step back inside.

The balcony door clicks shut behind them, and the room feels suddenly smaller, warmer, the air thick with the lingering traces of smoke and the sharper edge of something else that has been building for weeks. The city lights are cut off, replaced by the low amber glow of the bedside lamp Ilya left on. Neither of them moves to turn on the big light.

Ilya turns back to the door and looks at Shane. Just *looks*. The smirk is gone. His eyes are darker than usual, pupils blown wide in the low light, and the silence stretches so taut Shane can hear his own heartbeat in his ears.

Shane's mouth goes dry. He takes one step forward. Ilya mirrors it. Another step. Then they collide.

It is not gentle. Ilya's hands come up to fist in Shane's hoodie, hauling him in, and Shane's palms slam against Ilya's chest, fingers curling into the soft fabric of his T-shirt. Their mouths crash together, hungry and messy, teeth clicking before they find the angle. Ilya tastes like smoke and Coke, and Shane groans into it, the sound low and helpless, vibrating between them. Ilya answers with a rough groan in his throat, the noise rumbling against Shane's lips as he backs him up hard until Shane's shoulders hit the wall beside the balcony door with a thud.

"Shit," Shane gasps when Ilya's mouth moves to his jaw, teeth scraping. His hands are already under Ilya's shirt, greedy for skin, dragging over the ridged abs and up to the broad chest, thumbs circling nipples that pebble instantly. Ilya hisses sharply, the sound hot against Shane's neck, and shoves a thigh between Shane's legs, pressing up firmly. Shane rolls into it without shame, cock already aching, and lets out a shaky moan that makes Ilya chuckle dark and low.

"Fuck," Shane breathes. "Fuck, *finally*."

Ilya laughs, ragged and hungry, and comes back up to bite Shane's lower lip hard enough to sting. "You want this bad, Hollander?"

"Yes," Shane says, voice cracking as they break for air, foreheads pressed together. They're both panting now. "Bed. Now."

Ilya doesn't wait. He spins Shane around, hands gripping his hips hard enough to bruise, steering him the few steps to the nearest queen bed. Shane stumbles willingly, and Ilya shoves him down onto the mattress. Shane lands on his back, chest heaving, staring up as Ilya yanks his own shirt over his head and tosses it aside. The low light from the bedside lamp gilds the sharp cut of his torso, the faint sheen of sweat making his skin gleam.

Shane sits up just long enough to rip off his hoodie and shirt, and then Ilya is on him, crawling over him, knees bracketing his hips. They kiss like they are fighting for it, tongues sliding slick and desperate, hands everywhere. Ilya's fingers dig deep into Shane's pecs, squeezing the muscle possessively, thumbs rolling and pinching his nipples until Shane arches off the bed with a loud, broken moan that echoes in the quiet room. "God, yes," Shane groans, the words spilling out unfiltered. He gives it right back, palms spreading wide over Ilya's chest, kneading hard, twisting nipples until Ilya growls again, deeper this time, and grinds down roughly, cocks dragging together through fabric.

"Take these off," Ilya mutters against Shane's mouth, voice gravel-rough, tugging at Shane's waistband. Clothes come off in a frantic rush, sweats and boxers shoved down and kicked away until there is nothing left but skin on skin. They rut together like that, hips snapping, cocks sliding hot and slick with precome, mouths fused in messy kisses. Shane's hands never leave Ilya's chest, squeezing rhythmically, and every time he pinches, Ilya lets out a low, filthy curse in Russian that makes Shane moan louder.

Ilya pulls back first, breathing hard, eyes blazing down at Shane. He drags a thumb across Shane's swollen lips, voice husky. "Is your first time with a man?"

Shane huffs a wrecked laugh, chest rising and falling fast. "Definitely not."

Ilya's grin is sharp, almost feral. "Good. I want to hear you."

He slides down Shane's body, slow and deliberate, mouth leaving a trail of wet heat – collarbone, sternum, pausing to suck hard at one nipple while his fingers torment the other. Shane's head falls back against the pillow, fingers threading tight into Ilya's hair as he moans openly, the sounds coming steady now, breathless and needy.

"Fuck, Ilya, right there."

Lower still, tongue dipping into his navel, teeth grazing the sharp line of his hipbone until Shane is squirming, hips lifting.

When Ilya finally takes him in, mouth hot and wet, closing over the head of his cock, Shane's hips jerk hard off the bed.

"Oh fuck," he groans loudly, voice cracking. Ilya pins him down, hard, with a strong forearm across his hips and sinks deeper, throat working, cheeks hollowing as he bobs, slow then fast. His free hand stays glued to Shane's chest, squeezing hard in time with every pull of his mouth, thumb flicking the nipple relentlessly. Shane can't stay quiet, moans spill out of him in a constant stream, getting higher and more desperate the closer he gets. "Rozanov, shit, your *mouth*, don't stop."

He lasts longer than he thought he would, but the sight of Ilya's lips stretched wide, the wet sounds, the possessive grip on his pec and other hand on his thigh anchoring him in place – it shatters him. Shane comes with a loud choked groan, a little bit too late to warn Ilya, fingers yanking Ilya's hair as he pulses down his throat.

Ilya swallows every drop, pulls off slow with a wet pop, lips shiny and red. He crawls back up and kisses Shane deep, letting him taste himself. Shane flips them without breaking the kiss, rolling Ilya onto his back with a growl of his own. He returns every second of it, mouthing down Ilya's chest, biting at the firm muscle, sucking into the skin while his hand wraps around Ilya's cock, stroking slow and firm. Ilya's head slams back into the pillow, a string of rough Russian spilling out, low and guttural.

When Shane finally takes him in, swirling his tongue around the head before sinking down, Ilya loses it. His hips snap up, a deep, broken moan tearing out of him.

“Blyad, Hollander, you suck cock like you play hockey,” he says.

Shane pauses to look up inquisitively, mouth still full.

“Almost as good as me,” Ilya finishes his joke.

“Fuck you, Rozanov,” Shane spits the words while taking his mouth off Ilya, and then, spurred on, sucks harder and goes deeper, making Ilya choke out a long moan.

The curses come faster and faster, mixed with heavy breaths and low groans every time Shane bobs deeper or flicks his tongue across Ilya's sensitive tip. Shane works him relentlessly, tongue pressing just right, one hand twisting at the base, the other kneading Ilya's chest hard enough to leave red fingerprints.

Ilya's hips jerk up and Shane uses his hand to slam his hips back down and hold him there.

Ilya isn't quiet at all, his moans are deep and raw, building louder as Shane pushes him closer, fingers digging into Shane's shoulder and chest like anchors.

“Fuck, Hollander, I'm gonna come,” he warns, but Shane doesn't pull off; instead, he sucks even harder, until Ilya can't hold off any longer.

He comes with a long, low groan that cracks at the end, his mouth clenched shut as he moans to try and keep the noise down somewhat. His hips thrust shallowly the whole time as he's spilling hot across Shane's tongue.

After, they lie tangled and panting, sweat cooling on their skin, the room quiet except for harsh breathing and the faint hum of the city outside. The high drains fast, leaving a sudden, horrible, heavy awkwardness in its wake.

“Fuck,” Shane mutters into the pillow, voice hoarse. “That was... that was so fucking dumb.”

Ilya exhales a tired laugh. “Yeah. Really dumb.”

“But it was hot,” Shane adds.

“Very hot,” Ilya is still panting.

Shane rolls onto his side, propping his head on his hand. “I won’t tell anyone. Seriously.”

Ilya meets his eyes, expression carefully neutral. “Okay. Thanks. Me too.”

They take turns in the bathroom to clean up, quick and separate, the sound of water running the only noise. When Shane comes out, towel around his waist, Ilya is already in the far bed, sheets pulled up, scrolling his phone like nothing’s happened. Shane drops the towel, pulls on boxers, and climbs into his own bed.

The lights go off. The room is dark, city glow seeping around the curtains.

After a minute, Shane hears the creak of mattress springs. Ilya crosses the space between the beds, lifts the edge of Shane’s covers, and slides in behind him without asking. Shane doesn’t protest. Ilya’s arm drapes over his waist, chest warm against Shane’s back. They fit together easily, like they’ve done this before.

“It was okay?” Ilya asks.

“Was okay. It’s been a while,” Shane says quietly into the dark. “Since I’ve been with a guy.”

“Same,” Ilya murmurs against the back of his neck. “Last time was... my coach’s son. Back in Russia.”

Shane huffs softly. “You like trouble.”

Ilya’s arm tightens a fraction. “Maybe.”

Shane is quiet for a beat. “I had someone back home. A while ago. Good friend. We hooked up for a while, but it got kind of serious and I think that scared him. Then one day he panicked. Said we couldn’t anymore. Never really talked about it again.” He shrugs, even though Ilya can’t see it. “However, I have hooked up with other guys, just not often.”

Ilya’s thumb strokes idly over Shane’s ribs. “Sounds like you like trouble too.”

“Yeah, I guess.”

They don’t say anything else. Eventually Ilya’s breathing evens out. Shane listens to it for a long time before sleep pulls him under.

In the morning, Ilya is already back in his own bed when Shane wakes up.

Shane’s mouth feels cottony. His body remembers everything in vivid detail: heat, hands, mouths, the way Ilya’s breath sounded when he came. He keeps his face neutral, swings his legs over the side of the bed, and heads for the shower without a word.

They pack in quiet efficiency, like nothing happened. Ilya tosses Shane his charger when he can’t find it under the bed. Shane mutters thanks, then finds Ilya’s underwear on the ground and throws them at his face. They laugh. It’s fine.

Down in the lobby the team is gathering, rolling suitcases clacking over marble, coffee cups in hand. The bus to the airport idles outside. Shane spots Hayden near the back row, saving him a seat with a duffel on the empty spot. Hayden's hair is still damp from his own shower, and he looks up with that easy, expectant grin when Shane climbs the steps.

"Morning, superstar," Hayden says, kicking the bag to the floor so Shane can sit. "How'd you sleep?"

Shane drops into the seat, stretches his legs into the aisle. "Great," he says, maybe too quick. "Like a rock."

Hayden smirks, nudging him with an elbow. "Lucky. Connors talked in his sleep. Whole monologue about fantasy football. I almost smothered him with a pillow."

Shane laughs, the sound coming out normal enough. He pulls his hood up and settles in.

A minute later, Ilya boards, sunglasses on despite the gray morning, carrying a paper cup of coffee. He walks down the aisle slowly, pushing his sunglasses onto his head and scanning for his seat. When he passes their row he looks down at them, the corner of his mouth lifting in a small private smile that lands on both of them but lingers a half-second longer on Shane.

Shane feels it like a fingertip has dragged down his spine. He looks away first, pretends to check his phone.

Ilya keeps moving, dropping into a seat a few rows further back.

Hayden watches him go, then turns to Shane, voice low. "So... rooming with Rozanov was okay then?"

Shane shrugs, keeps his eyes on his screen even though it's still locked. "Yeah. He doesn't snore."

Hayden snorts. "Bet he smoked in the hotel room though. Your hoodie stinks."

Shane hums something noncommittal and finally unlocks his phone, thumbing through nothing. Hayden pulls out his AirPods, and leans his head against the window.

Everything is fine. Normal. Just another road trip morning.

However.

Last night was *not fine*. It *cannot* happen again. It's far too dangerous and reckless.

Shane feels how hot his body is getting and slams his mental vault shut with a final thought: it shouldn't happen again.

But what if it did?

Chapter 7: Commercial

Chapter Summary

Introducing: Heart Eyes Hayden

Shane jerks off so much he probably has carpal tunnel

Chapter Notes

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

The Metros are really busy with games, a brutal stretch of back-to-backs and three-in-fours that leaves everyone dragging. But, finally, there is a rare pocket of home days in Montreal: no travel, only practices and recovery.

Hayden texts Shane mid-afternoon: come over, I got the new PlayStation NHL game and a fridge full of chicken and broccoli.

Shane shows up around six, with a six-pack of sugar-free ginger ale, because alcohol is banned right now. Hayden's place is a tidy condo, and like Shane's, has big old windows overlooking the river, and a PlayStation already hooked up to the massive TV.

They settle on the couch with their assigned meals, courtesy of the nutrition team: grilled chicken, steamed broccoli, ground beef mixed into brown rice. It tastes like cardboard with ambition, but they eat it anyway, elbows bumping as they pass the hot sauce.

After dinner, they start playing the game: a classic game of 'Chel. Shane plays as Boston, Hayden as Montreal. After forty-five minutes, Hayden heats up even more food between games: second helpings of rice and beef, then the 'dessert' protein shakes that taste like chalk and fake vanilla.

"Last playoffs," Hayden says, wiping his mouth after chugging half his shake, "I was eating six meals a day. Full meals. And I still dropped eight pounds. Coach Glen lost his mind. Kept saying if we're not on the ice or in the gym, we better be shoving calories in our faces."

Shane nods, scraping the last of his disgusting shake from the glass. "Makes sense. Gotta fuel the furnace. I'm so sick of eating already."

"Big dinners make winners, all that shit," Hayden adds.

Shane glances at the paused game on the TV, then says casually, "I notice Rozanov still drinks full-sugar Coke though. Like, a lot."

Hayden smirks, taking their shake glasses back to the kitchen and returning with more diet ginger ale. "Yeah. And he smokes. Not as much as he used to. But he does."

Shane shrugs, thumb working the controller stick absently. "He told me he's trying to quit."

Hayden flops back down beside him, closer than before, knee bumping Shane's. "I still can't believe you actually like him."

Shane keeps his eyes on the screen where the game is paused, looking at nothing. He definitely does not replay the way Ilya had licked down his stomach and squeezed his chest while he had sucked Shane's cock. "I don't *like* him. He's a good player. Just an asshole to everyone. People just don't care because he scores."

"But that's wrong! Well, that's not how I was raised, anyways," Hayden says quietly. "Guy's got a stick up his ass."

Shane forces a laugh. "Yeah, no, he's an ass. But Coach made him my buddy or whatever, so maybe he just takes it easy on me."

"Sure," Hayden says, drawing the word out. "Sure."

He looks over at Shane. The paused game is forgotten. Instead, they just sit there for a second, eyes locked, the room quiet except for the low hum of the fridge.

Hayden breaks first. "What did I say when I was drunk? At your place that night, I know it was months ago."

Shane's stomach dips. He shakes his head. "It's fine. You were wasted."

"I want to know." Hayden's voice is softer than usual. "Do you remember?"

Shane does. Perfectly. He hesitates, then lets it out slowly and carefully. "You asked what color my eyes were. You said my eyes were nice. Told me I'm your best friend. Said you wished you'd stuck up for me when Roz was chirping and I lost it. You didn't like seeing me mad."

He stops there, but Hayden is waiting, eyebrows raised.

"And you wanted to hold my hand," Shane finishes. "Wouldn't let me leave the bed."

Hayden's lips press together, cheeks going pink. "I was homesick. And you are my best friend, here. And yeah, you were fucking furious at Roz that night. It freaked me out. You're always so chill, but that day you just lost it. And yeah, I do like having you around."

"I told you it's fine, and I like having you around too," Shane says again, gentler.

Their eyes hold longer this time. Shane feels it in his chest, that slow flip, the way the space between them on the couch has shrunk without either of them moving much. Hayden's knee is still against his. The air feels thick. Hayden blinks slowly, his eyelashes fluttering a little.

Holy shit, Shane thinks. Holy shit. *Holy fucking shit.*

They shift at the same time, just an inch closer, like magnets finally giving in.

Then, Shane's phone buzzes, loud on the coffee table, vibrating against the wood. Karen's name lights up the screen.

Shane grabs it immediately. "Hey, Karen!" he answers, voice pitched too high, too bright. He stands up fast, walking toward the kitchen like he needs privacy. "Yeah, no, perfect, now is good. What's up?"

He leans against the counter, heart hammering, trying to sound normal and not like he was two seconds from finding out what Hayden's mouth tastes like. Jesus Christ. He definitely needs to start jerking off more. Like, immediately. That was *far* too close.

That night, Shane lets himself into his apartment, drops his keys on the counter, and heads straight for the shower. Karen had rattled on about schedules and contracts for some shoot, but his brain is still stuck on Hayden's couch – the quiet stretch, the way they had leaned in without meaning to. The hot water hits hard, and he tries to think of absolutely nothing, just the steam and the quiet. But the harder he pushes Hayden out of his head, the soft eyes, the knee bump, the *almost*, the more his brain rebounds to Ilya. The smirk on the balcony, the heat of his mouth, the way his chest felt under Shane's hands. He tries to swap to generic fantasies, anyone else, ideally female, but the pictures keep sliding back in, overlapping in a messy blur he can't control. Hayden's flushed cheeks. Ilya's low growl. He's fucking hard before he even touches himself. He jerks off fast, frustrated, coming with a low groan against the tile, both of them flashing behind his eyes no matter how hard he fights it.

Obviously he likes Ilya. That part is clear – stupidly clear – even if it is complicated and dumb. But Hayden? Shane doesn't know what that is. Hayden is cute, sure, in that boyish, earnest way, but is it actual attraction or just Shane picking up on vibes Hayden is throwing? Projecting because the air got weird? *That air got so weird so fast*, he thinks.

It feels messy, like his brain is short-circuiting, bouncing between the two of them because he's too horny and confused to pick a lane. He needs to get this under control. Immediately.

Thirty minutes later he's in bed, lights off, phone facedown, staring at the ceiling. The ache is still there, buzzing under his skin, like he has to burn the feeling off to be normal again.

He rolls onto his side, hand sliding down. He tells himself that this is just a physical thing. He needs to jerk off enough to get it *all* out of his system. He vows that he's going to make sure to jerk off every night, so he'll be more clear-headed.

But it's Hayden's quiet voice saying *best friend*, then Ilya's rough murmur against his neck. He comes again, muffling the sound in his pillow, hating how good it feels even as guilt and confusion twist harder in his gut.

Another forty minutes pass. He's still restless, flipping sides, skin too warm.

Jerking off again now is going to feel raw and terrible, like forcing down dessert when you're already stuffed, but the horniness won't quit and he needs to *stop feeling like this* around both of them.

One last time, he tells himself. It's kind of like self-punishment at this rate; he doesn't really want it, and it's almost mechanical now, oversensitive and dry, images of Hayden's mouth and Ilya's chest blurring together until he finishes – shaky, and finally, mercifully, exhausted.

He curls onto his side, breathes slowly until the room stops spinning, and passes out wondering what the hell is wrong with him.

The next morning, Karen corners him and Ilya after practice, clipboard in hand, looking like she's been up since five, negotiating.

"Thanks for taking my calls last night, both of you. I couldn't tell you last night, but it's nailed down now – Under Armour wants you two for a commercial. Big money. Like, life-changing-for-a-rookie money. They love the new-line chemistry angle. Shoot is in Baltimore next week, two days, rink and studio. I've emailed you both the details. Say yes, or maybe call your agents first."

Shane blinks. Holy shit. This will be his first real big-name brand deal, the kind with zeros that make his mum cry happy tears. Ilya just smirks and shrugs.

"Sure. I like money," he says.

Baltimore in November is cold and gray. Under Armour flies them down business, puts them up in a hotel with a view of the Inner Harbor. The rink they use is some minor-league barn an hour outside the city, empty except for crew, lights, and cameras. The concept is simple: two young stars pushing each other, sweating, scoring, selling compression shirts and shit like that.

They run drills in the branded stuff, sweat through takes, reset pucks a hundred times. Between shots, Shane gets an idea. On a break, he grabs the hem of his tight black Under Armour shirt, lifts it just enough to show the cut of his abs, and bites the fabric to hold it up while he wipes fake sweat from his face. It's cheesy as hell, but the female crew members audibly sigh, and one of the assistants actually fans herself.

Karen watches the monitor, raises an eyebrow, then shrugs. "Okay. Fine. Whatever. He earned those abs. Keep it."

Ilya notices. (Of course he does). From that moment on, he turns into the world's most annoying peacock. Every reset, he finds a reason to stretch overhead, shirt riding up. He flexes when he leans on his stick. During one take, he peels his shirt off completely to 'adjust the base layer' and stands there shirtless, arms out, letting the camera linger. The crew loves it. Shane grits his teeth and pretends it doesn't bother him, even as his mind flicks traitorously back to hotel balconies, Ilya's fucking mouth around his cock, the quiet cuddling after and how messed up everything feels (fuck, and now with *whatever the fucking fuck it means with Hayden* layered on top of it all).

By wrap, everyone is exhausted and happy. The director calls it a day, the crew starts packing, and the players hit the locker room showers. Most of the staff clear out fast, chasing dinner or flights. Soon, it's just Shane and Ilya left, the echoing tile room steamy and quiet.

Shane stands under the spray, rinsing shampoo, trying not to think about anything. The friction of his hand cleaning himself is innocent enough, until it isn't. He feels himself thicken, just a little, and curses under his breath.

Ilya, two showerheads down, glances over. His eyes drop obviously, then flick back up with that slow, infuriating smirk.

"Fuck off," Shane snaps, voice echoing sharper than he means.

Ilya turns off his water, leans a shoulder against the tile, unashamed. Water beads on his chest. "I think you like it."

Shane stills. The room is warm, loud with leftover drips. He meets Ilya's eyes, throat tight.

"Not here," he says finally, low and rough.

Chapter End Notes

[rambling author end note deleted]

Chapter 8: Baltimore

Chapter Summary

Previously, in the showers: “Not here.”

This time: Porn!

Chapter Notes

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

They take the Uber Black back to the hotel together, the film crew chattering in the front rows about flight times while Shane and Ilya sit in the very back, quiet. The city lights streak past the windows, orange and white blurs, and Shane keeps his eyes fixed outside, hyper-aware of every small shift. Ilya's thigh presses against his when the van turns a corner, stays there even after the road straightens. Neither of them moves away. Shane's pulse is already up, a low thrum in his ears. He tells himself it is just adrenaline from the shoot, from the cameras and the flexing and the way Ilya had looked at him all day like he knew exactly what Shane was thinking.

This is the worst idea, Shane thinks. The absolute worst. They are teammates. Linemates. Roommates on the road sometimes. One wrong move, and everything gets messy: locker room rumours, media bullshit, careers tangled up in something neither of them can control. Not to mention the fucking situation with Russia. At least if something came out, Shane wouldn't be a fucking *criminal*. Holy shit.

The fact that they've done this once before is bad enough; they shouldn't be *repeating* this.

He knows what he should do. He should say goodnight in the lobby. Go to his own room. Jerk off thinking about literally anyone else, and sleep it off.

But when the van pulls up under the hotel portico and everyone piles out, Shane's feet follow Ilya's without permission.

The lobby is bright and busy, Karen waving her phone at them about check-in being open already, or something. Shane nods along, barely hearing her. Ilya stands close enough that Shane can smell the faint icy trace of rink smell and whatever cologne he wears. Their eyes meet for half a second and Shane looks away fast, heat crawling up his neck.

Shane wants a drink. But that's not on the cards. He could sneak one, but it's his first fucking season and if Coach Glen found out there'd be hell to pay. Oh my god, and the drinking age in the States is fucking *twenty-one*.

Karen, Shane and Ilya eat dinner in the hotel restaurant. It's boring salmon and brown rice and charred broccolini, which is still much nicer than steamed broccoli. Karen runs through how they did, like a post-mortem hot wash of their impression on Under Armour.

"And you both really showed a lot of enthusiasm, and I can't tell you how much that means to a brand..."

She continues to talk and Shane and Ilya nod along. It occurs to Shane that Karen might be the fastest talking woman he's ever encountered, and based on how Ilya is idly nodding his head, perhaps she's going a tad fast for him, too.

Shane steadies his face when he feels Ilya's foot under the table. It slides first up against his ankle, and then up his calf. Ilya locks eyes with him for a full second and then goes back to eating his dinner.

"Karen, thank you for organising this for us. It is a lot of work and you did it so quickly. And thank you for coming with us," Ilya says finally.

Okay, so Ilya *can* be respectful. And really... nice? If he wants to be.

"Aww, Ilya," Karen sighs. "You know, I appreciate you saying that so much. Bob always says..."

Karen kicks off an anecdote about her husband (known by the team as Mr Karen). Shane feels like a fucking idiot for not thinking to thank Karen before Rozanov had fucking beaten him to it in the Manners Olympics. Fucking ass. Since when does Russia beat Canada in *manners*?

"It's been a great trip," Shane chimes in, but his brain is foggy and then Ilya's foot is back against his calf and he has to remember to act normal.

He needs to go up to his own room, *alone*, and calm the fuck down.

However, after they say good night to Karen, he follows Ilya to the elevator.

The elevator is empty except for them. It feels smaller than it did when Shane came down to dinner. Ilya leans against the wall, arms crossed, watching the numbers climb. Shane stares at the floor indicator like it's the most interesting thing in the world. The silence is thick, charged, both of them pretending it's normal. Shane's stomach flips.

He knows Ilya knows. That game of footsies could only have meant one thing.

They both know exactly what's coming the second that hotel room door shuts. His hands feel clammy around the keycard he's clutching like an amulet. Worst idea. Worst. But so hot.

The hallway is quiet, carpet muffling their steps. Ilya stops at his door, the one before Shane's room, slides the card, pushes it open. He walks in and looks back at Shane—who's just standing in the hallway like an idiot—and raises one perfect Russian eyebrow, casual as hell, like he's just checking if Shane needs something.

Shane's mouth goes dry.

Ilya is so fucking hot it's unfair, broad shoulders filling the doorway, that shiny gold chain glinting against his throat, hazel eyes amused and hungry all at once. Shane hates how much he wants this. How much he's wanted it since the balcony; since the first time Ilya smirked at him across the locker room.

He slides his keycard back in his pocket and steps in after Ilya. The door clicks shut behind him.

The room is dim, curtains half-drawn, harbor lights glowing soft through the gap. Ilya drops his bag by the desk and kicks off his shoes.

Shane, on the other hand, stands there like an idiot, heart hammering so hard he swears Ilya can hear it. He then takes his shoes off as well and chucks his bag on the floor. Ilya turns, leans back against the dresser, and just looks at him. That slow, knowing look that makes Shane's skin feel too tight.

"You going to stand there all night?" Ilya asks, voice low, teasing. "Or maybe you want to pretend you came here for room service?"

Shane huffs a laugh despite himself, nerves sparking. "Shut up."

Ilya's mouth curves, a glint in his eye. "Make me."

Shane moves first because if he doesn't he might bolt. He crosses the space, grabs Ilya by the front of his shirt, and kisses him hard. Ilya makes a low sound in his throat, hands coming up to fist in Shane's hair, pulling him closer. It's not gentle; teeth and tongues and desperation they have both been carrying for weeks. Shane's back hits the wall beside the TV, Ilya crowding him, thigh sliding between his legs again like in Boston, pressing up until Shane groans into his mouth.

God, he's gorgeous, Shane thinks dizzily. The way his shoulders flex under Shane's hands, the heat coming off his skin, the scrape of stubble against Shane's jaw when Ilya moves to his neck, sucking hard but not enough to leave a mark. Nerves spark everywhere, electric and overwhelming. *This is the worst idea of all time*. But Ilya tastes like mint and faintly of smoke, and Shane just *cannot* stop.

They break for air, foreheads pressed together, breathing ragged. Ilya's hands slide under Shane's shirt, thumbs brushing his abs teasingly.

"You were showing off today," Ilya murmurs, lips brushing Shane's ear. "Biting your shirt. All those girls watching. You like being watched, Hollander?"

"Fuck you, Rozanov," Shane mutters, but his hips roll forward involuntarily, cock already hard against Ilya's thigh. "You're the one who took your shirt off every five seconds."

Ilya chuckles, dark and rough.

"Jealous?" he asks.

"No."

"Liar." Ilya nips his earlobe, hands shoving Shane's shirt up and off. "You couldn't stop looking."

Shane retaliates by yanking Ilya's shirt over his head, palms spreading over warm, hard muscle immediately. "You're so full of yourself."

Ilya grins against his mouth, kissing him again, slower this time, teasing.

"You like it," he says. Shane swallows. Then, suddenly, his voice roughens, and he steps back just enough to create space. "On your knees."

Shane's heart stutters. He meets Ilya's eyes, dark and commanding, and drops without thinking, knees hitting the carpet. He pulls Ilya's cock out of his jeans, hard and flushed, and takes him in painstakingly slowly, teasing him by tongue swirling around the head first, payback for the chirping.

Ilya's fingers thread into his hair, not pushing much, just holding as Shane sinks deeper, cheeks hollowing, hand wrapping the base. Ilya's hips rock shallowly, low moans spilling out in Russian, thighs flexing under Shane's free hand.

"Fuck, your *mouth*," Ilya groans, head tipping back. "I missed your mouth."

Shane works him relentlessly now, bobbing slowly then fast, tongue pressing just right, eyes flicking up to watch Ilya biting his lip and breathing heavily in and out of his nose. It's heady, the way Ilya's grip tightens, the rough sounds he makes.

Ilya pulls him off before he finishes, hauling him up for a messy kiss, tasting himself on Shane's tongue. "My turn," he mutters, pushing Shane onto the bed.

They stumble toward the bed, shedding the rest of their clothes piece by piece. "You have such a dirty mouth on you," Ilya growls.

Shane rolls his eyes and uses Ilya's line from the shower back at him. "I think you like it like this."

"You curse so much, and you suck cock so well, I'm going to let you do it some more soon." Ilya stares down at Shane and Shane tries not to gulp like a cartoon character.

"*Let me?*" Shane huffs.

"Yes."

Their teasing fades into heavy breaths and touches. Pants hit the floor, boxers follow, until they're naked and grinding against each other at the edge of the mattress. Shane's hands roam everywhere, squeezing Ilya's chest, thumbs flicking nipples until Ilya moans and bites his shoulder.

Shane's on his back, chest heaving, but Ilya flips him easily. "On your stomach."

Shane complies, face heating as he stretches out, ass up slightly. This is a little bit different and a little more vulnerable.

Ilya straddles his thighs, mouth trailing hot down his spine, hands spreading him open. Fingers trace teasingly between his cheeks, circling his hole.

"Do you ever touch yourself here?" Ilya asks, breath warm against his skin.

Shane buries his face in the pillow, nodding. "Yeah, but I have a dildo."

Ilya laughs softly, pressing a kiss to the small of his back. "What color? Is big?"

"Fuck off," Shane groans, hips shifting back despite himself.

Ilya's finger presses firmer, dry but teasing. "Have you ever..."

"Yes," Shane admits, voice muffled. "But it's been a long time." He feels his body tense. Fuck. He hadn't considered that Ilya might want *this*.

Ilya hums, kissing his shoulder blade. "Okay. Don't worry. Next time."

Then Ilya flips him again, crawls up, and takes Shane's cock deep in one smooth motion. Shane's back arches off the bed, a loud groan tearing out. Ilya's eyes lock on his while he sucks, relentless, throat working, hand stroking in rhythm. Shane threads fingers into Ilya's hair and pulls slightly, "Is this okay?"

Ilya doesn't stop sucking. He gives Shane a thumbs up, and Shane grips Ilya's hair and tentatively thrusts up a little into his mouth.

Ilya moans around his cock, and Shane isn't going to last. Not usually one to have a hair trigger, that intense feeling in his core is already building up.

He's snapping shallowly until he knows he's far too close. "I'm gonna come," he warns. But Ilya doesn't stop and sucks even harder, and Shane comes hard down Ilya's throat with a broken cry.

"Oh, fuck, ah! *Fuck!*"

Ilya swallows, crawls up slow, lips shiny and red, and kisses Shane lazy and deep, letting him taste himself.

Shane is still buzzing and now oversensitive, but the sight of Ilya hard and untouched reignites everything. He pushes Ilya onto his back, slides down his body without a word, mouth trailing over chest and abs until he takes Ilya in again, deeper this time, determined.

Ilya's head falls back with a rough groan, fingers tightening in Shane's hair as Shane works him fast and sloppy, tongue swirling, hand twisting at the base, cheeks hollowed. Ilya's hips buck, moans turning constant and desperate, Russian mixing with English curses and encouragement for Shane.

"Fucking *take* it, Hollander," spills out of Ilya's mouth, and he comes hot and pulsing into Shane's mouth, with a broken sound.

Shane swallows, pulls off slow, and crawls back up to collapse beside Ilya. They lie together, panting, sweat cooling, room smelling like sex and hotel air. Ilya's arm drapes over Shane's waist, casual and warm.

"We really shouldn't be doing this," Shane says eventually, voice raw. The post-nut clarity is hitting hard. "We're making everything so complicated."

Ilya shrugs against the pillow. "What? Is not complicated. Is just fucking. I fuck other women. You fuck other women?"

"Yeah," Shane lies, the word tasting wrong. "Of course. But... we shouldn't do this all the time, right?" Shane adds after a beat.

"Probably shouldn't," Ilya murmurs, already half-asleep.

Shane stares at the ceiling, heart still racing. The room feels too quiet now. He decides, firmly, that it is probably a good idea to fuck more people. Women. Anyone who is not his teammate. He can do that. He is in the NHL, young, not bad-looking. Opportunities everywhere.

He can do that. He will do that. Starting soon.

Chapter End Notes

[rambling author end note deleted]

Don't share my fic on reddit or TikTok or whatever guys. I don't need lots of readers you guys are enough xxx

Chapter 9: Articulate

Chapter Summary

We interrupt your regularly scheduled pornographic fanfic programming for a brief but catastrophic transmission.

Tonight's feature: grown professional athletes attempting to play Articulate.

Also maybe Hayden has had too many concussions because we are Concerned.

Chapter Notes

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

Shane's living room is full in the way it only ever gets on team nights, with guys half-sprawled across furniture, shoes kicked off wherever (Shane's rules), empty bottles clustered around, just waiting to trip up. The lamps are on low, throwing everything in warm gold, and someone's left a window cracked so cold air sneaks in around the noise. The TV is muted in the corner, forgotten, a game paused mid-highlight.

JJ dumps the Articulate cards onto the coffee table. A few slide off the edge and scatter across the rug. "Same rules. Teams of two. Category stays the same until the sand runs out. Flip the hourglass, go as fast as you can."

He looks straight at Hayden. "No saying the word. No part of the word. No *rhyming*. Rhyming means 'it sounds like'."

Hayden nods with conviction, already grinning like he's about to ignore half of that. "Yeah. Obviously."

Shane closes his eyes for half a second, rubbing a hand over his face, here we go again.

Teams sort themselves out easily. Patrice and Ilya end up together, which feels illegal because they've played together before and have a history of beating everyone. A couple of the guys groan in protest. Shane gets Hayden, which feels inevitable (Shayden). JJ and Marleau high-five like they've already won, assholes.

They sit cross-legged on the floor, knees bumping the coffee table. Someone shifts to make space. A bottle rolls lazily and taps against Shane's ankle. Shane takes the cards immediately.

"I'll start for us," Shane says to Hayden. "I'll describe."

"Love that," Hayden says. "I trust you."

Patrice and Ilya pull the first card. Nature.

Patrice flips the little plastic hourglass. The sand starts to hiss softly, barely audible under the low hum of chatter that immediately dies down as everyone leans in.

“Tall, green, outside, needles,” Patrice says.

“Pine tree,” Ilya guesses, not even looking at him.

Patrice flips again without breaking eye contact.

“Old McDonald had a—”

“Farm.”

Flip.

“We skate on it.”

“Ice.

Flip.

“Orange clay, used for pots and roofs.”

Ilya pauses and squeezes his eyes shut, like he’s scanning an internal dictionary. “Terracotta.”

Flip again, smooth and relentless.

There’s a ripple of impressed muttering, Ilya is *good*. JJ whistles under his breath. Marleau tips his head back against the couch.

Shane watches, jaw tight. Patrice barely pauses between cards, already flipping to the next, keeping the rhythm going. It’s efficient and brutal.

When it’s Shane and Hayden’s turn, they have a lot of ground to make up already.

Shane doesn’t comment, he just flips the hourglass. The sand drops.

Nature.

“Large body of water, not ocean.”

“Lake.” Hayden is so pleased with himself. Jesus.

Flip.

“Very tall rock formation, people climb it.”

“Mountain.”

Flip.

“Small insect, buzzes, stings.”

Hayden thinks for a little too long. He squints at the ceiling like the answer might be written there. “Bee.”

A few guys groan at the hesitation.

Flip.

Shane doesn’t hesitate, card, clue, flip, next. He’s in it. Focused. Maybe this is their night?

The sand runs out.

“That was decent,” Hayden says.

“That was *fine*,” Shane corrects.

Ilya and Patrice kill another round. JJ and Marleau lock in and score seven points in one turn.

It’s Shane and Hayden’s turn. Hayden reaches for the cards.

“I got this one,” he says confidently.

Shane hesitates. “...okay.”

Actions.

Hayden flips the hourglass.

He immediately panics.

“Okay— okay— uh— you do it with your mouth,” Hayden starts, eyes darting. “You do it *all* the time, everyday. Especially when we go for runs, or after. And you do it better when it’s just us.”

The room explodes.

Shane jerks upright. “Hayden! What the *fuck*? Describe better!”

“What?” Hayden says, frantic. “It’s an action!”

“Keep describing!” Ilya bellows, nearly falling off the couch.

Hayden keeps going, sweating. “You do it with your mouth, yeah, and you do it with your mum! On FaceTime, though she kind of does more of it! You do it with your dad but then you do most of it!”

Marleau is literally screaming. “MAKE IT STOP, oh my god!”

Shane folds in half. “I’m going to pass away. Dear God, please take me.”

The sand runs out.

“What was it?” Shane demands.

“Chatting,” JJ says, still laughing, “it just sounded like something else.”

Hayden lights up. “Yes! Chatting! Thank you!”

Shane stares at him. “That was horrible.”

Twenty minutes later and it’s the final round.

Hayden and Shane are in trouble: category is, Place Names.

Hayden grabs the cards again before Shane can stop him.

“I’m good at places,” Hayden insists.

Shane doubts everything.

The hourglass flips.

“Oh! Easy!” Hayden says immediately. “Okay! It’s in Europe, and it sounds like ‘cube’.”

“Cube?” Shane repeats back. They’re so fucked, and he knows it.

JJ spins on Hayden. “No. *No*, you can’t do that.”

“Do what?”

“You can’t *rhyme*,” Marleau pleads. “Rhyming or when you say ‘it sounds like this word.’ Come on Hayd! We talked about this!”

Hayden freezes.

“...*fuuuuck*.”

Laughter erupts.

“Let him cook,” Ilya insists. “There is no time for them to win.”

“Okay, okay,” Hayden says, rushing. “Europe. It’s in Europe.”

Shane squints, literally nothing is coming to mind. “Aruba?”

“No! *Europe*!” Hayden groans, “come on Shane!”

“That doesn’t help! More words!”

“I don’t know anything about this country!” Hayden screams back.

“Skip it,” Shane snaps. “Next card, next card, next card.”

Hayden fumbles and drops half the deck then he swears and scrambles, hands shaking, finally grabs one and gasps.

“Oh! Oh! It’s easy! Okay— him,” Hayden says, pointing at Ilya.

Shane stares and pauses. “Ilya Rozanov?”

“The *country*!” Hayden screeches, “Jesus Shane!”

“And that’s time!” JJ calls.

“Russia!” Hayden moans. “How did you miss that!”

Shane explodes. “I RAN OUT OF TIME! BUT YOU TELL ME, WHAT *FUCKING* EUROPEAN COUNTRY SOUNDS LIKE *CUBE*?”

“Cuba!” Hayden shouts back. “Obviously!”

“No!” Shane yells. “That’s in THE CARIBBEAN! NOT EUROPE!”

Hayden frowns. “Wait—”

“And don’t say ‘wait’ like you’re close,” Shane continues. “What did they teach you in school? The Cuban Missile Crisis? Anything?”

Hayden’s face clears suddenly. “Oh!”

Shane pauses. “Oh?”

“They have the little hats,” Hayden says, pleased. “Like the army ones.”

The silence is deafening.

They’ve lost by twenty points.

Ilya tilts his head, considering Hayden. “I think, maybe,” he says slowly, “you are the only ice hockey player who is eligible for brain transplant.”

The room loses it again. The whole ‘chatting’ action card is going to haunt Shane for the rest of his fucking life.

Later, as the box gets shut and shoved under the table, Hayden nudges Shane’s knee.

“We weren’t thaaaaat bad.”

Shane doesn’t look at him. “We are never playing Articulate on the same team again.”

Hayden frowns. “That feels unfair.”

Shane closes his eyes. It feels necessary.

Chapter End Notes

[rambling author end note deleted]

Chapter 10: Wedding

Chapter Summary

Okay so, Shane and Ilya have blown each other (again) in Baltimore:

“We really shouldn’t be doing this,” Shane says eventually, voice raw. The post-nut clarity is hitting hard. “We’re making everything so complicated.”

Ilya shrugs against the pillow. “What? Is not complicated. Is just fucking. I fuck other women. You fuck other women?”

“Yeah,” Shane lies, the word tasting wrong. “Of course. But... we shouldn’t do this all the time, right?” Shane adds after a beat.

“Probably shouldn’t,” Ilya murmurs, already half-asleep.

Shane stares at the ceiling, heart still racing. The room feels too quiet now. He decides, firmly, that it is probably a good idea to fuck more people. Women. Anyone who is not his teammate. He can do that. He is in the NHL, young, not bad-looking. Opportunities everywhere.

He can do that. He will do that. Starting soon.

You’ve also put up with my self indulgent Articulate chapter.

Now: brace yourselves, here comes Hayden!!

Chapter Notes

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

Early December is brutal, the kind of cold that turns your lungs inside out. Shane stands outside the cringy venue rubbing his hands together, watching his breath hang in the air, thinking *who the fuck picks early December for a wedding*. Absolutely criminal.

The place is done up like a Pinterest board threw up: fake frost on the windows, evergreen garlands everywhere, fairy lights twinkling like it’s supposed to be magical instead of freezing. It also looks lowkey Christmassy which is a *choice*.

Patrice’s little sister apparently begged him to bring ‘a bunch of young hot hockey players for all my single ladies’ as her wedding gift, so half the team is here in suits, stamping their feet and complaining about the cold while they file past the venue’s diligent bouncer. Apparently the mother-in-law is nuts. (Yikes)

Shane's pissed about one thing: No drinking allowed. Mid-season rules are strict this time of year, bodies need to be tuned like instruments, no room for hangovers when games are every other night. Once they get into the venue, they can't even hide behind a beer; everyone's nursing sparkling water, sugar-free pop or coffee, pretending it's fun.

The women descend fast. Bridesmaids in sparkly silky dresses, cousins, college friends, they circle Shane like he's the only warm thing in the room. Touching his arm, asking about his goals, laughing too loud at nothing. He smiles, chats and lets it happen.

He reflects back that, since the Under Armour shoot in Baltimore, he's actually been a good boy about branching out. One girl sucked him off in a club bathroom after a road win. Then there was another girl, bent over her apartment couch for him, doggy style – quick and straightforward – while he tried not to think too hard about anything and failed and thought about men the whole time. (*Whatever that means, Jesus Christ Shane what the fuck*).

At least he did a good job lasting for her, maybe too good of a job. But she came. That's a win, right? Massive win!

Normal!

Proof he can still do this without complications.

He's proud of himself for that, and prouder still for not sneaking off to find Ilya again since that night in Baltimore, no matter how many times their eyes caught across locker rooms or hotel lobbies, no matter how many *almosts* hung in the air.

But tonight, it all feels flat. He keeps scanning the room, eyes landing on Ilya across the dance floor. Ilya looks lethal in a charcoal suit, perfectly tailored, shirt unbuttoned just enough to show the gold chain, curly hair styled back with just one ringlet that keeps falling forward onto his forehead. Eastern European elegance dialed to eleven. Shane catches himself staring too long, and looks away.

Hayden appears at his elbow, club soda in hand, tie already loosened.

"This theme is aggressive," he mutters. "I feel like I'm trapped in a snow globe."

Shane snorts. "Right? Who *hurt* her? If I had one billion dollars, I would buy Pinterest and unplug the 'wedding themes' section from the wall."

Hayden grins, scanning the bridesmaids. "Wish I was drunk. Normally I'd be over there ranking the bridesmaids with the guys. Like, that one in the red? Solid nine. The blonde? Eight-five, maybe nine if she stopped glaring."

Shane laughs. "You're terrible, that's misogynistic. They're all pretty. They're all dressed up. And they probably all had to get up at 5am for this."

"Oh come on, Chicken. You're not looking?" Hayden bumps his shoulder. "Come on. Pick one. Bet you could take home the maid of honor. Think of the brownie points you'd earn Patrice. You kind of owe it to him after ruining his save percentage last practice."

Shane shrugs, cheeks warm. “Not really feeling it. And I’m sympathy-fucking a lovely woman so Patrice’s sister is happy? That’s insane.”

Hayden gives him a sideways look. “You okay? You’ve been weird tonight.”

“Just sober at a wedding and tired as shit. Feels wrong to be here. The me that agreed to this in October no longer exists.”

“Tell me about it.” Hayden sighs dramatically. “I also feel so fucking single it *hurts*.”

Shane glances at him. Hayden’s suit fits well, blue tie bringing out his eyes, hair a little messy in a cute way. “Same,” Shane says, quieter.

Ilya chooses that moment to saunter over, drink in hand – probably just water, but he makes it look cool. He stops in front of them, smirking slowly.

“Ah! Little babies at grown-up party,” he says, voice low and mocking. “You two look like you are waiting for curfew.”

Hayden stiffens. “Fuck off, Rozanov.”

Ilya ignores him, eyes on Shane.

“Hollander. You clean up nice, like a grown up boy.” His gaze flicks down, deliberate. “Almost.”

Shane feels heat crawl up his neck, but decides to be nice.

“Thanks. You look like a Bond villain.” (*Well, nice-ish.*)

Ilya laughs, sharp. Then he turns to Hayden, smirk sharpening. “And you. So sexy, maybe borrowed from your big brother?”

Hayden’s jaw tightens. “At least I don’t look like I’m auditioning for a cologne commercial. Eau D’Asshole.”

Ilya leans in a fraction, voice dropping. “Careful. Someone might think you are jealous.”

Hayden bristles. Shane steps between them without thinking. “We’re fine, man. Go charm someone else.”

Ilya’s eyes linger on Shane a beat too long, something unreadable flashing there. Then he shrugs and wanders off toward a group of bridesmaids, who immediately light up.

“Ladies!” he sings.

Beau Mackenzie (known as Cap Mac, Mac Cap, Cap or Mac), the team’s captain and a towering, soft-spoken Saskatchewan guy who always makes sure the rookies feel welcome and remembers everyone’s family details, appears at their side a minute later with a fresh

club soda in hand. He must have caught the tail end of the exchange, because he gives Hayden and Shane a reassuring nod before glancing toward Ilya charming the bridesmaids.

“Don’t let Roz get under your skin,” he says quietly, voice calm but firm. “He chirps everyone, but I’ll tell him to lay off you two if it gets too much.” Beau claps Shane on the shoulder and then walks off.

“Mac’s great,” Shane says, “I’m still terrified of him though.”

Hayden exhales. “Same. But Roz is still a fuuuuuucking dick. I wish I could punch him.”

They stick together the rest of the night, trading jokes about the playlist (too much Ed Sheeran), the food (tiny portions, nothing they can eat on their meal plans), the speeches (endless). Every time their shoulders brush or Hayden laughs too close, Shane feels it in his chest. The tension builds slowly and his cheeks feel warm.

They bail after the cake and Uber back to Shane’s, because it’s closer, and Hayden had gotten ready there anyways so all his toiletries are in the bathroom. Inside, they shed jackets and ties, ending up sprawled on Shane’s bed watching old game highlights on low volume. Conversation drifts from dumb plays to deeper stuff: pressure, loneliness, how weird it is to have your whole life planned around a puck.

Hayden rolls onto his side, facing Shane.

“You ever feel like... I don’t know. Like everyone expects you to have it all figured out already?”

“Yeah, all the fucking time,” Shane says softly. The lamp catches Hayden’s eyes, turns them an impossible blue. They’re close enough now that Shane can feel his warmth, the faint hitch in his breathing. Hayden doesn’t look away.

It’s also Hayden who moves first, barely. A lean that is almost nothing, a question more than a decision. Shane meets him halfway.

And they’re kissing.

The kiss is quiet, careful, like neither of them wants to scare it off. Hayden freezes for half a heartbeat when their mouths touch, a sharp inhale against Shane’s lips, then he exhales and melts. A soft, broken sigh slips out of him, like he’s been holding it in for a long time.

Shane feels his heart hammering. This is new.

He keeps it gentle and lets Hayden set the pace. Hayden’s lips move uncertainly at first, a little messy, like he is learning in real time. Then his hand comes up, fingers curling into the back of Shane’s hair, gripping hard, like he’s afraid Shane might disappear if he lets go.

The sound Hayden makes when Shane deepens the kiss is low and unguarded. It’s messy and there’s spit, but it’s *all want* and threaded with relief and Hayden kisses like they don’t have long before it all has to stop. Shane’s heart slams so hard it almost hurts, but he grips Hayden back and lets his tongue taste the inside of Hayden’s mouth.

Hayden kisses him back with everything he's got. Clumsy and earnest and hungry all at once. His other hand slides to Shane's shoulder, then his neck, pulling him closer, and closer, like there is still distance to close.

When they finally break apart, it is only because they have to breathe.

"Fuck," Hayden whispers, voice wrecked, forehead resting against Shane's.

"Yeah," Shane says, just as quiet.

They don't talk about it. There's nothing to say that would make it smaller. So they just shift closer, legs touching naturally, like this is where they've always intended to land. Hayden's hand stays fisted in Shane's hair as they settle.

It's too late – both figuratively and literally, it's after midnight – to talk it through now.

They fall asleep like that, the room quiet around them, the moment held intact.

Morning light filters gray through the crack in the blackout curtains. They wake, tangled, and blink at each other across their pillows.

"That was weird," Hayden says, but he's smiling.

"Super weird," Shane agrees, grinning back. It doesn't feel weird at all.

Hayden stretches, sheet slipping low on his hips. He's just in boxers after changing last night, and Shane's the same. They're both hard, morning wood straining against thin fabric, impossible to ignore in the quiet room. Hayden notices first and laughs awkwardly, cheeks flushing deep pink. "Uh. Sorry about that."

Shane shrugs, but his own face is warm, pulse kicking up. "It's been a while. Happens."

Hayden's eyes flick down again, lingering this time, then back up to Shane's face. He bites his lip, hesitant. "Yeah. Guess so."

"Have you ever done that before? Like, kissed a guy?" Shane asks.

Hayden shakes his head. Mercifully, he doesn't ask Shane the same.

The air shifts, thick and charged. Shane rolls closer, knee brushing Hayden's thigh. Hayden's breath catches, but he doesn't pull away. Shane searches his face and gives him time. Hayden's hand twitches on the sheet, then reaches out slowly, fingers grazing Shane's arm. That's all the permission Shane needs.

He leans in, really slowly, lips meeting Hayden's, soft and careful. Hayden freezes for a split second, and then his mouth is opening under Shane's with a quiet, surprised sigh. It starts gentle, exploratory, like it had at first last night, Hayden's lips warm and a little unsure. Shane cups his jaw, thumb stroking the soft skin there, tilting his head to deepen it slowly.

Hayden makes a small sound, low in his throat, and kisses back harder, tongue sliding tentatively against Shane's.

It catches fire fast.

Hayden's hand slides to Shane's neck, fingers threading into his hair, pulling him closer like he can't fucking get enough. Shane rolls half on top of him, thigh pressing between Hayden's legs, and Hayden gasps into his mouth, hips rocking up instinctively, seeking friction.

Hayden is fully hard and rutting against Shane.

They make out like that for ages, slow and filthy, mouths sliding wet and hungry, panting between kisses. Hayden's free hand roams Shane's back, tracing the line of his spine, dipping under the waistband of his boxers to palm bare skin. Shane groans softly, grinding down, feeling Hayden so fucking hard and thick against his thigh through the fabric.

"Feels fuckin' good," Hayden murmurs against Shane's lips, voice rough. His cheeks are flushed dark, eyes half-lidded, when they break for air.

"Yeah," Shane breathes, nipping his lower lip gently, soothing it with his tongue. "You're good at this."

Hayden huffs a shaky laugh, but it turns into a moan when Shane's hand slides down his chest, thumb circling a nipple until it pebbles tight. Hayden arches into the touch, mouth finding Shane's again desperately. Their hips roll together now, cocks dragging through thin cotton, precum soaking spots in the fabric.

"Can I?" Shane pants, moving his hand really slowly down Hayden's chest towards his waistband. "We don't have to."

"Fuck, yes," Hayden nods frantically. "Fucking touch me."

Shane's hand slips lower, palming Hayden over his boxers, squeezing slow. Fuck, Hayden is *big*.

Hayden's whole body jerks, a low whine escaping as he thrusts into the pressure.

"Shane, *fuck*," he groans.

Shane strokes him through the fabric, firm and teasing, watching Hayden's face: eyes squeezed shut, mouth open on quiet gasps, brows furrowed like it's too much and not enough.

"Can I touch you?" Hayden pants.

"Please," is all Shane can manage.

Hayden's hand mirrors him, wrapping around Shane the same way, stroking clumsily over his underwear. They grind and touch like that forever, making out messy and deep, little sounds spilling freely now.

Eventually hands push under waistbands as their eyes meet and a nod confirms it's okay to continue.

Shane wraps around Hayden fully, stroking slow and tight, thumb swiping over the head on every upstroke. Hayden's hips stutter, moans turning constant, breath hitching every time Shane twists his wrist just right.

"Don't stop," he whispers, voice wrecked, pulling Shane into another kiss, deeper this time, swallowing each other's sounds.

"Feels so good... if you don't stop I'm gonna come," Hayden nearly whimpers.

"Do you want to come?" Shane checks in, trying desperately *not* to remember that this is going to be a first for Hayden, or think about whatever the fuck the fallout of this could be.

"Please, please, please," Hayden chants. He sounds so needy and so desperate.

They almost come together, Hayden first with a choked groan muffled against Shane's neck, pulsing hot over his fist, body shaking. Shane follows seconds later, gasping into Hayden's hair, pleasure crashing through him in waves.

They're both panting, foreheads pressed, grinning dazed and breathless.

"That was good," Hayden says.

Shane laughs and gives him a thumbs up. "Yep. Great work."

Oh, but then, there it is: that rush of realisation that only ever hits after hooking up with someone you probably shouldn't have, specifically in a *gay kind of way*. (If you know, you *know*. And if you don't know, you'll *never* fucking know.)

Shane remembers his first time with a guy, and how afterwards, he had sat there panting, covered in come, thinking *holy shit holy shit holy shit*.

Hayden flops back first, chest heaving. His panic seems to have begun right on time.

He speaks immediately.

"Okay, but I'm not gay. I like girls. Like, a lot," Hayden says, very quickly. How very Hayden of him.

"Me neither," Shane says immediately, and way too quickly. "Not gay. Love girls. Girls are the best."

"Yeah," Hayden nods vigorously. "Girls are great."

The tissues pass between them in total silence, awkward as hell. They need to get up. There's training that needs to be done and they need to head to the rink and be normal and it's all actually fine though, and it's normal and no one can know, and it's all normal. Without saying it out loud, it's agreed. *No one will ever say a fucking thing*.

Hayden needs clothes for their run. His training stuff is here from yesterday, but he didn't have a hoodie. Shane tosses him one of his own: soft gray, with a logo from the Pacific Rim National Park on the back. It fits Hayden perfectly.

They run the river path, breath puffing in the freezing morning, talking macros and practice like always. It should feel strange.

But it just... *doesn't*. Just best friends. Best friends who apparently know what each other's dicks feel like now, and how each other's mouths taste.

Practice is hell: endless drills, heavy bags, legs screaming. The post-skate protein shakes taste so bad and chalky that they have to plug their noses to chug them. Lunch is – surprise, surprise – more chicken and beef and brown rice. The next game is going to be brutal, and everyone is locking the fuck in.

In the locker room, Hayden changes back into Shane's hoodie, peeling tape off the top of his stick.

Ilya walks by, stops, and stares at the logo on the back.

His face goes tight.

He kicks a stray puck into the wall, *hard*. It ricochets, making Connors and J.J. jump. Ilya spits out something in Russian and whacks a stall door.

"I stubbed my fucking toe," he says, before turning around and leaving.

Shane and Hayden exchange looks.

"What the hell's his problem?" Hayden asks.

"No idea," Shane lies, stomach twisting.

Chapter End Notes

[rambling author end note deleted]

Chapter 11: Friends

Chapter Summary

Last time: Shane and Hayden got... close. Nothing to see here folks!

This time: Ilya makes an attempt to communicate but mostly they bang

Chapter Notes

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

After weeks of brutal training, Ilya is exhausted. It's been a long fucking day, and he finally hangs up after twenty minutes on the phone with his asshole brother. His dad isn't retired yet, and that's probably for the best; work keeps him busy with whatever shady deals he's tangled in, too distracted to dissect every shift Ilya makes on the ice.

He ends the call with a promise to send Alexei money later in the week. The cokehead thinks he's scored a victory when Ilya agrees to wire thirty grand to cover how 'expensive' New Year's is going to be or something. Christmas doesn't mean much to most Russians, least of all the Rozanov family.

Thirty thousand dollars is real money to most people, but to Ilya it's nothing. The Under Armour photoshoot in Baltimore alone will pay out enough to handle every future demand from that leech.

Baltimore.

The memory hits him like a slap.

He's tried to replay that conversation in his head a hundred times, but the exact words keep slipping away. English always scrambles in his memory afterward.

Still, he's almost sure he said something like, 'This is great. We can keep doing this. Of course, we will fuck other people, but this is fine.'

Maybe it got lost in translation. Because things had felt kind of weird since then. Maybe next time, if there was a next time, he could explain it better.

Unless Shane just didn't want to.

Fuck.

Ilya drops onto the couch and lights a cigarette.

Shane hasn't acted *strange* around him. There just hasn't been another chance to hook up, and they haven't felt as friendly. Ilya tells himself he doesn't care, obviously, but seeing Hayden wearing Shane's hoodie the other day had turned his stomach. It's probably only because Shane *actually likes* Hayden. They're real friends (even if they do seem unusually close sometimes). They hang out all the time. Ilya doesn't have that with Shane. That's all it is. Definitely.

He finishes the cigarette, stubs it out, and starts packing for the short road trip.

New York is the best.

And suddenly, Ilya has an idea.

It's been almost three weeks since Shane and Hayden had explored each other's bodies, and by some miracle, nothing has turned awkward. Shane had braced himself for the fallout, stomach churning so badly he thought he might actually puke. But the fallout never came.

Late December in Montreal is too cold for outdoor runs, so they stay late at the team gym instead, knocking out treadmill sprints and spotting each other on extra sets.

"I gotta head home and pack for New York after this," Hayden says, wiping his mouth after a swig from his water bottle.

Shane nods. "Same."

Hayden's eyes catch Shane's and hold a beat longer than two straight (???) friends normally would. Shane's pulse kicks. (*Oh my God. Is it happening again?*)

"I've been thinking about something," Hayden says, biting his bottom lip.

"Yeah?" Shane's voice comes out quieter than he meant, like he's been holding his breath.

"One day, when we're married," Hayden starts, a small grin tugging at his mouth.

"To women," Shane jumps in. "Not each other."

The clarification slices the tension perfectly. They both relax; this is just them being idiots, phew.

"Yes. To women. Definitely not each other." Hayden nods solemnly. "There's gonna come a time when my wife gives me a handjob."

"Jesus Christ, Hayd," Shane groans. "Where in the fuck is this going?"

"Let me finish."

"And I *did*, didn't I?" Shane smirks.

Hayden scoffs but continues on.

“Maybe we’ve been married ten years, whatever. Here’s what I’m wondering: am I gonna be lying there, thinking, *Honey, this is nice, but it’s not as good as when I was nineteen and my best friend jerked me off?*”

Shane snorts water and chokes. It takes a second for him to stop coughing.

“First of all, why is your wife giving you a fucking *handjob!*” Shane is cackling now.

“I don’t know! Maybe I’ve broken both my arms! It’s a hypothetical scenario! I’m also hypothetically married! Which might also not happen!”

“Oh, fuck off with that. You are gonna meet some lovely girl, date for 8 months, have a massive wedding and pop out a whole brood of Pikes. Then your wife is going to make you get a vasectomy, you horny bastard.” Shane’s prediction of how Hayden’s life is going to go just rolls off his tongue.

“Fair,” Hayden nods. “That checks out.”

“Second of all,” Shane continues, wiping his chin from where he’d coughed water everywhere before, “You’re expecting way too much if you think your hypothetical future wife is gonna be any good at handjobs. You know who’s an expert at handjobs? *Men*. Because literally all we do is fucking jerk off. I’ve never had a handjob from a girl and been like, *damn, that’s fire.*” (Kind of a weird specification there Shane, just saying!)

“So I did a better job than girls?” Hayden asks. He’s being stupid but he actually seems like he wants to know.

“Oh, you did amazing. Like you’re an absolute pro at jerking off.” Shane laughs and then sighs.

“I’ve had that *exact* thought, though, about girls and handjobs,” Hayden says, gesticulating and triumphant. “Honestly, getting a handjob from a girl is kind of gay, if you think about it.”

“Totally!” Shane agrees, laughing. “Between bros, it’s basically just a neck massage. Like how girls braid each other’s hair.”

“Exactly!” Hayden says. “And think about it: we eat together, skate together, lift together, travel together. When are we even supposed to meet women? Doing that is actually efficient.”

“So true,” Shane wheezes. He’s hoping Hayden is kidding. He’s gotta be, right? Unless Hayden has deleted the grinding and fucking *making out* from his brain.

Hayden’s laughter fades into something softer. “Anyway. I just wanted to say thanks for not making it weird. And I’m glad you get it.”

Shane isn’t sure he completely gets it, but Hayden’s elaborate routine to straight-wash (if that’s a thing) what happened is so ridiculous it somehow works.

“Of course,” Shane says. “You’re my best friend. Zero weirdness.”

“Plus,” Hayden adds, “we can’t be the only ones who’ve done it. There’s just no way.”

Shane balks. Okay so that isn’t a thought he has actually had before. But statically, Hayden could be onto something. “Who else? From our team?” Shane wonders out loud.

Hayden considers this for a moment, “Maybe Connors, maybe Marleau, I don’t know. Guess we’ll never know.”

Yep, that’s the plan, Shane thinks.

The team touches down in New York under a heavy December snowstorm, the kind that blankets the city just before Christmas and turns everything quiet and glittering. By the time they reach the hotel in Manhattan, everyone is tired and irritable from travel. When the rooming list goes up, Hayden scans it twice, frown deepening.

He and Shane are not together this trip. Fucking fuck.

Hayden mutters something under his breath and stalks off toward the elevators, clearly more pissed than usual. Shane pretends not to notice, but he feels the sting too. That gym conversation the night before probably lingers in Hayden’s head as much as it does in his. Oh well. They could have... Nevermind.

Ilya, meanwhile, stands a few feet away with his duffel slung over one shoulder, grinning like he just won something. He catches Shane’s eye and tips his head toward the list. They’re rooming together.

The game that night is at Madison Square Garden, the arena electric with holiday energy despite the low score. It’s a defensive grind from the start. Both goalies are sharp, hits heavy, and very few chances. New York strikes first, late in the second period, on a fluke bounce off a skate. Montreal answers early in the third when Shane buries a wrist shot from the slot, assisted by Hayden on a perfect stretch pass. Then, with five minutes left, Ilya tips in a point shot from the blue line for the game-winner, picking up his point of the night. Final score: 2-1 Montreal. A hard-fought road win – the kind that feels huge, heading into the break; like an early Christmas present for the team.

There’s another game tomorrow night, same building, same opponent. Back-to-backs against the Admirals are extremely rare, but the schedule worked out that way this season; arena availability and all. Then the team will all scatter for Christmas break.

Cap Mac keeps them on lockdown after the win. No going out, no celebrating. Straight back to the hotel, everyone, room service only – the pre-planned meals have been arranged by catering, and will be available to be collected. Lights out early, with another game looming. No monkey business.

Shane is in the gym after the game, stretching in sweats, when his phone buzzes with a FaceTime from his mum. He answers immediately. Yuna’s face fills the screen, smiling from the kitchen back home, Christmas lights twinkling behind her.

“Hi, sweetheart! Great game. I watched every second.” She can tell he’s too tired to chat in Japanese, probably by the look on his face when he picks up the call.

“Thanks, Mum. Felt good to get the win.”

“You looked strong out there. That goal was beautiful.” She beams. “I’m so proud. Can’t wait to have you home in a week. Whole seven days. Just us, food, no hockey talk if you want.”

Shane laughs softly. “I’ll want *some* hockey talk. But yeah, can’t wait.”

The door cracks open and Hayden pokes his head in. He had ducked out to change after getting back from the showers, but he’s ready to stretch too. He hears Yuna’s voice and grins.

“Hi, Yuna!”

“Hayden! There he is.” Yuna waves. They have done this plenty of times. Whenever she calls to check in, the two of them are usually together anyway. “How are you, honey?”

“I’m great,” Hayden says, stepping fully into frame and leaning over Shane’s shoulder. “Assisted on Shane’s goal tonight. Tomorrow’s another big one, though. Need to close it out strong.”

“That’s my boys,” Yuna says proudly. Then she catches Hayden’s expression. “You look a little grumpy, though. Everything okay?”

Hayden sighs dramatically. “They split me and Shane for rooms this trip. First time in forever.”

“Oh no,” Yuna says, sympathetic. “Who’d they stick you with Shane?”

“Rozanov,” Hayden mutters, answering for Shane. “Of course.”

Yuna raises an eyebrow at Shane. “And how’s that going? He still being a good teammate? Not bullying you?”

Shane shrugs, keeping his tone neutral. “Yeah, sure. He’s good. Fine.”

Hayden snorts. “He’s an asshole.”

“Shane’s too polite,” Yuna says, shaking her head fondly. “Always has been. You tell me if anyone gives you trouble, okay?”

“I will, Mum,” Shane promises.

They chat for a few more minutes. Yuna reminds him to rest his shoulder and asks if he needs anything brought to the airport next week and to text her a list of any special snacks he wants. Then she has to go finish dinner prep. Shane ends the call feeling lighter.

He heads up to the room alone. Ilya isn’t back yet. He should be, what with coach’s orders, but Shane’s no snitch.

The thought hits him suddenly, sharp and undeniable: Baltimore. That night after the photoshoot when Ilya had asked, voice low and serious, if Shane would ever want to bottom. They hadn't done it then, sticking instead to hands and mouths. But the question has lived in Shane's head for two months rent free. Ilya had wanted it. He'd said "Next time".

Maybe tonight.

Heart pounding, Shane takes an extra-long shower, thorough in a way he definitely was not planning to admit. He towels off, pulls on boxers and a T-shirt, and climbs into bed to scroll his phone, trying to look casual.

The door clicks open forty minutes later.

"You're back late," Shane says, he keeps his tone even and doesn't look up.

Ilya drops his keycard on the dresser, snowflakes melting in his damp dark blond hair. "Yeah. Old friend from home lives here. Went to see her for a drink. No alcohol, don't worry."

"Oh. Nice." Shane doesn't flinch at the pronoun. Not externally, anyways.

Silence stretches, thick and charged. Shane's heart thumps. He can read this vibe.

Ilya doesn't go to his own bed. He crosses the room and sits on the edge of Shane's, close enough that their knees touch. The air feels electric.

Shane sets his phone aside.

The second their eyes meet, it's all fucking over. Any self-control Shane was supposed to be showing evaporates.

Ilya leans in. Shane meets him halfway. They kiss like they've been waiting months, which they *have*. Slow at first, then deeper, hungrier. So messy. So fucking desperate it's downright embarrassing.

Between kisses, Shane manages, "When we went to Boston, I didn't room with Hayden that trip either."

Ilya pulls back just enough to smirk. "That was me."

Shane chuckles. "You organised it?"

"Wanted to see what would happen."

"Oh." Shane's pulse races. "And tonight?"

"Yeah," Ilya says quietly. "Told Cap Mac it would be good to debrief with how intense this game would be. Go over tape together." His mouth quirks. "He agreed."

Shane laughs, breathless. "Is that what this is? Debriefing? You're only two years ahead, not sure what you're gonna teach me."

Ilya kisses him again instead of answering, hands sliding under Shane's shirt to trace the hard ridges of his chest. Shane does the same, palms spreading over Ilya's broad, muscled pecs, thumbs circling nipples that harden instantly. Ilya groans low into the kiss and pinches Shane's in return, making him gasp. Clothes come off fast after that. Shirts, Ilya's jeans, boxers. Until skin meets skin and the room feels too warm despite the snow outside. They keep touching, hands roaming over strong chests, teasing and tugging until both of them are trembling.

Ilya pulls back, eyes dark, voice soft. "Hollander. I want to fuck you." He says it plainly and earnestly. "Please."

Shane's throat goes tight. "Yeah. I know. Yes. I want that." *Wow, smooth* he thinks. *Dork dork dork.*

Ilya takes his time. He knows it has been a while since Shane has done this with a guy, thanks to that hushed confessions months ago. He starts slowly, kissing down Shane's chest, pausing to suck and bite gently at a nipple until Shane arches off the bed. Then lower. He takes Shane into his mouth, warm and wet, sucking slow and deep, tongue swirling around the head, cheeks hollowing as he bobs.

"Fuck, Roz," Shane breathes, fingers tight in dark curls. "Your mouth. So good."

Ilya hums around him, takes him deeper for a long, luxurious moment, throat working, then pulls off with a wet sound. He pushes Shane's legs wider, lifts them over his shoulders, and licks lower.

It's been a long, *long* time since someone has done this for Shane. He grips the sheets and tries to remain calm.

Ilya's tongue circles the rim, teasing with light flicks, then pressing against it with deliberate, firm strokes. Shane's hips buck involuntarily, a low whine escaping him.

"Yes. God, yes," Shane gasps. "Don't fucking stop."

"Yes, like that, Hollander, hold your legs up," Ilya murmurs against him, voice muffled, hands gripping thick thighs hard enough to leave marks. "So good for me."

He keeps rimming him until Shane is shaking, thighs trembling, hole soft and fluttering. Only then does Ilya pause, reach for the lube from his toiletry bag, and slick his fingers generously. He presses one inside slowly, crooking it just right.

"Okay?" He checks.

"Oh, Jesus. Fuck. More than okay," Shane says, voice wrecked. "Need this."

Ilya adds a second finger, scissoring carefully, twisting and spreading while his tongue laps again at the stretched rim. "Two. Tell me how it feels."

"Fucking insane," Shane whispers, pushing back. "Burns so good. I want everything. Keep going."

Ilya pours more lube, works him open patiently, adding a third finger when Shane starts rocking desperately onto his hand. He curls them, strokes that spot over and over until Shane is babbling, sweat beading on his chest, nipples peaked and he's trying not to beg. Ilya's free hand drifts up to pinch one nipple sharply, drawing out a sharp moan.

"You're ready," Ilya finally says, voice rough with restraint. He rolls on the condom, slicks himself until he's glistening, and lines up.

He moves up onto his knees and Shane holds his own legs up and apart. Ilya then presses in slowly, inch by inch, eyes locked on Shane's face. The stretch is intense, perfect and overwhelming. Shane's breath catches as Ilya fills him half way.

"You feel. God. So big." Shane chokes out. It's burning a little but it feels right.

"Good big?" Ilya asks, voice strained as he stills halfway, letting Shane adjust. "Don't want to hurt you."

"Good big, I'm fine," Shane whispers, reaching up to thumb across Ilya's nipple again. "Fuck. All the way. I want all of you in me. Push in."

Ilya nods and then pushes the rest of the way in, gentle and deliberate. When he's fully seated, he leans down, forehead against Shane's, one hand splayed over Shane's chest, teasing the sensitive peak. "You okay?"

"Yeah," Shane gasps, pinching Ilya's nipple and earning a sharp inhale. "Move. Please fucking move."

Ilya starts to thrust, slow and deep at first, dragging over that spot with every stroke. Shane arches, hands clutching Ilya's back, nails digging into muscle.

"Like this?"

"Exactly like this," Shane says, pulling him closer. "You feel so fucking good. So fucking deep."

Ilya's hand wraps around Shane's cock, stroking in perfect time. "You're so tight around me, Hollander. Take me so well."

Shane moans, loud and unrestrained. "Fuck! I'm good now, you can do more. Harder. Please."

Ilya speeds up, hips snapping sharper, but Shane shakes his head, breathless. Ilya pauses.

"No. Flip me over. Want you to fuck me hard. From behind. Really hard."

Ilya stills, eyes flashing dark. "Yeah?"

"Yeah. Please. It's not my first time, remember?" If it's hardly ever going to happen, Shane might as well get what he wants.

Ilya pulls out carefully, flips Shane onto his stomach, then lifts his hips until Shane is on his knees, chest pressed to the mattress. Ilya swallows as he watches the way Shane arches.

Then, he lines up again and slides back in with one smooth thrust, bottoming out. Shane cries out into the pillow.

“Like this?” Ilya asks, voice gravel, hands gripping Shane’s hips bruisingly.

“Fuck, yes,” Shane pants. “Harder. Don’t hold back.”

Ilya doesn’t. Shane asked for it. He pulls back and slams in, setting a punishing rhythm, skin slapping skin, the bed creaking under them. Every thrust punches a broken sound from Shane’s throat, his cock leaking steadily. Ilya leans over him, chest to back, one hand snaking around to stroke him fast and rough.

“You feel so fucking good,” Ilya growls against his ear. “So tight. Taking me like this.”

Shane can only moan, overwhelmed, pleasure coiling hot and tight, and Ilya is stroking him so fast now. “Close. So close.”

“Come for me,” Ilya demands, pounding deeper, relentless. “Want to feel you come on my cock.”

“Fuck! I’m coming, I’m *coming*,” he feels it crash over him. He bites down hard on his own fist to muffle the loud, broken cry as he shatters, clenching rhythmically around Ilya, spilling hot over Ilya’s hand and the sheets beneath. Ilya follows seconds later, hips stuttering, burying himself deep and groaning, “Oh god, *fuck*, Hollander!” against his neck as he pulses inside him.

They stay locked together for a long minute, breathing hard, hearts pounding in sync. Then Shane laughs, shaky and spent.

“I made a complete mess of my sheets.”

Ilya kisses his temple, smiling against his skin. “My bed is clean. And I will leave a big tip for housekeeping.”

He gets up, strips the soiled linens with quick, efficient movements, and bundles them into a pile in the corner.

They shower separately, Shane first, then Ilya.

When they’re both back in clean boxers, towelling their hair, Ilya flops onto his own bed and pats the space beside him. Shane hesitates a second, then sits.

“So,” Ilya says, propping himself on an elbow, eyes soft but direct. “Was that good for you?”

Shane shrugs, fighting a grin. “Yeah. It was alright, I guess.”

Ilya snorts. “Alright. Sure. You were fucking begging for it, Hollander. But *alright*. You hurt my feelings.”

Shane’s cheeks heat, but he doesn’t deny it.

Ilya’s voice drops, more serious now.

“In case it wasn’t clear last time, when we were in Baltimore – this sex is good. We can keep doing it. Just ask when you want. It is... we have same secret, and it’s—” Ilya searches his mind for the right word, “—convenient.”

Shane nods, throat tight. “Got it.”

“And I will do the same? You will ask me?” Ilya pats Shane on the stomach twice.

“Sure, yeah. Fine by me.” Shane closes his eyes and sighs.

“You know,” Ilya says, and Shane can hear the smile in his voice, “we probably should fuck in Canada. Don’t you think it is weird if we just do it in the States? Boston, Baltimore, now New York.”

Shane thinks for a second. “Okay, sure. When we’re back home. Good for me to be patriotic.”

Ilya hums ‘O Canada’, Shane shoves him.

Ilya pulls the covers up, slides in behind him, arm heavy and warm across Shane’s waist. Within minutes Ilya’s breathing evens out, deep and steady.

Shane lies awake in the dark, staring at the faint glow of city light through the curtains.

Yeah.

He can do this. *Convenient*.

Friends who fuck.

Well. They’re almost friends. They could be friends.

Chapter End Notes

[rambling author end note deleted]

Chapter 12: Christmas Shenanigans

Chapter Summary

Last time: Shane and Ilya fucked in a hotel room and Hayden did some mental gymnastics as to how what he and Shane do could still be straight guy behaviour.

This time:

They're home for Christmas after the New York game! Hi David and Yuna!

Oh and more "straight" behaviour from Shane and Hayden. Guys, you gotta trust me, I'm not just writing them for fun there IS A POINT TO THE MADNESS.

Chapter Notes

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

The NHL holiday break finally drops like the best Christmas present ever, handing the Montreal Metros seven sweet days to ditch the superstar grind and turn back into regular kids again.

Shane flies west to Squamish, British Columbia, about an hour north of Vancouver, along the Sea to Sky Highway. Mountains loom everywhere, Howe Sound sparkles cold and blue, and the place feels sleepy under fresh snow.

As an only child, he slides right back into their easy, low-key family rhythm. They bake and decorate cookies together, and make proper mochi for New Year – he might be a world-class athlete, but Shane's inner seven-year-old still can't believe he's allowed to wield the huge mallet. They play gin rummy at the kitchen table, with ruthless trash-talk (David attempts to cheat and Yuna calls him on it, every round), and queues up *Die Hard* on Christmas Eve because Yuna declares it 'The only acceptable Christmas movie – fight me'.

Afternoons are lazy: Shane buried in a thriller, Yuna is playing Candy Crush or scrolling art on her tablet, David stoking the fire and humming along to whatever's spinning on the turntable. The house smells of pine, fresh-cooked mochi rice, and cedar smoke. It's warm and it's the exact reset Shane needs.

Forty-five minutes up the Sea to Sky in Whistler, Hayden is starring in his own personal *Home Alone* sequel intro, directed by a caffeinated lunatic.

His parents' house has become a holding pen for approximately ninety relatives (he lost count after the second wave of second cousins arrived with more babies).

The living room looks like a toddler mosh pit: wrapping paper shrapnel everywhere, three kids under five doing laps around the coffee table screaming “I’m Elsa!”, “No, *I’m* Elsa!”.

Someone – some kind of uncle, Hayden thinks – is doing karaoke to ‘All I Want for Christmas Is You’, completely off-key, while wearing reindeer antlers and a beer helmet.

The kitchen is a crime scene of casseroles exploding in the microwave, gingerbread men with existential melted faces, aunts yelling “WHO ATE THE LAST SLICE OF TOURTIÈRE?!”

Downstairs in the den, the Switch tournament has escalated to full-contact: Hayden’s little brother just suplexed a cousin over a disputed Mario Kart blue shell.

Hayden hides in the laundry room for twenty minutes just to breathe. When he emerges, his four-year-old niece tackles his legs, screaming “Uncle Hayden the Hockey Man! Put me on your shoulders so I can see the Moon!”

He’s pretty sure he’s developing tinnitus from the cumulative decibels.

The day after Boxing Day, Shane’s sprawled on the couch with a book and a warm tea when his phone buzzes. Hayden texts:

I know I should be grateful to be home but there’s literally 80 people in my family with my sisters and brothers having kids and I’m dying and I think maybe I Cannot Go On.

Shane laughs, picturing the chaos. He fires back:

Sounds brutal. Come over then! Hang with me, stay here a day or two. Drive’s like 45 min. My place is dead quiet. Mum and Dad won’t mind.

Hayden:

Don’t have to ask me twice. On my way. Save me from the toddler apocalypse.

An hour later Hayden’s (big brother’s) SUV crunches up the driveway. Shane greets him at the door, in socks and Japanese slippers and an old hoodie.

Hayden arrives looking like he’s survived a natural disaster, hair electrocuted, eyes wild. He staggers through the door like a man who’s seen too much.

Yuna appears instantly, hands on hips.

“Hayden Christopher Pike. You look like absolute roadkill. Shoes off. Coat. Now. Sit.”

Hayden blinks.

“Yes, ma’am.” He leans over to Shane. “How the fuck does she know my middle name?”

“She knows everything,” Shane laughs.

Shane's parents have met Hayden a couple of times in person, like when they manage to fly over for games, but they mostly see Hayden on FaceTime. Yuna adores Hayden.

Hayden steps inside and the calm hits like a drug. Warm wood, soft lights, fire crackling. Shane gives him the tour: living room with the tree, shelves stuffed with books and vinyl, family photos – young Yuna at punk shows in Tokyo, tiny Shane on pond ice, David in old minor-league gear at McGill (it's a school). The mochi-making mortar and mallet are still in the kitchen, along with the mochi itself, ready to be topped with a mandarine and decorations for New Year.

They end upstairs in Shane's bedroom, with its faded posters, twin bed, trophies, dusty PlayStation 3 and windows overlooking a wall of snow-laden evergreens. It's all cozy as hell.

They flop onto the bed and pillows.

"I have a treat for us," Shane says. He reaches into a drawer and pulls out a tin with two joints.

"Thank *fuuuuuuuuck*," Hayden sighs.

"Been forever," Shane says, lighting one and passing it. "High school was peak stress. This was the only thing that made me shut up and chill. Fuck it. Holiday rules, let's get baaaaaaked."

"Even if we did get drug tested," Hayden smiles, "luckily they wouldn't care. Fuck yeah, NHL."

Hayden then takes a hit, coughs into giggles. "My family's got me so keyed up I'm vibrating. One night off the insane NHL diet and training regimen? I'm fuckin in."

They pass it back and forth. The room fills with sweet haze. Shane thinks about opening the window but it's negative a bajillion degrees. Soon they're stupid high. Snow outside looks like slow-motion glitter. Shane sprawls against the headboard, loose and grinning. Hayden stretches out on the rug, staring up at the ceiling.

They start talking shit, just locker-room stories, dumb rookie pranks like when they printed out 300 pictures of Marleau and stuck them all over his apartment building, how Cap Mac accidentally shared his screen to the projector and they saw his holiday pictures, and also how Patrice still owes Shane fifty bucks from a bet, bastard.

Shane queues up *Superbad*. Every scene is gold. They pause to reenact lines in awful accents. "Where have you been? You almost gave me a goddamn heart attack!" Shane yells dramatically. Hayden sobs back: "Well, they let you pick any name you want when you get there!" They loop it endlessly, voices getting weirder, until they're crying-laughing and gasping.

They end up forgetting to watch the movie and dangle upside down off the bed.

The door flies open. Yuna stands there, one eyebrow raised at the haze and the two melted boys. “Oh my god, you idiots, you’re baked.”

“Hiiiiiiii Mum. Merry Christmas.” Shane sing-songs.

Hayden, also upside-down: “Hi Mrs. Yuna. Your son is a geeeeenius.”

Yuna snorts. “Both of you are babies. Giant, overpaid babies.” She goes to walk away, muttering in Japanese.

Shane sits up, red-eyed and grinning. “Wait! Mum, it’s Christmas tiiiiime. Please can we have some little snacky-treaties?”

“Pleeeease,” Hayden pouts.

“Okay. Holiday pass.” She disappears.

Ten minutes later she’s back with the ultimate Canadian mum platter: ketchup chips, Nanaimo bars and some cut up fruit, as well as some drinks: Ginger ale (Canada Dry, sugar free) and Coke Zero. David trails in with napkins, chuckling. “Don’t tell the trainers.”

“Thank you mum!” Shane sighs. “You’re the best. I missed you so much. Also I think I’ve literally forgotten what real food tastes like. This is amazing.”

“Thank you,” Hayden echos.

They demolish it all while replaying *Superbad* lines between bites.

The high peaks. They finish the movie in giggles and crumbs.

Then, without really thinking, Hayden reaches up and runs his fingers through Shane’s hair.

“Dude, your hair’s so soft.”

Shane laughs, then reaches over and messes with Hayden’s. They take turns, slow and lazy, tugging gently, tracing patterns, both too baked to care how intimate it feels.

They lean in closer. Noses bump, soft and accidental. Shane freezes for a second, then whispers, eyes glassy.

“Your eyelashes are so beautiful, man. Like... unfairly long.”

Hayden blinks slowly, smiles stupidly.

“Thanks, I grew them myself.”

They stay like that for a beat, noses almost touching again, breathing the same hazy air.

Then Hayden shifts a little, and Shane feels an unmistakable press against his thigh. Hayden freezes, eyes going wide. Shane glances down and realizes he’s in exactly the same predicament. The weed has them both ridiculously, undeniably turned on.

Hayden whispers, voice cracking with suppressed laughter.

“Oh my god, is this the weed? Because I am... embarrassingly hard right now. I could cut diamonds.”

Shane snorts into the pillow, muffling the laugh that keeps trying to escape. His whole body shakes with it. He presses his face deeper into the soft down, shoulders bumping Hayden's every time one of them twitches.

“Same,” he manages, voice thick and slurred from the high. “One hundred percent the weed. It's like... *boing*.” He lifts a hand and makes a dumb little upward flick with two fingers, like he's launching something into the air.

Hayden loses it beside him. Silent giggles make the mattress dip and creak. Their arms brush, warm skin sticking for a second before they both pull back an inch, then drift closer again without meaning to. Hayden wipes his a-bit-red eyes with the back of his wrist, cheeks pink and blotchy in the faint laptop glow.

“We're such idiots. Two grown men high in your childhood bedroom, both hard as hell and high as hell,” he says.

His voice drops softer at the end, almost careful. He glances over, eyes half-lidded. “We could...”

Shane's stomach flips, but it's that weird feeling where everything inside him suddenly feels too tight and too loose at the same time. He peeks out from the pillow, pupils still huge, the room hazy around the edges. The smell of weed and ketchup chips lingers, mixing with the smoke drifting up from the fireplace downstairs. His heart thuds loud enough that he is sure Hayden can hear it.

This is a terrible idea.

The worst.

They're both baked out of their minds, Hayden is his best friend, probably, and this, again, could make everything weird forever. But Ilya was clear: what *they* have is just sex, nothing serious, no strings. Ilya fucks whoever he wants and told Shane he should do the same. So this is fine. This is exactly what Ilya meant. Casual. Easy. It doesn't have to mean anything.

Shane swallows.

“Hold on.”

He slips out of bed, legs heavy and slow, and grabs a rolled-up towel from the floor. He wedges it tight under the door, jamming it in hard. There's no lock on his childhood bedroom door, but this will muffle any sound and buy them a second if someone tries to come in. With his parents downstairs, they have to be completely silent.

He crawls back onto the bed. Hayden is watching him, eyes dark and glassy, lips parted just a little. Shane leans in first this time, slow, and their mouths meet, soft and careful. It's warm

and clumsy from the weed. Hayden makes the tiniest sound into the kiss, and Shane pulls back an inch.

“Quiet,” he whispers, barely a breath against Hayden's lips. “We have to be quiet.”

Hayden nods, biting his lip, and pulls Shane back in. The kiss deepens, lazy and wet, tongues sliding slow and exploratory. Hayden's hand slips under Shane's hoodie, palm hot against bare skin, thumb brushing over his ribs, and Shane jolts hard enough that the bed creaks once. They both freeze, listening, then relax when nothing happens.

“Shirts,” Shane murmurs against Hayden's mouth, tugging at the hem. “Don't wanna... you know. Evidence.”

Hayden huffs a silent laugh, eyes crinkling.

They peel their shirts off carefully, tossing them aside. Skin on skin now, warm and flushed, the contact sending sparks everywhere. Shane shifts closer until their thighs slot together, the heat between them is obvious and urgent.

His hand slides down, hesitant at first, then cups Hayden through his sweats. Hayden's hips twitch, just barely, and he buries his face in Shane's neck to muffle a shaky exhale. Shane slips his hand inside, fingers wrapping around bare skin, stroking slow and deliberate so the mattress doesn't move.

Hayden's hand mirrors him, sliding under Shane's waistband, grip careful and familiar from that one other time. It's electric and they move together in tiny, controlled strokes, breathing through their noses, foreheads pressed together. Every time a sound threatens to escape, one of them stills, squeezes a warning, waits until the urge passes.

It's fucking agonising, having to go so slow when the high makes every touch feel amplified and overwhelming. Minutes stretch, the pleasure building in long, drawn-out waves instead of a quick rush. Shane's toes curl, his free hand clutching Hayden's shoulder, nails digging in just enough to ground them. Hayden's breath comes in soft, uneven puffs against his cheek, his hips rolling in tiny increments that barely shift the bed.

It takes forever. The slowness makes it torturous and intense, every glide of Hayden's fist over the head of his cock pulling Shane closer to the edge only to hold him there. Hayden's grip tightens, strokes getting shakier, and Shane can feel him trembling with the effort of staying silent and controlled.

Finally, Hayden tips over first, a full-body shudder he barely contains, mouth open against Shane's collarbone, no sound but a sharp, silent inhale through his teeth. His hand stutters but keeps moving, until Shane follows, biting down on his lower lip hard enough to hurt, pulsing hot over Hayden's fist in long, slow waves that leave him wrecked.

They stay like that for a long moment, breathing hard but silent, foreheads still touching. Slowly, carefully, Shane pulls back just enough to grab tissues from under his bed and clean them up. Hayden watches him with heavy-lidded eyes, cheeks flushed, lips swollen. Neither of them says anything at first.

Shane swallows, voice barely a whisper.

“Was that... alright?”

Hayden lets out a soft, breathy laugh, eyes already half-closed.

“Fuck yeah. That was... yeah. I'm zonked though. Like, literally melted.”

Shane huffs a quiet smile, tension easing a little. “Same.”

“How about this,” Shane whispers. “We put on that shark documentary you wouldn't shut up about on the last road trip. The one with the creepy Mariana Trench footage.”

Hayden grins, sleepy and crooked.

“Yes. Sharks are hot. Everyone knows that.”

They put their clothes back on. Shane finds the video and keeps the volume low so the narrator's voice is just a murmur. The screen fills with dark blue water and slow, gliding shadows. Hayden shifts closer, head dropping onto Shane's bare shoulder. Shane freezes for half a second, then relaxes. It's comfortable, the high making everything feel soft and safe.

Fifteen minutes in, right when the great white cruises past the submersible like it's sizing up lunch, Hayden's breathing evens out completely. His hand goes slack where it's resting on Shane's thigh. A tiny snore slips out, barely there.

Shane stares at the ceiling. The high is settling into something heavy and warm in his limbs, but his pulse hasn't slowed down. He can still feel the ghost of Hayden's hand on him, the careful way they moved together, the weight of what they just did hanging between them like the lingering smoke in the room.

Unfortunately, Hayden isn't who Shane's mind keeps wandering back to.

Carefully, so he doesn't wake Hayden, Shane reaches for his phone on the nightstand. The screen glows against his face. He opens messages. Scrolls past a dozen group-chat notifications until he finds the thread he's looking for.

His thumb hovers.

Then he types, slowly and carefully:

When are you back in Montreal?

He hits send before the second-guessing can catch up. The delivered checkmark pops up almost right away.

Shane sets the phone face-down on his chest and lets out a long, quiet breath that feels like it's been stuck there for hours. On the laptop, a shark drifts past in perfect silence.

Chapter End Notes

[rambling author end note deleted]

Chapter 13: Confession

Chapter Summary

Previously: Shane went home for Christmas, Hayden came over for a couple of days and they got high and jerked each other off. Oh and then Shane immediately texted Ilya to ask him when he was back in town.

This time: Ilya has invited Shane over to ‘hang out’ and we all know what this means.

Chapter Notes

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

Shane has four outfits laid out on his bed. He’s sweaty now from the cycle of changing, second-guessing, changing again, deciding he looks like he’s trying too hard, and changing back.

He finally settles on the same thing he wore that first night they all went clubbing: a tight black T-shirt and extra-baggy Levi’s. He pauses, digs out the nice watch from the sponsor gift bag, and adds his new stainless steel bracelet for good measure.

Then it’s shoes on, quarter-zip fleece over the T-shirt, coat zipped up. It’s only a fifteen-minute walk to Ilya’s building, but he still pulls on his toque. December in Montreal doesn’t care how short the walk is.

His heart is hammering by the time he steps out of the elevator. He’s been to Ilya’s condo a dozen times with the boys, but never alone. Never like this. What the *fuck* is he doing.

Ilya opens the door barefoot, wearing low-slung drop-crotch Rick Owens sweatpants and nothing else.

Fuck.

“Hi,” Ilya says, stepping aside.

“Hey.” Shane toes off his shoes and shrugs out of his coat. Ilya takes it without a word and hangs it neatly by the door.

The heating is cranked high, so Shane peels off the fleece too. He catches Ilya’s eyes flicking down to the strip of skin above his waistband before snapping back up.

Ilya grabs drinks from the fridge: sugar-free Canada Dry ginger ale for Shane, full-sugar Coke for himself. He dumps some salted cashews into a bowl and sets it between them. They drop onto the couch.

“So,” Ilya says, nodding toward the TV. “I’m playing Rocket League. You in?”

Shane’s grin is instant.

“You know I destroy you at this every time,” he says.

Ilya snorts and tosses him the second controller. “We will do one-V-one. Private match. First to ten. Loser admits the other is better. No excuses.”

“Deal.”

They cue up fast and dive in, elbows bumping, trash talk flying from the first kickoff.

The score stays neck-and-neck the whole way, both of them locked in, thighs pressed together, controllers clicking furiously. It ends 10-9, Ilya on a clutch play that leaves Shane groaning at the replay.

Ilya drops the controller and spreads his arms along the back of the couch, smug as hell.

“Best driver in the world. Admit it.”

Shane shoves his shoulder.

“Demo spam isn’t skill. Rematch. Best of three.”

Ilya laughs low.

“You Canadians and your excuses.”

“Scared I’ll win?” Shane challenges, already reaching for the start button.

Ilya leans in just enough that their shoulders stay touching.

“Keep dreaming, Hollander.”

Shane bumps Ilya’s knee with his own.

“We’ll be here all night.”

“Good,” Ilya says, eyes on the race menu. “I have time.”

But Ilya doesn’t pick a race. Instead, he taps Shane’s wrist

“You’re wearing a new bracelet, is chic.”

“Yeah, it’s from my parents, you know. For Christmas. I think they didn’t know what to get me, but anyways, mum’s sister brought it back from Japan.” Shane lifts his wrist up to show Ilya. The stainless steel bracelet has tiny flowers engraved into it.

“It’s pretty,” Ilya says having a closer look.

“I don’t know about *pretty*,” Shane huffs. “It’s very cool.”

“Mm, no. I think it’s a pretty bracelet for a pretty boy,” Ilya’s eyes sparkle a little as he teases Shane, and Shane feels his cheeks heat up a little.

“So did you go home for Christmas?” Shane asks, hastily changing the subject. “I know you guys don’t celebrate it like we do, but with the season starting back up right after New Year’s, and no chance to travel then...”

“No, I went to New York. I saw my friend Svetlana. She’s the one I went out with... that night, in New York.”

Shane feels heat rush to his face. Right. The *friend*.

“So, is she your girlfriend then?”

Ilya shakes his head.

“No, no, no. I mean, sometimes we fuck, sure, but no, we are just good friends. We have been friends for many years, since childhood in Russia together. Her dad was a goalie in the Soviet Union, and she knows *everything* about hockey.”

“Oh, right, okay.” *Sometimes we fuck* loops in Shane’s head like a broken record. He almost feels like he needs to shake his head to get it out.

Ilya gives him a long, unreadable look.

“You fuck women too, don’t be weird,” he says flatly.

“Jesus, Rozanov, I’m not being weird,” Shane mutters, cheeks burning.

“What! You are! You do fuck other women!” Ilya leans back against the couch and rolls his eyes dramatically. “I am maybe the one person here that you do *not* have to pretend with. I know you fuck men. You know I fuck men. You can tell me. Who the fuck am I going to tell? The Pope? Coach?”

It’s a good point. Shane snorts despite himself.

“Yeah, I fuck women. Are you happy now, you nosy bastard?”

Ilya rolls his eyes again, bigger this time. “Come *ooooon*. Talk about sex with me, Shane. Please. Tell me. Come on. Be honest for once in your polite Canadian life.”

“Okay, fine,” Shane says, sharper than he means to. “I fuck women. Men are hot. Some men. Not you, obviously.”

“Obviously,” Ilya echoes, deadpan.

“But you suck cock better than you play hockey, so,” Shane teases, grinning despite the heat in his face.

Ilya's smirk is slow and lethal.

"Oh, so I am the best cocksucker in the world then? Best you ever had? Say it. I will wait." Ilya crosses his arms above his head and leans back.

Shane throws a cushion at him. It bounces off Ilya's chest.

"Or you're average at hockey and I'm just being nice."

"Ah-ah." Ilya tuts, wagging a finger like a disappointed teacher. "We both know that is bullshit. NHL knows. ESPN knows. Your mother probably knows."

"Fine. You're pretty good at sucking cock," Shane smirks. He is lying through his teeth; Ilya is, unfortunately, the best he has ever fucking had, and the memory still makes his pulse jump. "Although, you're out of practice. Been a while, huh? All that New York 'friend' time."

Ilya throws a hand over his face in mock horror. "What? And you are a practiced cocksucker then? You are sucking off half the men in Vancouver? Is that what they say about perfect Shane Hollander? 'Nice guy, great slapshot, incredible blowjobs'?"

"Fuck you, Rozanov," Shane laughs, shoving Ilya's shoulder.

"No, no, I think you are the asshole. You are a selfish lover. Everyone says I am asshole, but they don't know that Mr *Perfect Blowjob* over here, you, Shane Hollander, you are the real asshole. You want everyone to suck your dick and don't want to return the favour. It is not good to not want to return the favour, or do they not teach that in Canada? Only making maple syrup?"

Shane is laughing properly now. "Whatever. You seemed happy enough the last three times we hooked up. Didn't see you complaining when I was the one on my knees."

"Then the girl in the club?" Ilya raises an eyebrow. "You just want your dick sucked? *Very* generous of you, I've heard you tell the others, has happened more than once."

"So what if I do," Shane says, brow furrowing. "I'd just gone through a fucking breakup. I was sad. I deserved treats."

Ilya raises his hands in surrender. "Fine, fine. Treats for sad little Shane Hollander."

"Exactly," Shane says, gathering courage. "And, besides. The last girl I fucked? I fucked her bent over her couch until she came, so I hope you're happy with that. *She* definitely was."

Something sharp flashes across Ilya's face, gone almost instantly, but Shane catches it.

"And the last man you had who wasn't me? You sucked his cock too? Or just... hand stuff, like teenagers?"

The memory slams into Shane: Hayden's breath against his neck, the quiet gasps, the way they'd both come undone so noisily in Shane's bed, and then again, quietly and slowly in his

childhood bedroom. He hesitates half a second too long, and Ilya's eyes narrow, catching it like a hawk spotting a poor helpless rodent.

"You didn't," Ilya says, voice low, delighted, but there's an edge under it. "Who was it, Hollander? Someone I know? Someone back home?"

Shane glares, cheeks hot. "We both came, if you have to know. I didn't suck his cock, but he didn't suck mine either. Mutual generosity."

Ilya laughs, but it's tighter than before. "Doesn't it feel good to just speak openly? You're too wound up. You need to relax. Maybe you need better company than... whoever that was."

Shane reaches for his ginger ale and takes a sip. "Fuck off. Home was relaxing."

"Good," Ilya says, mirroring him with his Coke. His jaw is a little tight now, Shane notices. "You go caroling around the neighbourhood and do Christmas play at the church or something? Little Shane in reindeer sweater? Or maybe you play the shepherd?"

Shane rolls his eyes. "If you must know, we make mochi for New Year. Half-Japanese, remember? We also watched Die Hard. My dad grilled steaks. Hayden's family drove him insane so he ended up coming over for a couple nights."

Ilya goes very still. "*Hayden* spent Christmas with you?"

"No, no," Shane laughs, waving it off. "He's got, like, five brothers and sisters and twelve aunts and uncles. His parents' house was chaos. He just needed some quiet so he crashed at my place after Christmas. We got high, watched movies. Super chill."

Ilya's fingers tighten around his Coke can. "High. With Hayden." His voice is flat again, but his eyes flick to Shane's mouth and away again.

"Yep," Shane says, leaning back against the couch, trying to act oblivious to the shift in the air. "God, I've missed smoking weed."

"You Canadians and your weed," Ilya mutters, but the laugh doesn't quite reach his eyes. He sets his drink down hard enough that it clinks. "So. Hayden gets the quiet family Christmas with the Hollanders. Gets you high. Gets... hand stuff, maybe?" Ilya fucking smirks.

Shane's stomach flips.

"What? No, I didn't say—"

Ilya's smirk is sharper now. "No, no. You hesitated. You blushed. You looked like you were remembering something *veeery* nice." He leans in, voice dropping. "Tell me, Shane. Was he better than me?"

Shane's mouth goes dry. "It's *not* like that, you've got it twisted."

"No?" Ilya is close now, knee pressing against Shane's on the couch. "Because I think maybe you need a reminder. Who is best."

Shane swallows.

“You jealous, Rozanov?”

Ilya’s eyes darken.

“Thought there was nothing to be jealous of.” He reaches out, slow enough that Shane could move away, and brushes a thumb across Shane’s bottom lip. “But you want generous? I will show you generous.”

Shane’s breath catches. He doesn’t move away.

Ilya closes the distance, kissing him hard, possessive, one hand sliding into Shane’s hair to tilt his head exactly where he wants it. Shane kisses back just as fierce, hands fisting in Ilya’s hair, the cashew bowl tipping forgotten onto the rug with a thud.

They break apart only for air, foreheads pressed together.

“Still think I’m out of practice?” Ilya murmurs against his mouth.

Shane laughs breathlessly.

“Shut up and prove you’re not.”

Ilya shifts forward in one smooth motion, swinging a leg over Shane’s thighs until he’s straddling him, knees sinking into the couch on either side. The weight of him is heavy and insistent, pressing Shane back into the cushions. Ilya’s hands brace on Shane’s shoulders, and then he rolls his hips, slow and filthy friction through two layers of clothes that makes Shane’s breath hitch hard.

“Fuck,” Shane whispers, hands flying to Ilya’s waist, fingers digging into bare skin above the waistband of those ridiculous, expensive sweatpants.

Ilya does it again, harder, grinding down in a circle that drags the hard line of his cock right against Shane’s. Heat pools low in Shane’s stomach, sharp and immediate. He can feel himself thickening, straining against his jeans, and Ilya knows it. He smirks triumphantly, eyes dark, and keeps the rhythm slow enough to torture.

Shane’s head falls back against the couch. Another grind, another drag, and he’s already losing the ability to think straight. His hips jerk up involuntarily, chasing more, and Ilya chuckles, low and wicked against his ear.

“Stop—*fuck*—teasing,” Shane manages, voice rough.

Ilya stills, but stays seated firmly in his lap, one hand sliding up to cup the back of Shane’s neck. Their faces are inches apart, breathing the same air.

“I’m going to ask you some questions,” Ilya says, an edge to his low voice. “You are going to answer them. And then I will take you into my room and fuck you as reward.”

Shane swallows, heart hammering. The promise in Ilya's tone sends a shiver down his spine.

"Okay," he says, the word barely above a whisper.

Ilya's thumb strokes along Shane's jaw.

"Good. First question." He leans in, lips brushing Shane's ear. "Since I sucked your cock, have you thought about me when you touched yourself?"

Shane's face burns. There's no point lying. Ilya is staring at him like he can see straight through skin and bone.

"Yes," he admits, the word scraping out.

Ilya smirks, rewarding him with a small roll of his hips that makes Shane's eyes flutter.

"You can't get me out of your head," he says.

Shane groans at that, half-embarrassed, half-wrecked.

Ilya pulls back just enough to meet his eyes again.

"Second question." Ilya's voice drops even lower. "Since I fucked you, have you ever thought about me while you fucked someone else?"

Shane freezes. The memory flashes hot and unbidden. That girl, bent over, his hands on her hips, but his mind traitorously elsewhere, picturing Ilya's shoulders, Ilya's voice in his ear, Ilya inside him. He hesitates too long.

Ilya's eyes narrow. He leans in and drags his teeth, slow and deliberate, down the side of Shane's jaw, a sharp scrape that ends with a soft bite just below his ear. Shane shudders hard, cock throbbing now.

"Answer the question, Hollander," Ilya hisses against his skin.

Shane's grip tightens on Ilya's waist. He's weak for this. He's weak for Ilya's voice, for the way he takes control without ever raising it.

"Fine. Yes," Shane finally breathes out, the confession ragged. "Fuck. I did."

Ilya pulls back just enough to stand, grabbing Shane's wrist in one firm hand and yanking him to his feet. Shane stumbles forward, off-balance, but Ilya is already on him again, mouth crashing back down, kissing him deep and hungry as he starts walking them backward down the hall.

They don't make it far. Ilya spins them, shoving Shane against the wall with a thud that knocks a framed painting askew. Shane groans into the kiss, hands scrabbling at Ilya's bare shoulders, trying to pull him closer. Ilya's tongue slides against his, filthy and demanding, while his fingers work fast at the button of Shane's jeans. The zipper rasps down, and then

Ilya's hand is inside, pushing past the waistband of his boxer briefs to wrap around Shane's cock in one tight, perfect grip.

Shane jerks, breaking the kiss with a choked gasp.

"Fuck, Ilya."

Ilya strokes once, slow and mean, and then kisses him again to swallow the sound. Shane's hips buck into his hand, desperate already, but he fumbles between them, yanking his own T-shirt up and over his head, tossing it somewhere down the hall. Skin on skin now, Ilya's chest hot against his, and Shane can't stop kissing him, can't stop chasing his mouth even as Ilya keeps that maddeningly slow rhythm on his cock.

They stumble the rest of the way like that, mouths fused, Ilya steering them through the bedroom door. The backs of Shane's knees hit the bed, and Ilya shoves him down hard, following right after. Shane lands flat on his back, breathless, and Ilya pins him there, knees bracketing his hips, one hand planted beside Shane's head while the other yanks Shane's jeans and underwear down in one rough pull. They catch on his ankles before he kicks them off entirely.

Shane is naked now, cock hard and leaking against his stomach, while Ilya still has those stupid fancy sweatpants on, riding low on his hips. The unfairness of it hits Shane like a slap.

"Ilya, please," Shane says, voice cracking. He reaches for the waistband, but Ilya catches his wrists and pins them above his head with one hand.

"No," Ilya says, eyes dark and gleaming. "You wait."

He slides down the bed, settling between Shane's thighs, and takes Shane into his mouth without warning. Hot, wet, perfect suction, tongue teasing the head before he sinks down deep. Shane's back arches off the mattress, a broken sound ripping out of him.

"Fuck, yes, please."

Ilya pulls off just as Shane's hips start to thrust, blowing cool air over the wet skin. Shane whines, high and pathetic, trying to chase Ilya's mouth. Ilya does it again, sucking hard, hollowing his cheeks, taking him to the root until Shane is shaking, and then stopping right at the edge, hand clamped around the base to hold him back.

"Ilya," Shane begs, voice wrecked. "Please, don't stop, I need—"

Ilya strokes him once, twice, brutally slowly, and then takes him back in, bobbing slow and deep, humming around him until Shane is babbling nonsense, thighs trembling, fingers clawing at the sheets. Every time Shane gets close, hips lifting, breath hitching, Ilya pulls off again, edging him mercilessly, over and over until Shane is a mess, sweating and pleading pathetically.

"Tell me," Ilya says finally, lips brushing the head of Shane's cock, voice rough. "Tell me I'm the best cocksucker you ever had. Fucking *tell* me."

Shane groans, head thrashing on the pillow.

“Fuck, this isn’t fair. I’d say anything right now, just let me come, please.”

Ilya laughs, low and dark, nipping at Shane’s thigh.

“You fucking brat,” he purrs.

Ilya’s mouth lingers on Shane’s thigh, teeth grazing the skin before he pulls back entirely, sitting up on his knees. Shane’s cock is aching against his stomach, slick and desperate.

“I want to fuck you now,” Ilya says, voice rough, eyes locked on Shane’s. “But not unless you ask for it. Are you ready for that?”

Shane’s face goes scorching hot, a deep flush crawling up his neck to his ears. He had *hoped*, yeah. He had showered extra thoroughly before coming over, taken the time to prep himself in case this exact thing happened, fingers lubed up and shaky while he thought about Ilya doing it instead. The fact that Ilya wants him to ask for it makes something hot and mortifying twist in his chest.

Ilya’s gaze sharpens, catching the blush, the way Shane’s eyes flick away for a second. A slow smile curves his mouth.

“You came here knowing what you wanted,” he says, low and certain. “Say it. Do you want me to fuck you?”

Shane swallows, still flushed, but he meets Ilya’s eyes.

“Yeah, I mean, yes,” he admits. (Jesus, Shane.)

Ilya leans down for one hard kiss, then flips Shane over in one smooth motion, manhandling him onto his stomach. Shane goes willingly, breath hitching as Ilya settles over him, chest to back for a moment, mouth brushing the nape of his neck.

“I will make you forget anyone else has ever touched you,” Ilya murmurs. He reaches for the nightstand, grabbing lube and a condom with efficient movements. The cap clicks open, cool gel sounding loud in the quiet room, and then Ilya’s slick fingers are sliding between Shane’s cheeks, pressing in without hesitation.

“You’re... slippery inside,” Ilya says. “You were playing with yourself before you came.”

Shane moans into the pillow, pushing back instinctively.

“Yeah... yeah, I was.”

“You wanted me inside you so badly, had to get ready for me,” Ilya smirks.

Ilya works him open, not needing to take it as slow as last time, one finger, then two, scissoring and curling until he finds the spot that makes Shane’s whole body jolt.

Despite the intensity Ilya's claiming him with, his movements are attentive. He adds a third, stretching him carefully, thoroughly, until Shane is trembling, breath coming in ragged pants.

"Fuck, Ilya, please, just fuck me already," Shane gasps, hips rutting down against the bed. Embarrassingly, the friction is starting to feel far too good. Shane has never struggled to last before – well, not until Ilya, at least. Shane moans and rubs his cock against the sheets faster.

Ilya's free hand presses down between Shane's shoulder blades, pinning him.

"Stop that. Do not come," he says, voice firm. "Do not come yet. I will tell you when you can."

"Then hurry up and fuck me, for fuck sake," Shane demands.

Ilya laughs, and then squeezes Shane's ass. "Last time when I fucked you, I couldn't see your face," he says, voice low and rough against Shane's ear. "This time, I want to watch you when you come."

He flips Shane onto his back in one easy motion. Shane's cheeks burn hot, the flush spreading all the way to the tips of his ears and down his chest. Ilya notices (of course), and his smirk is infuriatingly smug as he leans down to kiss Shane hard, tongue sliding deep until he's dizzy with it.

Ilya pulls away just long enough to kick off his sweatpants, roll on a condom and slick himself up with more lube. His eyes never leave Shane's face.

"Legs," he says simply.

Shane lifts them without thinking, hooking them over Ilya's ribs, knees spread wide. Ilya lines up and starts to push in, slow and relentless. Shane's breath catches, and he brings his fist to his mouth by instinct, biting down to muffle the moan that rips out of him.

Ilya stills, buried halfway.

"No," he says, voice firm. "I want to hear you. No one else is around. I want to *hear* how good I am."

Shane's arm drops away. His hand finds Ilya's bicep instead, fingers digging into thick muscle as Ilya sinks in the rest of the way. Shane arches hard, shoulder blades pressing into the mattress, back bowing as he takes every inch.

"Fuck," Shane breathes, eyes squeezing shut for a second. "You're so big, fuck!"

"Look at me," Ilya murmurs.

Shane forces his eyes open. Ilya starts to move, slow rolls of his hips at first, deep and deliberate, watching every flicker across Shane's face like he is memorizing it. Shane's hands roam over Ilya's back, nails scraping lightly, urging him closer.

It feels too good, too intense. Shane's hips start rocking up to meet him, chasing more.

“Faster,” he gasps. “Fuck me faster, please.”

Ilya obliges, pace picking up, thrusts turning harder, sharper. The headboard taps the wall in a steady rhythm. Shane’s moans spill out unchecked now, loud and broken, filling the room. They’re trying to kiss while they fuck, but they’re both breathing too hard, so they end up just playing in each others mouths , not really kissing, more just licking at each other, and cursing as Ilya continues to nail Shane into the mattress.

Ilya’s panting harder now, and his hand braces beside Shane’s head, the other gripping his hip hard enough to bruise. Sweat beads on Ilya’s forehead.

“Maybe I should make you come like this,” he says, voice strained as he jackhammers into Shane relentlessly.

Shane struggles to answer between huffing moans.

“Untouched? Holy fucking shit, Rozanov.”

Ilya stares down at him.

“But maybe I don’t want to wait that long.” He wraps a hand around Shane’s cock, stroking in time with his thrusts. “Maybe I want to do *this*.”

“Fuck,” Shane groans, head thrashing on the pillow. “Fuck, I’m close, I’m fucking close, just like that, fuck, I’m right there.”

“Come for me,” Ilya says, low and commanding. “Come on my cock. I want to feel you.”

Shane’s whole body starts to tremble. His thighs shake against Ilya’s sides, muscles locking up as the pleasure crests.

“God I’m gonna fucking come, Ilya, I’m—” They both look down to watch as Shane comes hard in Ilya’s hand, stripes of white painting his stomach and chest, whimpers turning into wrecked moans.

Ilya watches every second of it, eyes dark, jaw clenched. The sight alone nearly tips him over. He hauls Shane’s thick thighs up higher, folding him nearly in half, and pounds into him with short, brutal thrusts until he’s coming too, louder than Shane has ever heard him, groans echoing off the walls as he pulses deep inside. “Fuck, oh god, Shane, fucking take it, oh my god you feel so fuck—”

Ilya is panting as he comes down off the high, his whole face blushed and sweaty.

Eventually, Ilya pulls out slowly, ties off the condom, and lets himself collapse beside Shane, chest heaving.

Shane lies there panting, staring at the ceiling.

“Jesus,” he manages.

Ilya chuckles, breathless, rolling onto his side to face him.

“You will not think of anyone else in bed but me next time, I think,” he says.

Shane turns his head, smirking weakly.

“Couldn’t make me come untouched, though,” he teases.

Ilya reaches over and smacks Shane’s arm, a little harder than playfully.

“Fuck you. Maybe next time. Give you something to look forward to.”

Shane laughs, sounding rough and wrecked.

“Big promises, Ilya.”

Ilya grins and leans in to kiss the smirk right off Shane’s mouth. It’s softer this time, almost sweet, lips lingering like he isn’t quite ready to let go. When he finally pulls back, he brushes a thumb over Shane’s cheekbone.

“I will go tidy up,” Ilya says quietly. He kisses Shane’s temple, then grabs the tissue box from the nightstand and passes a handful over. Shane is still flat on his back, legs splayed, come cooling on his stomach and chest. He takes the tissues with a small, grateful nod and starts cleaning himself up while Ilya slips out of the room.

The shower runs for a minute, just a quick rinse. Ilya comes back barefoot, in just a towel, hair damp and sticking to his forehead in little curls. Shane drags himself upright, legs still shaky, and heads to the bathroom next to rinse off quickly. When he returns, he eases down onto the edge of the bed and winces without meaning to.

Ilya’s head snaps up.

“You okay?”

“Yeah, yeah,” Shane says, rubbing the back of his neck nervously. “Just... that last part, when you pushed my legs up higher and folded me in fucking half. Went really deep. I’ll feel it tomorrow, but I’m good. Didn’t mind it.”

Ilya’s expression softens, guilt flickering there for half a second.

“I should have asked first. I’m sorry.”

Shane shakes his head.

“No, no. Don’t. I would’ve said something if it hurt too much. I liked it.”

Ilya studies him a beat longer, then reaches for the cigarettes on the nightstand.

“I need one.”

Shane quirks a grin.

“You and your goddamn cigarettes.”

“Come on,” Ilya says, already tapping two out. “Have one with me.”

“I really shouldn’t,” Shane sighs.

“You smoke with Hayden, you can smoke with me. Come on, Hollander. Indulge.”

“Fine.” Shane scoots up the bed until they’re shoulder to shoulder against the headboard. Ilya grabs two, lights both and hands Shane one.

Shane takes a drag and lets it out slowly, and they smoke next to each other in silence for a beat.

“First three hits are always perfect,” Shane muses. “After that, it’s just... kind of meh.”

Ilya plucks the cigarette from between Shane’s fingers without asking.

“Then stop wasting it. Gimme.”

Shane watches him smoke them, one after the other, glowing in the dim room.

“You know,” Ilya says after a while, voice low, “you say my name right. Everyone else does ‘Il-lee-ya’. You say Il’ya.”

Shane feels his ears go warm. “Well... I looked it up.”

Ilya turns his head, a small smile tugging at his mouth.

“You looked it up.”

“Yeah.” Shane shrugs, trying to play it off. “I googled it. Figured I should get it right.”

“Thank you.” Ilya whispers. He then leans over and kisses him, right on his forehead, soft, barely there, just a brush of lips. When he pulls back, they sit in the smoke and quiet for another minute.

Shane clears his throat and straightens up.

“Anyway. I should probably head out.” He gets up and starts picking up his clothes and getting dressed.

Ilya’s face shifts. Something quieter and bleaker settles in, his shoulders dropping, a flicker of disappointment. It’s gone the next second, Ilya’s face back – mostly – to its usual cocky confidence. He gets up and follows Shane down the hall, still just in a towel. Even though they’re not touching, they’re close enough that Shane can feel the heat of Ilya.

At the door, Ilya stops just behind him, hand resting lightly on the frame. He doesn’t say anything to keep Shane there, but the way he looks at him, his eyes sharp and hungry, mouth

turned down just a little – like he’s challenging Shane not to leave – hits harder than words could.

“See you tomorrow, Shane.”

“Yeah. See you tomorrow, Ilya.”

“Bye.”

The door closes softly.

Chapter End Notes

[rambling author end note deleted]

Chapter 14: Realisation (Ilya's POV)

Chapter Summary

Last time: Shane goes to Ilya's and they play video games and fuck. Also it seems kind of tender and Ilya kind of guesses what's going on between Shane and Hayden (at least as to what happened at Christmas. Oh my god.)

This time: Ilya's POV! Finally!

Chapter Notes

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

Ilya can't help but glare at Hayden. Hayden might be the most annoying fucking person in the whole world, and he's sitting there giggling and trying to put music on the shared playlist in the locker room, and surprise surprise, his music taste is also terrible.

This also has nothing to do with the fact that Shane hasn't denied that he and Hayden messed around over Christmas break. The mental image of Shane and Hayden touching each other, maybe kissing, maybe breathing into each other's mouths and then probably giggling from being high and snuggling in Shane's childhood bedroom makes Ilya so angry he wants to break his stick over his knee. Or maybe over Hayden's head.

He wonders if stupid, annoying Hayden might have bought Christmas presents for Mr and Mrs Hollander. Maybe he'd *helped with the dishes*.

Earlier, Shane and Hayden been working out (read: pissing around being annoying together) in the weights room when Ilya had come in for a session. He'd overheard Hayden asking Shane what his, Ilya's, problem was.

You, Ilya thought.

Now, Hayden decides to do a big annoying stretch and show Shane how flexible he's getting from all his conditioning.

Ilya glares at Hayden like he's trying to explode him with his mind.

At practice, Ilya specifically avoids passing to Hayden, and leaves him skating around trying to guess Ilya's next move. He lets Connors have the puck and score, and then roughly pushes past Hayden as they climb over the boards. Then, when they're on again, he smacks the puck stupid hard to make it an impossible pass to receive, which then makes Hayden fumble and get told by Coach to 'fucking wake up, Pike'.

Ilya smirks. Hayden looks dejected.

Ilya also decides for certain that Hayden is shit at hockey. (He's obviously not. He plays for the NHL. He's not as good as Shane, maybe he's, like, the fifteenth best on the team.) Squirting his water bottle into his mouth, Ilya fumes more as Shane shows Hayden how to angle his blade better.

And what the fuck does Shane see in Hayden.

Obviously he likes him enough to invite him over for Christmas, and... *God*. Ilya clenches his jaw. But then Ilya thinks about the way *he* had folded Shane in half and fucked him until he came (albeit with his hand, but still).

God, I should have waited, made him come untouched, he thinks.

"Dude, you're acting fucking insane," Patrice whacks Ilya on the back and breaks him out of his thought spiral. He probably looks a million miles away.

"I did not sleep well." Ilya crosses his arms. He knows he's acting like a toddler. Or maybe like a petulant teenager who has to share the X-box.

Oh god.

It's the *sharing*, isn't it?

Back in the locker room, Shane and Hayden are, surprise surprise, chatting about fucking nothing together, giggling over some video of rabbits jumping on a trampoline.

"That's fucking AI." Ilya knows he's being a dick.

"Oh," Hayden looks up. "The trampoline video? Are you sure? Because it—"

"Yes, I'm fucking sure." Ilya turns around and yanks his practice jersey over his head and then heads to the showers.

"Jesus, lay off the kids would you?" Cap Mac is in the showers already and is rinsing suds out of his hair.

Ilya nods and then turns away. He can't be bothered with this right now. So what. He's a prick. Get used to it.

Back at his apartment, Ilya throws his bags down at the door and marches straight to the balcony. He needs to smoke, badly. His lighter struggles to catch in the wind, and then he's finally leaning on the cold railing and taking a drag.

What does Hayden Pike have that he doesn't have? He knows he's better at hockey. He's probably more handsome, if he has to admit it. That's what the fans say, anyways. Hayden laughs a lot, but he's not even *funny*. Everyone knows Ilya is funny. Funny, maybe in a dry, Russian way, but he's a crowd-pleaser. And Ilya is *fun*. He hosts all the game nights and social nights and gets everyone off to the clubs.

He leans sideways against the brick of the balcony wall and groans.

Last night had been fucking insane. The thought of Shane under him, trembling and gasping 'Ilya' as he came hard between them, makes his own cock thicken again. Fuck, even just the way Shane had said his *name* makes him breathe funny. He wants to play that, over and over, in his head.

But then... afterwards. It had seemed different to normal. They'd kind of cuddled, they'd shared little kisses. They'd talked a bit. It was different to normal, but... nice.

What even is normal, though? he wonders. A couple of blow jobs in hotels, then fucking him hard from behind in New York. And then sharing a bed, that night. Ilya can't even recall the last time he's actually wanted to fall asleep with someone.

He wants to fall asleep with Shane. He should have asked him to stay last night.

He could have gone home with Svetlana in New York. He would have broken curfew, and Shane wouldn't have ratted him out. Svetlana had even hinted that it had been a while since she'd had a good quality lay. But no, Ilya had been eager to get back to his stupid hotel room with his rookie fucking teammate, and had then fucked him, struggled to last, and come so hard he thought he might pass out.

He thinks back to talking about sex yesterday with Shane. He knows what he saw in Shane's eyes when he mentioned Svetlana. He'd been testing the ice, just to see if Shane reacted. And he *did*. But then, Shane had doubled down on making it clear he's fucked other people.

And *Hayden*.

Why *Hayden*?

Fuck Hayden. Stupid. Stupid.

The anger rises up in his chest, hot and sticky and sour, and he feels sick to his stomach.

Hayden touching Shane feels so wrong, and he can't even begin to rationalise it.

Unless.

And... Ilya knows that feeling.

Even if he isn't letting himself feel it, or even realised he's feeling it until now. It's how he'd felt when he had folded Shane in half, to *show* him how he'd been feeling.

Jealous.

So fucking jealous.

This crush on Shane suddenly feels so huge it's going to destroy him.

He groans and lights another cigarette. Fuck it.

He needs to work out how the fuck to fix this right fucking now, or he's going to die.

And he also maybe needs to work out how to never speak to Shane again.

Maybe he needs to change teams. Ilya starts to panic.

He calls Svetlana.

"Ilya? Are you alright? I'm still at the office—"

Okay, so Ilya probably should have thought about the fact that it's only 6pm (in both Montreal and New York), and that he also never calls her. He probably needs to be more chill.

"I think I need to change teams," he blurts out, in Russian. And then his eyes are embarrassingly wet.

"What? Ilyusha! What's happened? Wait, let me just hop into a meeting room." There's the sound of Svetlana shuffling, probably trotting down her office hallway in her high heels, and then there's the bang of a door closing.

"Ilyusha, please, talk to me, you're scaring me! What happened?"

Ilya slumps down against the brick and sinks down until he's sitting on the cold concrete. He takes a drag of his cigarette. The air is far too cold. He should just smoke inside.

"Okay so when we were in New York, I told you how I hadn't been sleeping around as much, you remember?"

"Yes, and I was very concerned," Svetlana's voice already sounds worried. "It isn't like you. Is it the stress? Montreal is on such a streak, surely it's not—"

"I fucked my teammate." It comes out before Ilya can stop himself. "You can't ask me who. But I did. More than once." It spills out and Ilya's blurting out his stream of consciousness, which is far easier than normal in his mother tongue. "And he's not out, because no one is fucking out, but we're, like, friends with benefits, but then we said we would fuck other people, and now he's fucking ... this other guy, and oh my *god*, Sveta, he's fucking the *worst guy ever*, and I don't even know what he *sees* in him, and—"

"Slow down, slow down!" Svetlana sounds genuinely panicked. "Did you get found out? Are you getting kicked out?"

"No! No one knows, oh my god, no one can *ever* know. But he's fucking this other guy, I think – actually, maybe not full fucking, I don't know – and when I see them together, I want to fucking *kill* him."

"You want to kill the guy you're fucking? Ilya, that's dark even for you." Svetlana is sounding more and more concerned by the minute.

“No! I want to kill the friend he’s fucking! I can’t stand the thought of him touching him, and –*fuck!*” Ilya sighs. Saying it all out loud makes him sound clinically insane. “And I was the one who said ‘let’s fuck other people’. And now he is. And I don’t *want* that any more.”

“Oh Jesus. Ilya. Does... does he know you feel this way?” Svetlana says it like it’s the most obvious thing in the world.

“No! And then last night he came over, and we had the most insane sex, like *crazy* good, but I think I was fucking him to show him how good I could be. Better than Hay— the other guy. Yeah. But then afterwards, we smoked in bed together, and it was different and sweet and I never wanted to him go home and I’m fucking ... breaking down.”

“Ilya. You have feelings for him.” Svetlana sighs. “You know this right?”

Ilya groans. “But... what if he doesn’t feel it back, and what if—”

“You have two options here. You say nothing and get your shit together so you don’t get traded to Ohio. Or you confess your feelings. You’ve always been good at picking up on how others feel. This will be no different. Have you considered he could be fucking someone else just for the sake of not only fucking you? Remember when I was with Tomás, on and off, and you and I would fuck?”

“Yeah?” Ilya isn’t that good at remembering the times they’ve had sex. “Oh! The guy with the Lotus!”

“You remember his *car*?” Svetlana sounds exasperated.

“It was such a cool car.” Ilya sighs. It was, though!

“Back to what I was saying. It didn’t mean anything romantic with you. I just didn’t want him to be the only guy I was fucking if we were going to be casual. And you know I wanted him.”

“Yeah. I remember now. He broke your heart.” Oh! *That* Tomás. Of course.

“Precisely,” Svetlana says in a clipped, dry tone. “But maybe that’s what is going on with your mystery man and his fuck buddy. Just because they’re fucking—”

“Or doing hand stuff,” Ilya interrupts.

“Or doing *hand stuff*,” she corrects. Ilya swears he can hear her eye roll. “Doesn’t mean he doesn’t want you. If you get the feeling he has feelings for you too, you’re probably right.”

Ilya groans again. He’s now on cigarette number three. “But what do I do?”

“Go to him! Go to him right now. He’s probably at home playing video games or something. Go and tell him you like him. Tell him you’re willing to give whatever this is a try. Tell him you are keen to be exclusive if he is.”

“I can’t just go to him, I—”

“You can. You should. Come on Ilya. At least you’re not wondering if he’s queer or not. You know you have good chemistry in bed. You said the sex was insane. And you like him. He’d also be a fool not to like you.” Svetlana pauses. “And I know it would be complicated, but...”

“Good things are worth it,” Ilya grumbles. “Okay. So maybe I’ll do it.”

“Yes!” Svetlana squeals. “Yes, Ilya! Go get your man! Go show up at his doorstep and confess your love, and—”

“It’s not love!” Ilya panics. His fingers are now so frozen he’s struggling to hold his phone.

“You want to kill the guy he’s friends with. You’re so jealous you feel physically ill. But not love, okay, Ilyusha. Go to him.”

Fine.

They talk a little more and Ilya smokes a fourth fucking cigarette.

He goes inside, takes a few deep breaths. Decides he’s no longer going to let this simmer. Time to get real.

Ilya pulls on his coat and grabs his toque. He’s going to do this. His heart hammers as he power-walks through the deserted streets in the cold night towards Shane’s. He thinks about what he’s going to say, but nothing is really feeling right. He’ll go by vibe, he decides. He’ll just be honest. He wants Shane. He wants only Shane. He wants to be the one to give Shane everything he needs.

The elevator trip up feels like it takes minutes instead of seconds. He hesitates outside of Shane’s door for a second and then knocks hard three times.

He hears murmuring. Perhaps Shane had been on the phone.

And then Shane opens the door. His lips are puffy and wet, his T-shirt is rucked up slightly so a tiny sliver of his stomach is visible, and there, in the background with messed up hair and bright pink cheeks is—

Oh my god

Hayden Fucking Pike.

Chapter End Notes

[rambling author end note deleted]

Chapter 15: Crash Out

Chapter Summary

Last time: Ilya talks to Svetlana and decides to go to confess his feelings to Shane.

Unfortunately, he finds Shane mid-make out with a certain Hayden Pike.

This time: Shane's POV of the same day. The night before Shane and Ilya had their games night and hot sex.

Chapter Notes

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

The morning after hooking up with Ilya, Shane wakes up to sunlight slicing through the blinds. His body feels heavy and loose in a way that makes him bury his face in the pillow with a muffled groan. He is sore. Deep, aching sore. Sore enough that it pulses low in his hips and thighs every time he shifts. It's a good sore. He can still feel the ghost of Ilya's hands pinning him down, the stretch and burn of being folded open, the way Ilya had watched his face like it was the only thing in the room.

Fuck.

He checks his phone. Nothing. He hadn't expected anything, but the blank screen still stings a little.

Hayden texts that he's back in town, finally free of his horde of cousins and aunts. Shane agrees to meet up at the team gym before team conditioning starts.

They both show up at the weight room an hour later, and Hayden is all loud grins and restless energy. He slings his arm around Shane's neck like he never left.

"Miss me, pretty boy?"

Shane laughs and shoves him off.

"Like a hole in the head."

They spot each other on the bench, trading dumb stories. Shane is laughing so hard he almost drops the bar when Hayden starts doing a terrible impression of his little sister's TikTok dances, hips wiggling dramatically.

Hayden's arm is slung across Shane's shoulders again when the gym door swings open.

Ilya steps in with his gym bag over one shoulder. His eyes land on them: Hayden half-draped over Shane, both of them flushed and giggling. Something cold flickers across his face. His jaw tightens. He doesn't speak. Just nods once, sharp, and heads to the far corner. He drops his bag hard enough that the thud echoes.

Hayden blinks after him.

"Jesus. What's his deal? He always looks like he wants to put me in the ground."

Shane shrugs, mouth dry.

"Rozanov being Rozanov. Ignore him."

But he feels Ilya's stare the whole rest of the session, heavy and unreadable.

Practice that afternoon is brutal. Coach rides them hard after the holiday break. By the time they're done, Shane's legs are jelly. He's also feeling particularly achy thanks to how hard Ilya railed him last night. Ilya is being kind of extra-asshole-y today, and kind of only like that at Hayden, but Shane doesn't think about that too much. Ilya has never acted that fond of Hayden so it's probably nothing. (He refuses to think about the fact that he might have accidentally let on about anything between Hayden and himself.)

Hayden follows him home, kicking off his shoes and raiding the fridge without asking.

"Movie?" Hayden asks, already scrolling Netflix. "Something brainless."

"Yeah, sure."

They end up on the couch, some old nineties action flick with terrible one-liners. The lights are off, and the volume is low. Halfway through, Hayden stretches out. His head drops onto Shane's shoulder.

Shane tries to watch the screen. He *really* does.

But his brain keeps sliding back to Ilya.

To the way they had played Rocket League like idiots, elbows bumping, laughing over stupid demos. To Ilya fucking him, merciless and perfect, and then how gentle he was after. Passing tissues. Kissing his temple. Smoking together in the quiet. That stupid little forehead kiss. The way Ilya had said thank you, just because Shane said his name right.

It had felt... tender. Too tender. Like something more than fucking.

Shane's chest tightens.

He cannot catch feelings for Ilya Rozanov. He absolutely *cannot*. They're supposed to just be bros. Teammates. This is just scratching an itch. Really good scratching. Mind-blowing, even. And maybe they're friends now. A little. But that's it. That has to be it. This stupid fucking crush has to stop.

He will *not* fall for his handsome, gentle, asshole Russian teammate. No way.

Hayden shifts beside him, warm breath against Shane's neck. The credits roll. Shane didn't catch a single plot point.

Hayden doesn't move. He just lifts his head enough to meet Shane's eyes in the blue glow of the TV. His gaze is clear and steady.

"So," Hayden says, voice low and a little shy.

Shane's pulse kicks. "Yeah?"

Hayden's cheeks pink up, but he doesn't look away. "I've been thinking about Christmas. You know. When we... you know. And before, after the wedding. It was really good."

Shane swallows. "Yeah. It was."

Hayden bites his lip. His fingers pick at the couch cushion. "I normally get super nervous about sex stuff. Like, sex makes me really fucking anxious, usually. I overthink everything and worry I'll suck at it or it'll be weird after. I don't know. It's dumb. It's always been that way."

Shane turns toward him, surprised. Hayden always seems so confident and loud and easy with everyone.

"It's not dumb."

Hayden huffs a small laugh. His eyes drop to Shane's mouth and back up. "With you, when we do stuff, it feels... safer. I dunno. You're chill. You don't make me feel like an idiot."

Shane's heart does something complicated. He reaches out. His thumb brushes Hayden's jaw.

"Hayden, I'm so, so tired right now. Sorry if I say the wrong thing." He strokes Hayden's hair and cups the back of his neck. "I liked doing *stuff* with you too. I'm just scared it'll get weird. Weird if we do it too much."

"It won't." Hayden blinks slowly. His beautiful round eyes almost pleading. "I promise. Not weird. And also handjobs aren't even sex. Remember? Like we said?"

"But you just said sex stuff makes you anxious except with me," Shane teases, trying to lighten the mood.

"It doesn't feel like sex. With you." (?!!!! Hello? Hayden?)

Shane's breath catches. What the *actual* fuck.

It's such a bad idea. It is *so* messed up. He should not do this. He shouldn't touch Hayden like that again. He absolutely should not kiss Hayden either.

But he also cannot, *cannot*, cannot be falling for Ilya.

Hayden's gaze flicks to his mouth again and lingers.

Shane snaps.

He grabs Hayden by the waist and hauls him forward, pulling him onto his lap in one rough motion. Hayden gasps, startled but delighted, and then their mouths crash together. Hard. Desperate. Fucking *messy*. Hayden's hands fist in Shane's hair, tugging just enough to sting, and Shane groans into the kiss, biting at Hayden's lower lip until he opens for him.

Hayden straddles him fully, knees sinking into the couch on either side of Shane's thighs, and rolls his hips down, slow and deliberate. The friction drags a low moan out of Shane's throat. They're both already hard, straining against sweatpants and jeans, and Hayden grinds again, harder, chasing the pressure like he can't get close enough.

Shane's hands slide under Hayden's shirt, palms skating over hot skin, thumbs brushing his nipples until Hayden whimpers into his mouth. They kiss like they're fucking starving; tongues sliding, breath coming in sharp pants between bruising kisses. Hayden rocks faster, rutting shamelessly, the thick line of his cock dragging against Shane's through too many layers.

"Fuck," Shane rasps against Hayden's jaw, mouthing down his neck, just below his ear. "You feel so good."

Hayden keens, head falling forward, hips stuttering as he grinds down harder, chasing the heat building between them. His fingers dig into Shane's shoulders, nails biting through fabric, and Shane thrusts up to meet him, matching the rhythm until they're both shaking, moans spilling unchecked.

"Fuck, Shane," Hayden breathes against his mouth, voice wrecked. "Don't stop."

Shane thrusts up to meet him, hands gripping Hayden's ass, pulling him down harder. Sweat prickles at their hairlines. The room fills with the sounds of their moans, the creak of the couch, the slick slide of fabric. Shane considers now would be the optimal time to maybe move off the couch so they don't accidentally come like this.

Then a loud knock thuds against the door three times. It's so loud they both jolt.

Shane freezes, unsure who the hell else would be coming over.

"Fuck. Maybe it's security," he pants, forehead pressed to Hayden's. "I'll go check. Wait here."

Hayden nods, flushed and dazed, sliding off his lap with shaky legs.

Shane adjusts himself as best he can, heart pounding, and yanks the door open just a crack. His hair is a mess and he's flushed all the way down his neck.

Oh, *fuck*.

Ilya stands there, coat zipped up, cheeks pink from the walk over. His eyes narrow as he looks at Shane and then glances past him to Hayden on the couch.

Hayden, whose shirt is pushed up to his ribs, face flushed deep red, hair messed from Shane's hands, lips bitten and shiny. Hayden freezes on the couch, blinking like he's just realized how this looks.

Ilya's jaw goes tight. Something raw and ugly flashes across his face.

Jealousy. Pure, sharp, unmistakable jealousy.

His nostrils flare. His hands curl into fists at his sides. His gaze drags over Hayden like he wants to burn the image out of his mind or maybe set Hayden on fire, then snaps back to Shane, hot and accusing.

Shane feels it hit him like a body check. The guilt. The panic. His cheeks burn.

"I forgot my charger," Ilya lies, voice flat and cold. But his eyes are blazing.

He doesn't wait for an answer. He turns on his heel and marches down the hallway, shoulders rigid, steps heavy and fast.

Shane's heart slams against his ribs.

"Wait, Ilya—" He doesn't think. He just moves. "Hayden, give me a second, I'll sort this out," he mutters, not waiting for a reply.

He steps out, pulling the door shut behind him. Then he's chasing him down the hall.

"Ilya, wait."

Ilya does not wait or even slow down. He stalks toward the elevator, thumb jabbing the button hard enough the panel rattles.

Shane catches up just as the doors slide open. He grabs Ilya's arm, his fingers digging in.

"Hey. Stop. Please."

Ilya yanks free and steps inside, turning to face him. His eyes are dark, stormy.

"Go back to your friend, Hollander. He is waiting."

The doors start to close.

Shane slaps his hand against them, forcing them open again. He steps in, crowding close. The doors shut behind him with a soft ding. They're alone in the small space.

"It's not—" Shane starts.

Ilya laughs, short and bitter. "Not what? Not exactly what it looks like? Hayden on your couch, looking like *that*. You with your hair like *that* and your cheeks all red and—"

Shane's face burns.

"We were just—"

"Just what?" Ilya steps forward, backing Shane against the wall. His voice drops, low and furious. "Just kissing? Just *chatting*? Forgetting who fucked you last night?"

Shane's stomach drops.

"It's not a big deal. We were just messing around. Like you do, with your 'friends'."

Ilya's laugh is harsh, echoing in the small space.

"Messing around. With Hayden Pike." Ilya nearly spits. "Hollander, he follows you around like a lost dog! He spent Christmas with your family."

Shane shoves at Ilya's chest, anger flaring hot.

"*You* said we're both fucking other people. *You* told me that. Svetlana in New York. Whoever else. You don't get to be pissed now."

Ilya's face twists. He crowds closer, hand slamming against the wall beside Shane's head.

"You... you get with him not even *twenty-four hours* after we fucked!"

Shane flinches at that. Yeah, when he puts it like that.

"What was I supposed to do? Sit and wait for you to text me?"

Ilya's eyes flash. "Not fuck Hayden. Not him." His voice cracks on the name, raw and possessive. "Anyone else. Anyone. But not him."

The elevator lurches downward. The air between them is thick, electric with anger.

"We didn't even fuck! You don't own me!" Shane snaps, chest heaving. He knows this is kind of the worst thing to say right now.

Ilya leans in closer, breath hot against Shane's face, jealousy rolling off him in waves.

"No. But I thought—" He cuts himself off, jaw clenching so hard Shane can see the muscle jump. "Fuck you, Hollander."

The doors slide open to the lobby. Cold air rushes in.

Ilya doesn't move. Neither does Shane.

They stand there, inches apart, glaring, both breathing hard.

Shane cracks first.

“What the fuck do you want from me, Rozanov? You want me to send you a list of the people I’m fucking? Every name? Every time? Are you going to send me your list, too? All your hookups? The model from the bar last month? Whoever else you’re ‘just friends’ with? Do you need to sign off on everything I do?”

Ilya’s mouth twists. He looks away for half a second, jaw working like he is chewing on glass. When he looks back, his eyes are glassy. Not quite wet, but shining in the harsh lobby light. The anger is still there, but it is cracking around the edges.

“No,” Ilya says quietly. “I guess not.”

Shane’s chest heaves. “Then what? What do you want?”

Ilya exhales hard through his nose. He steps back half a pace, putting space between them for the first time since they got in the elevator. His hands flex at his sides like he doesn’t know what to do with them.

“I do not know,” he mutters. “I just... not *him*, please, I just wanted to...” He stops and swallows.

Shane stares. The anger in his gut twists into something hotter and messier. “You’re jealous of Hayden.”

Ilya’s laugh is hollow. “Yes. Okay. I am jealous of Hayden. Happy now?”

“No,” Shane snaps. “I’m not happy. You walk in here acting like I betrayed you, when you literally told me we’re both free to fuck whoever. You said it. *You* said ‘you fuck women too, don’t be weird.’ You said, Ilya, you said we don’t have to pretend. So what changed?”

“I can’t explain, but it’s changed,” Ilya sighs and shakes his head. “I don’t know the English right now.”

Shane’s throat closes. He can feel his own pulse in his ears. “So you’re allowed to change the rules, but I’m not?”

“I am not changing rules,” Ilya pleads. “I am just—” He gestures wildly between them.

“This. Us. It feels like... different after yesterday. And seeing him touch you makes me want to—” He cuts off, teeth clicking together. “Fuck. Forget it.”

He turns sharply, stepping out into the lobby.

Shane lunges forward and grabs his wrist. Hard.

Ilya freezes mid-stride, back to him, but he does not pull away.

“Don’t,” Shane says, voice low and ragged. “Don’t just walk away. Talk to me.”

Ilya stands there for a long beat. The lobby is silent except for their breathing and the distant hum of the city outside.

Slowly, he turns his head. Just enough for Shane to see the side of his face. His eyes are wet now, jaw clenched so tight it trembles.

“I can’t. I have said too much.”

Shane steps closer, grip tightening on Ilya’s wrist.

“Just, please, don’t say anything about Hayden. To anyone. Promise me.”

Ilya’s gaze snaps fully to him now.

“You think I would do that?” he scoffs. His voice is rough, and he sounds hurt. “I would *never*. Not about him. Not about you. Not about any of this. Who the fuck do you think I am?”

Shane’s throat tightens. The words hit harder than he expected.

“I’m sorry. I know you’re angry, that’s all.”

Ilya shakes his head and shrugs.

“Secret is safe.” It comes out in almost a whisper.

Then Ilya’s phone buzzes in his coat pocket. Ilya pulls it out and glances down at the screen lighting up in his hand.

His expression shutters. He yanks his wrist free and walks out into the cold without another word.

The doors slide shut behind Shane, leaving him alone in the elevator, staring at his own reflection in the polished metal walls.

Fuuuuuuuuuuck.

Chapter End Notes

[rambling author end note deleted]

Chapter 16: Secret

Chapter Summary

Last time: Ilya walks in on Shane and Hayden and loses his mind. Shane chases him but they don't talk about it properly.

IT IS TIME TO TALK. TALK, NOW!!!

(Did anyone ask for make-up jealous sex? I think so? This is for you!)

Chapter Notes

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

Shane rides the elevator back up alone. The doors close with that soft ding, and the second he's sealed in, the tears come. Hot, stupid, unstoppable. He wipes at his eyes with the heel of his hand, angry at himself, at Ilya, at the whole fucking mess. His reflection in the metal walls looks wrecked. Red-rimmed eyes, flushed cheeks, hair still messed from Hayden's fingers. He looks like someone who just got caught doing something wrong. Because he *did*.

When he slips back into the apartment, Hayden is still on the couch, shirt tugged down now, knees pulled up, looking small and uncertain.

Shane stops in the doorway. "Hey."

Hayden's eyes flick up, searching his face.

"Is... everything okay?"

Shane exhales hard through his nose.

"No. Not really." He rubs the back of his neck. "Look. I can't do this right now. I'm sorry. I need you to go home now, alright?"

Hayden's face falls, but he nods slowly. "Yeah. Okay." He stands, grabs his hoodie from the armrest. "Is this about Rozanov? Did he..."

Shane doesn't answer. He just looks at the floor.

Hayden hesitates, then steps closer. "Shane. Whatever happened out there, it'll be okay. He's an asshole, but he's not going to, like... tell anyone. Right? And you can talk to me if you want."

"I don't." The words come out sharper than he means. He softens them. "Look. Yeah, he knows what he saw. But... our secret's safe. Just. Go. Please."

Hayden nods again, quieter this time. He pulls Shane into a quick, one-armed hug, but he's careful, like he's afraid Shane might break – which he *might*.

"Text me if you wanna talk. Or don't. Whatever you need."

Then he's gone.

Shane locks the door behind him, slides down it until his ass hits the floor, and buries his face in his hands. The apartment feels too quiet. Too big. He drags himself to bed, strips to his boxers, and crawls under the covers. He pulls out the old Snoopy plush from the bottom drawer of his nightstand where he keeps it hidden. He clutches it tight against his chest like the embarrassed kid he is.

He cries hard, ugly sobs that make his whole body shake, muffled into Snoopy's worn fabric. He feels like he's ruined everything. Like he's hurt Hayden, and destroyed whatever he had with Ilya, and now it's all going to fall apart because he can't control his stupid fucking heart.

He cries until his throat hurts and his eyes burn, until exhaustion finally drags him under.

The next day, morning skate is absolute hell.

Shane drags himself to the rink way too early, eyes gritty and swollen from crying all night, hoping the cold air and hard laps will numb everything.

It doesn't. His chest feels hollowed out, like someone scooped out his insides. He pushes into sprints anyway, legs burning, breath ragged, but every stride just reminds him how fucked he is. Ilya is already there, carving slow, mechanical circles at the far end, face completely blank, like nothing happened.

They line up for drills. Ilya won't pass to him. Not a single fucking time. Puck after puck sails to anyone else, and it feels deliberate and pointed. Shane's hands shake when he finally gets one on his own, his shots wild and high, edges catching wrong, body betraying him at every turn. He's sloppy, unfocused, barely holding it together; he's missing easy passes, fumbling the puck, looking every bit the rookie who's cracking under pressure. Coach Glen blows the whistle hard, his face red, zeroing in on Shane alone.

"Hollander! What the hell is this shit? You're skating like you've forgotten how to play hockey overnight. Get your head in the game, or get off my ice!"

The words hit like a slap. The whole team goes quiet. Guys exchange looks, pitying and confused. Shane feels the stares burning into him, and his face is heating up under the helmet, throat closing. It's so fucking obvious he's falling apart, and he wants to disappear right there on the ice.

Beau Mackenzie, (Cap Mac), the team captain, watches the whole thing with a frown. He skates up to Shane who is leaning against the boards trying his damndest not to burst into

tears.

“Buddy, hey. You look like hell. What’s going on with you and Roz?”

Shane doesn't trust himself to talk without his voice cracking, or worse, bursting into tears, so he just shakes his head.

“This isn’t like you, you know? You’re our little shining star. I can tell something is up with you two, m’kay? If the chirping is getting to you, I’ll—“

“It’s fine.” Shane squeaks. “I can handle it. I’ll handle it. Promise.”

“Take it easy, eh?” Beau says. “I’m here if you want to chat. Always. Door’s always open, buddy.”

In the locker room, the air feels thick. Shane strips off his gear with shaking hands, keeping his head down, trying not to let anyone see how close he is to losing it again. Across the room, Marleau leans in toward Ilya by the stalls, voice low but not low enough.

"Roz. Come on. You're icing Hollander like he pissed in your skates. What's the deal?"

Ilya doesn't look up, yanking at his laces. "Nothing."

Marleau huffs. "Bullshit."

“Fuck off.”

“Fine... Your phone's been buzzing nonstop. Svetlana blowing you up again?" Marleau is clearly trying to change the subject.

Shane freezes. The name hits like a slap. He glares across the room, hard enough his vision blurs at the edges, rage and hurt twisting hot in his gut. He rips his eyes away and slams his locker harder than necessary, the bang echoing.

Beau hears the chatter and corners Ilya by his stall across the room. Part of Shane tries not to listen, but an even larger part suddenly tunes in like a boom mic.

"Roz. A word." He’s trying to be quiet, but his voice has the crisp, carrying quality of someone who’s fucking pissed.

Ilya looks up, wary. "What?"

Beau steps closer, arms crossed and towering a little.

"Whatever you've got going on with Hollander, sort it out. He's been playing lights-out all year, and today he looks like he's about to shatter. If you're bullying him or pulling some bullshit to knock him down—"

"I'm not—" Ilya starts, face tightening.

"You're an asshole sometimes, Roz, we all know it," Beau cuts in, voice dropping even lower. Shane pretends to be busy with his bag, but he can't tear himself away. "But whatever you've done to Shane, dude – I know he's a rookie but he's *our* rookie, you *fuck*. Fix it."

Out of the corner of his eye, Shane sees Ilya staring at Beau, jaw locked, saying nothing. Beau holds the glare for a beat, then shakes his head and walks off.

Hayden tries with Shane after, hovering outside the sports centre.

"Shane, hey, can we—"

"Not now," Shane snaps, brushing past him roughly. He catches the flash of hurt in Hayden's eyes, the way he flinches back, and guilt slices through him sharp, but he can't stop. He can't breathe here. He just needs out.

Later, back home, curled on the couch in the dark, Shane tries to nap off the pounding headache and the ache that's settled bone-deep. His phone buzzes on the coffee table.

Ilya.

Please come over. I need to talk. I need to apologise. I'm the fucking asshole.

Shane stares at the screen until his vision blurs. He wants to delete it. Block the number and maybe pretend the last twenty-four hours never happened. Instead his thumb hovers, then taps out:

Fine. But only because Mac basically ordered us to stop whatever the fuck this is for the good of the team. That's it.

He hits send before he can overthink it.

Thirty minutes later, he's standing outside Ilya's apartment door again, still in yesterday's sweats, eyes puffy, throat raw from crying. He feels like roadkill. Ilya opens the door barefoot in joggers and a faded hoodie, his hair a disaster, eyes red-rimmed and shadowed like he hasn't slept, either. He steps aside without a word.

Shane walks in, coat still zipped to his chin, arms crossed so tight his nails dig into his biceps. The door clicks shut behind him like a trap snapping closed.

Ilya exhales shakily. "Sit?"

Shane stays rooted. "Apologise. And don't bullshit me. I'm not here for games." He probably looks like a grumpy kid, and honestly, he feels like one, too.

Ilya drags a hand over his face, voice rough and his accent thicker from exhaustion.

"I am sorry. For coming to your place last night and losing my shit when I saw Hayden. I am sorry also for today at practice, I was a dick to you. And I am sorry that coach yelled at you. I fucked everything up."

Shane's laugh is bitter, cracked.

"Fucked up? You saw Hayden and me on the couch and you looked ready to kill him and then stormed off like a fucking drama queen. Then today you wouldn't pass me the puck, not even once. Mac had to step in because I was about to cry on the ice. Do you get how *humiliating* that was?"

Ilya flinches and his shoulders drop.

"I know. I saw it all. I hate myself for it."

"Then why?" Shane's voice rises, sharp and trembling. "*You* said we could fuck whoever. You said it. Multiple times. Svetlana. Your friends. You made it very, very clear this was supposed to be casual. So why did you look at me like I betrayed you last night? It made me feel like I cheated on someone I'm not even with? You made me feel like complete garbage."

"Because it was *him*." Ilya steps closer again, voice low and wrecked, English stumbling a little. "Hayden Pike. The guy who spent Christmas at your house. And you actually like him. And... Shane, it was only twenty-four hours after we fucked and, he is... alone at your house and you are both looking like that. It broke something in me."

Shane groans.

"Ilya, you don't get to change the rules in your head without telling me, then punish me when I follow what you said. And for the record, which I'm sure doesn't fucking matter anyways, Hayden and I didn't even fuck. We were just... making out."

Ilya's jaw tightens, eyes flicking down then back up. He takes a deep breath.

"Shane... it stopped being casual for me. A long time ago. Maybe from first night we hooked up in Boston. After Boston, I couldn't even fucking *sleep* without thinking of you. And then, the other night, after we... it just felt... different."

"Different?" The word feels caught in Shane's throat.

"Yes, different. And I wanted to tell you. I wanted to tell you everything. Then I walked to your place and saw Hayden on your couch and it felt like—" His voice cracks. "I don't know, it felt terrible, I couldn't stand it."

Shane's hands fist at his sides.

Ilya closes the distance, voice dropping to something raw and desperate.

"I will tell you what I wanted to say to you last night, okay? I want you, Shane. Only you. I can't stand anyone else touching you. Especially not him. Please, Shane. It's killing me."

Shane's breath hitches and he glares at Ilya. His entire mind is scrambled and he doesn't know what the fuck to do or say.

So he slams Ilya back into the wall and presses against him with his chest, grabbing his jaw in one hand and pulling his hair with the other as he presses their mouths together and kisses him hungrily. Ilya whimpers (!!!) a little and kisses Shane back hard.

As they kiss, Shane's hand wanders down the front of Ilya's stomach and he loops a thumb into his waistband. He pushes his other leg between Ilya's legs, and feels him lean into it, grinding slightly. "I wanna fuck you so bad," Shane huffs between kisses and grabs Ilya through his pants and strokes him.

"I want that too." Ilya replies.

They stumble toward the bedroom, shedding clothes in a frantic trail. Hoodies. Shirts. Sweats. Until Shane's back hits the mattress and Ilya follows him down, mouth never leaving his, hips rolling slow and deliberate so Shane feels exactly how hard he already is.

It's fucking messy and urgent as they fumble to touch as much of each other as possible. Ilya's hands are everywhere at once, mapping every inch like he is memorizing it all over again. He drags his mouth down Shane's throat, teeth scraping just enough to make Shane hiss.

"Mine," Ilya growls against his skin, voice rough with accent and emotion.

Shane arches into it, fingers threading through Ilya's curls, pulling hard.

"Yes. Yours." It comes out before Shane can even process what he's admitting.

Ilya pulls back only long enough to grab lube and a condom from the nightstand. His eyes stay locked on Shane's the whole time, dark and blazing. Shane watches him roll it on with trembling hands, cock thick and flushed, and the sight alone makes Shane's mouth go dry.

Ilya pushes Shane's thighs wide, settles between them. He slicks his fingers and presses in slowly. One finger and then two, finding that spot and stroking until Shane is writhing, hips chasing more.

"You let him touch you here?" Ilya asks, voice low and dangerous.

Shane shakes his head frantically. "No. Fuck. We didn't fuck. Hayden and I never fucked. Just hands, or, like, grinding with our clothes half on. That's all."

Ilya's jaw clenches, but his touch goes gentle for a second, thumb stroking Shane's hip in a silent thanks. Then the jealousy surges back. He withdraws his fingers, lines up, and pushes in with one long, relentless thrust.

Shane's breath leaves him in a punched-out moan. The stretch burns perfectly and the fullness is overwhelming. Ilya doesn't pause. He sets a hard, driving rhythm from the start, hips snapping, headboard slamming against the wall. Every stroke drags over that spot inside, relentless and precise making Shane light up until his vision sparks.

"Tell me," Ilya pants, leaning down to mouth at Shane's collarbone. "Tell me I'm the best you've ever had."

Shane's nails rake down Ilya's back, leaving red trails. "Ilya."

"Say it." Ilya shifts his angle, pounds deeper, and Shane's back bows off the bed.

"You're the best," Shane gasps, hand flying to his own cock because the pressure is coiling tight and perfect but he still needs friction to tip over. "Fuck. The best I've ever had. No one else has even come close. Only you."

Ilya groans, a broken, desperate sound. His pace turns brutal, skin slapping skin, sweat dripping. Shane smirks through the haze, breathless and teasing while he pumps his own cock.

"You fuck so well when you're jealous."

Ilya laughs roughly, hips snapping harder. "Yes. Yes, I do."

Shane's laugh turns into a moan as Ilya drives in deeper and fucking relentless.

"Want to make you come just like this," Ilya rasps, voice cracking. "Hands free, one day. Want to ruin you for anyone else forever. But you're so fucking tight. Too good, I can't—"

"Keep practicing, superstar," Shane manages, thighs trembling around Ilya's waist.

Ilya buries his face in Shane's neck, thrusts turning wild and erratic.

"Shane. I'm close. So close. Fuck. Say my name," Ilya demands, as Shane strokes himself faster, chasing the edge. "Need to hear it."

"Ilya," Shane sobs. "Ilya. Fuck. Ilya!"

Ilya comes with a guttural shout, hips grinding deep, whole body shuddering as he spills into the condom, moaning "Fucking come for me, Shane, fuck! Make yourself come for me." The feeling of it, the sight of Ilya unraveling above him and Ilya's command tips Shane over. He comes hard over his fist, clenching rhythmically around Ilya until they're both shaking.

They both lie there and Ilya sighs happily. Shane isn't sure he can make any noises yet.

Ilya gently pulls out and Shane grunts. Then he ties off the condom carefully, knots it, and drops it into a tissue. Ilya then grabs a handful of tissues and wipes Shane down across his chest, stomach, and thighs.

When he's done he lets the tissues fall away and lowers himself over Shane, half on top, half beside. His weight feels like a perfect, grounding blanket. Shane's breath catches at how right it is. Ilya's head settles in the crook of Shane's neck for a moment, just breathing him in. Then he shifts up to press soft kisses across Shane's forehead, slow and deliberate. One to the centre. One to each temple. One to the damp hairline where curls stick to skin. His lips are warm and trembling just slightly.

His fingers slide into Shane's hair, carding through the sweaty strands and smoothing them back from his face with gentle scratches at the scalp that make Shane's eyes flutter shut.

Shane turns into him, burrowing closer. His nose brushes the hollow of Ilya's collarbone. He inhales deeply. Sweat and sex and the faint trace of Ilya's cologne, clean and spicy, the scent that has always driven him crazy.

"Hey," Shane whispers, voice a little hoarse still. "Your turn. Tell me I'm the best you've ever had."

Ilya stills for a heartbeat. Then he pulls back just enough to meet Shane's eyes. He cups Shane's cheek with one big hand, thumb stroking over the freckles there like he is tracing a constellation.

"Yes," Ilya says. "Yes, you are." He swallows. The words come slower. "No contest. Not even close. You have ruined everyone else for me, Shane."

Shane pulls back just a moment to look Ilya dead in the eyes. "If we're being honest here, I felt like shit, too when I heard about you fucking other people too." Shane says.

"Really?" Ilya looks like he can hardly believe it.

"Yeah, but we had agreed that was the arrangement so I couldn't hold it against you." Shane says. "I just swallowed it."

"Maybe you understand me then. Understand my feelings." Ilya pleads. "I'm not meant to... like you. And I like you so much."

Shane shakes his head. "You like me?"

"So much," Ilya says. "I like you so, so much."

"I like you too," Shane strokes Ilya's curly hair.

"I have never felt this crazy about anyone, so I did not know what to do."

"I wish I'd known," Shane sighs. "I am... crazy about you too."

Ilya cups Shane's face, thumb now wiping tears, his own eyes wet and spilling over. "I'm still terrified. The hiding. The risk. If anyone finds out—"

"It's so fucking messy."

"Yes." Ilya presses his forehead to Shane's, both trembling. "And I am Russian. It is very complicated and fucking scary. But I can't pretend anymore."

"I want you, too." Shane says, his arms now around Ilya's waist.

Ilya pulls him in tighter. "Just us. Please. Only us. I can't share you anymore, and I know I am asking a lot of you—"

"I want it too," Shane nods against him, relief and fear tangled so tight he can barely breathe. "Only us. No more sharing." His throat closes tight. His eyes burn. He reaches up with a

trembling hand and traces the sharp line of Ilya's jaw. The stubble rasps under his fingertips. Ilya leans into the touch immediately.

Ilya's eyes drift shut. A quiet, shaky exhale leaves him as he turns his face to press a kiss to Shane's hair.

Half an hour later, Shane is splayed out across Ilya's chest, and he sighs. "FYI. I think Hayden knows. Or maybe he might know. About us."

Ilya hums, lips brushing Shane's forehead again. "Okay. Probably fair. Maybe our argument the other night was not subtle."

"He might not, though. Maybe he thinks you're a raging homophobe." Shane sighs.

Ilya snorts softly.

"If he knows, he knows. Let's hope we can trust him."

"We can trust him. But let's not tell him unless he asks," Shane says. "Point blank."

"Okay," Ilya agrees, kissing his brow once more. "If he asks, we confess. But we keep it quiet otherwise. I will not borrow your hoodie to wear to practice and follow you around like lost puppy."

Shane elbows him weakly.

"Fuck off."

Ilya grins against his skin.

"Will you please stay tonight?"

"Yeah," Shane murmurs. "I would like that."

"Is what I wanted to ask you the other night. I wanted you to stay." Ilya strokes Shane's arm lightly.

"I think... I think I knew that. When we fucked, and you kissed my forehead, I think I panicked that if I stayed, I would be in too deep," Shane confesses.

"Oh, I am in *so* deep for you," Ilya gives Shane a squeeze. "So stay. And eat dinner."

"I could do dinner, I haven't eaten much all day actually," Shane says.

Ilya reaches for his phone. "Pizza? I love pizza."

"Oh god, I love pizza. But it's not... in our meal plan." Shane groans.

"It's a treat, Hollander. Come on," Ilya says, hooking their fingers together solemnly. "We won't tell. Another little secret."

Ilya orders them food and Shane has a quick shower. Then they eat in bed, grease on their fingers, Ilya teasing Shane about his washing machine and chicken cooking disasters from the beginning of the season until Shane is laughing so hard his sides ache.

"I thought *wow*, probably, maybe, Shane is best rookie in league, but has only *hockey* IQ. Still, Little Chicken is good nickname." Ilya laughs.

"Oh god, please don't remind them, they've only just started calling me 'Holly' and it's *so* much better than that." Shane begs.

"And when you sent photo of your hallway full of bubbles, I was *crying*, Shane. I laughed so hard I was going to be sick. And I still liked you *so* much." Ilya sighs as he laughs.

"Fuck, I was mortified, and all those photos are still in the group chat," Shane groans.

As the night goes on they continue to talk and snuggle until it really is getting too late. Ilya gets up to turn off the lamp, gets back into bed and pulls Shane close, his own chest to Shane's bare back with an arm secure around his waist.

"Only us," Ilya whispers into his hair.

"Only us," Shane answers, and finally sleeps.

Chapter End Notes

[rambling author end note deleted]

If you are staying up late bingeing this, now would be a good time to go to sleep.

Chapter 17: Vampire

Chapter Summary

Last time: they have their argument and decide to be exclusive. Everyone cheered. (This is a chapter of porn because that's just who I am).

Chapter Notes

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

The next morning, Shane pauses at the door and turns back. Ilya's watching him with his arms crossed, looking stupidly good in joggers and nothing else. Shane steps close, rises on his toes and kisses him quick and firm.

"See you at the rink," he says.

Ilya catches his wrist, tugs him back for one more. "Thank you for last night."

Practice feels good again. Shane's passes snap tape-to-tape, his shots hit the net, and his legs have pop again. Ilya is sharp, feeding him perfectly like the last few days never happened. They're clicking, a bit like the way they did at the start of the season, but even more than that now.

Coach Glen notices halfway through. He blows the whistle after Shane roofs a one-timer off Ilya's pass, grinning big at them both.

"Hell fucking yeah. Hollander and Rozanov are skating on the same sheet of ice again. I was about to make you two hug it out."

The bench cracks up. Shane ducks his head, thankful that his helmet is hiding the flush, but he's smiling. Ilya just shrugs, smirking, and smacks the puck at Shane. Shane tips one in right off Ilya's point shot and the whole bench erupts.

In the locker room, steam pours from the showers. Shane strips fast, eyes mostly forward, but he catches Ilya's gaze across the stalls once, just quickly. His stomach flips.

He finds Hayden by the sinks, toweling his hair. Hayden glances up, cautious but not pissed.

"Hey," Shane says. "Sorry about yesterday. I was a dick. Shit was just... a bit heavy, I guess."

Hayden shrugs one shoulder. "It's fine. You looked like you were gonna puke on the boards and I was worried. Is the thing with Rozanov fine?"

"Yeah," Shane exhales. "Something like that. We're good now."

Hayden nods after a beat. “Wanna hang later? Movie or whatever.”

“Gotta head home after,” Shane says. “Call my mum. She’s been blowing up my phone.”

That’s totally a lie, but Hayden doesn’t call him on it. He bumps Shane’s shoulder. “No stress. Text when you’re around.”

Phew. They’re cool. Ish. The knot in Shane’s chest eases.

Beau catches them heading out; Shane and Ilya are side by side, laughing quietly about Coach’s ‘hug it out’ line. Beau stops, eyebrow up.

“You two kiss and make up?” he asks, just teasing.

Shane freezes half a second. Ilya snorts.

“Something like that, Cap,” Ilya says.

Beau grins, claps them both on the shoulder. “Whatever fixed it, keep it fixed. Team plays better when you’re not glaring holes through each other.”

He walks off. Shane and Ilya share a quick look, that weird interaction has their pulses jumping, but they keep moving.

In the car park, their two separate cars wait. Normally they’d go home to their two separate apartments.

Shane doesn’t want that.

“My place?” he almost whispers as he gets to his Jeep. Ilya just nods.

“1919,” Shane adds. “My visitor parking space number.”

Ilya beats Shane to the building in his stupid sports car, but then has to wait for Shane to open the parking garage. Shane wins the race to the elevator, but Ilya wins the race to Shane’s door. Shane opens it and then pretends to close it on Ilya, who slips neatly through the gap. Shane’s back hits the entry wall, Ilya’s mouth crashing into his, hard and starving. Hands tear at clothes. Shane’s hoodie yanks over his head, Ilya’s shirt follows. They kiss like it’s been years. (It’s been maybe seven hours.)

Shane drops to his knees on the hall floor. Ilya shoves his joggers down just enough. Shane strokes him once, twice, then takes him in. Ilya’s head thunks back against the wall.

“Fuck,” Ilya breathes. “Shane.”

Shane hums, hollowing his cheeks and working him slow then faster. Ilya’s hand fists in Shane’s hair, holding, but not pulling. His hips jerk forward automatically. Shane relaxes his throat to let him fuck in.

“God,” Ilya groans. “Your mouth. I want to fuck you so bad. Want to bend you over—”

Shane moans around him. The vibration makes Ilya curse in Russian. Shane's own cock throbs in his sweats, leaking and ignored.

Ilya's breath turns ragged. "Shane, you're so fucking good. I'm gonna— fuck, I'm almost, I'm too close—"

He doesn't push Shane away. Hips keep moving, helpless little thrusts.

"Shane—"

Too late.

Ilya yanks free at the last second trying to stop the inevitable, but it's just too fucking late, so his hand is on his cock in a flash to try and not have a completely ruined orgasm. He comes hard, thick stripes hitting Shane's cheek, lips, chin, one across his nose. A couple of ropes catch the front of Shane's T-shirt, dark and wet against the gray fabric.

Shane blinks up, stunned, mouth open. "Ilya?"

Ilya stares down, his chest still heaving. "Fuck. I'm so sorry. I tried to stop. Fuck, I never usually lose it like that. That was embarrassing."

Shane licks his lips and tastes salt. Ilya is still gazing down at him, panting and looking embarrassed.

Shane then wipes a thumb over his cheek, glances at the mess on his hand and T-shirt, then back up at Ilya.

"That," he says, voice rough, "was kind of hot."

Ilya exhales, half-laugh.

"You would be into that, wouldn't you?"

Shane grins, filthy.

"Can you blame me?"

Ilya hauls him up and kisses him deep.

"Bedroom. Now. I'm not done."

"You seem *pretty done* to me," Shane teases.

"Fuck off, I am not done with you."

Shane laughs into the kiss, stumbling backward, pulling Ilya along.

They crash into the bedroom. Shane's sweats get shoved halfway down his thighs, cock hard and dark against his stomach. Ilya backs him to the bed. Shane drops to pull Ilya down.

Ilya settles almost on top of Shane, braced on one forearm, kissing him deep. Shane's hands roam: Ilya's hair, his back, his ass through the half-on sweatpants. Ilya's half-hard again somehow, but now this is for Shane.

Ilya breaks the kiss and shoves Shane's sweats off completely. Then his nasty T-shirt comes off next. Ilya's own pants hit the floor too and they're finally skin on skin. Ilya groans when their cocks brush.

"Ilya," Shane breathes.

Ilya kisses him softer, lingering. His hand wraps around Shane's cock. Shane gasps into his mouth, hips bucking. Ilya strokes slowly until Shane's thighs shake.

Ilya pulls back, eyes dark.

"Want to suck you. Want my mouth on you."

Shane shakes his head quickly.

"No, no. Kiss me. Please. Just kiss me. Don't stop – use your hand, please."

Ilya pauses, then nods. Something tender and raw crosses his face.

"Okay. I can kiss you."

He leans in again and the kisses turn slower, deeper, like he's memorizing Shane's mouth. Ilya's hand keeps moving in firm strokes. Shane moans into him, needy and muffled, panting and whimpering a little.

Shane clutches Ilya's shoulders, nails digging in. He rolls his hips into the fist. Ilya speeds up.

"Ilya," Shane gasps against his lips. "Feels so fucking good, I'm nearly there."

Ilya kisses his jaw, corner of his mouth, back to his lips.

"So hard for me. You always get so wet. Come on, Shane. Let go. I've got you. Wanna watch you come for me, wanna see your come."

Shane arches, thighs clamping shut as he tenses. His aching dick throbs, leaking so much now. Ilya strokes steadily and Shane's moans fracture.

"Ilya— gonna—"

Ilya kisses him harder, swallowing the cry as Shane comes, hot pulses over Ilya's fist, spilling across Shane's stomach and chest. Shane shakes, hips jerking, mouth open against Ilya's in a messy kiss.

Ilya strokes him through the aftershocks until Shane whimpers. Then he stills, just holding Shane close now, and kisses his forehead, temple and the wet corner of his eye.

Shane laughs weakly.

“Jesus. I was so loud. And that was a lot. Thanks for the kisses.”

“Always,” Ilya says. “Even when I want to be on my knees for you.”

Shane smiles.

“Next time.”

Ilya kisses his forehead.

“Next time.”

Shane looks down, come streaked on his stomach, chest – there’s definitely some on his face still, too. He snorts.

Ilya winces.

“Sorry again. About the hallway. And your clothes, and your face. I swear I usually last longer.”

Shane shrugs.

“Hot. And it’s just clothes.”

“If we were at my house, I would have lent you some of my clothes.” Ilya reaches over to grab some tissues for Shane in the meantime.

“I think I would have liked that.”

Tomorrow’s a home game, so they can’t stay up late. They end up on Shane’s couch, lights low. Shane’s the one who picks the movie, and as he scrolls through the streaming menu for a minute too long, Ilya taps his hovering thumb.

“Whatever you want,” Ilya says, sprawled out already, one arm along the back of the couch. “I’m not picky.”

Shane glances over, cheeks a little pink.

“You sure? I… kind of like older stuff. Not just action crap.”

Ilya raises an eyebrow, amused.

“Show me.”

Shane lands on *The Talented Mr. Ripley*. He’s seen it three times already, but he doesn’t say that. He just hits play and settles in close, thigh pressed to Ilya’s.

The opening credits roll, jazzy and moody, and Ilya doesn't say a word about it being 'classy' or 'old'. He just shifts so Shane can lean against his side, arm dropping around Shane's shoulders like it's the most natural thing. Shane exhales and relaxes into it.

Part-way through, during the boat scene, Ilya's fingers start tracing lazy circles on Shane's upper arm. Shane turns his head, catches Ilya watching him instead of the screen. Ilya doesn't look away; instead, he leans in slowly to kiss Shane's mouth.

Shane turns fully into it.

"You're missing the movie," Shane complains, but he can't help it either.

The kiss deepens without hurry. Ripley's voice murmurs in the background, but neither of them is really listening anymore. Ilya's hand slides to Shane's neck, thumb brushing the pulse there. Shane makes a small sound and shifts closer, one leg hooking over Ilya's thigh.

They're making out properly now. Shane's hands fist in Ilya's top, tugging him down and across on top of himself on the couch. Ilya follows, pressing Shane back into the cushions until he's half under him, bodies lined up. Hips roll together once, experimentally, then again, harder. Shane gasps into Ilya's mouth at the friction, cock already thickening in his shorts.

Ilya groans low, hips grinding down in a slow circle.

"Fuck. You feel good."

Shane's answer is to arch up, chasing more. They find a rhythm quickly, lazy at first, then needy. Their sweats stay on, but it doesn't matter. The drag of fabric, the heat of each other through it, the way Ilya's thigh slots between Shane's legs is enough.

Shane's mouth moves to Ilya's throat, kissing open-mouthed, sucking lightly at first, then harder when Ilya's breath hitches. He sucks again, teeth grazing, and Ilya curses softly in Russian, hips stuttering. Shane runs his fingernails up and down Ilya's back under his top, pressing maybe just a little too hard.

"Shane," Ilya breathes, hand sliding into Shane's hair, holding him there. "Don't stop."

Ilya's grinding harder now, desperate little rocks, cock thick against Shane's hip.

Shane's close, too – like, embarrassingly close. Just from dry humping. The pressure builds fast, coiling tight in his gut.

"Ilya— fuck— I'm—"

Ilya kisses him hard, swallowing the words, hips snapping once, twice.

"Me too. Come on. With me, come on."

Shane breaks first, with a choked moan into Ilya's mouth as he comes in his pants, hot pulses soaking through the fabric, thighs shaking. Ilya tips over after him: his rhythm stutters, body

locking up, and he spills with a rough groan, grinding through it until they're both oversensitive and trembling.

They stay like that for a minute, panting against each other's mouths. The movie's still playing, credits rolling now, soft jazz fading out. Neither moves to turn it off.

Ilya pulls back just enough to look at Shane. His eyes are dark, wrecked, lips swollen.

"Now you will have to give *me* some of *your* clothes," he says.

Shane laughs.

"Come on," he says. "Let's get cleaned up. That was so hot that I forgot how gross it feels to come in your jocks."

Ilya stands and pulls Shane to his feet, gathering him into his arms, latching on and refusing to let him go until they're in the bathroom.

Then his gaze drops to his own neck in the mirror. He touches the spot gingerly, winces a little, but there's a small, crooked smile tugging at his mouth.

"Hollander! You marked me up," he says, voice hoarse. "Big one."

Shane's eyes widen. He peers at it.

Oh god. It's massive. Right where a collar or a scarf might not quite cover it.

"Oh shit," Shane whispers. "I didn't mean—I got carried away."

Ilya laughs, low and rough.

"I noticed." He presses two fingers to it, testing the tenderness, then looks back at Shane with something hot and pleased in his eyes. "I like it."

Shane flushes hard.

"You're gonna get chirped to death tomorrow."

"Maybe." Ilya shrugs, thumb brushing Shane's cheek. "I will make up interesting story."

Shane groans, drops his head onto Ilya's shoulder.

"We're supposed to be careful and now you're gonna be sporting the world's biggest hickey."

Ilya kisses him again.

"You are the one who gave it to me. You want to eat me alive, you pervert."

"Shut up," Shane mutters, but he's smiling into the kiss. "Maybe just a little bit."

They clean up eventually – Shane changes into fresh shorts, Ilya borrows some clean boxers and a pair of sweats.

“You can hold onto those,” Shane says.

“Yes, but I will not wear them to practice, like somebody else,” Ilya smirks.

“Fuck off,” Shane groans and whacks Ilya in the arm.

They finish the last of the cold pizza from the night before, curled up together in front of the movie’s end credits.

Shane rests his head on Ilya’s chest, listening to his heartbeat slow.

“Good movie, right?”

Ilya hums, fingers carding through Shane’s hair.

“Best part was you.”

Shane elbows him weakly.

“Asshole.”

“Next time we can watch it properly. I’m sorry.” Ilya kisses Shane on the temple.

It's game day, and Shane wakes up tangled with Ilya again in his own bed, Ilya’s arm heavy across his chest, not thinking about hockey at all. They don’t talk much in the morning light. Just quiet kisses, lazy touches. Shane’s the one who finally rolls out of bed first.

“Gotta get moving,” he mutters, already pulling on compression shorts. “You’re gonna be late if you stay here.”

Ilya groans, stretches like a cat, then sits up. The massive hickey on the side of his neck is impossible to miss now: deep purple, edges blooming darker overnight, the size of a coin and shaped vaguely like Shane’s mouth. When Ilya rolls over, Shane gasps.

“Fuck. I scratched up your back bad too. I don’t even realise I was just—”

Ilya shrugs.

“Is hot.”

He pulls on his hoodie, zips it high. It covers most of the mark, but the edge of the hickey still peeks out when he moves.

By the time they both reach the arena – separately, and not obviously at all – the locker room is already alive: music thumping low, guys laughing, tape ripping, sticks clacking against stalls.

Shane keeps his head down, lacing skates, taping his stick, pretending to be normal. Ilya does the same across the room, but their eyes meet once. Shane's stomach flips. A good flip, this time.

Ilya's got his shirt off still as he fiddles with some tape when Marleau leans over from his stall to grab something and freezes.

His eyes lock on Ilya's neck.

"Jesus Christ, Roz," Marleau says, loud enough that the whole room quiets for half a second. "What the hell have you been up to? Boys, check out the hickey!"

Heads turn. Even Beau looks over from tying his laces. Hayden glances up from his phone. Coach Glen, who has just happened to walk by, pauses in the doorway, eyebrow raised. It's really quite an insane piece of work.

Ilya doesn't flinch and instead leans back against his stall with a slow, shit-eating grin.

"Yeah," he says, accent thick and smug. "Someone very, very sexy in my bed last night. So... what is the word? Insatiable."

The room explodes with laughs and whoops, a couple guys banging their sticks on the benches.

"Atta boy, Roz! Details, come on!"

Ilya shrugs one shoulder, still grinning. "She was a vampire. So hungry for me, you see. And I wanted to please her, as generous lover." Ilya pauses, then turns around to show his scratched up back. "I haven't seen these yet but I can feel it. How do I look?"

Connors whistles.

"Jesus Christ, Roz. Leave some for the rest of us."

More laughter.

"Get some, Rozanov!" someone in the back yells.

Beau shakes his head, but it seems he's just happy the team's loose and laughing.

Shane keeps his eyes on his skates, face burning under his helmet, but there's a tiny, secret smile tugging at his mouth. He risks one quick glance, Ilya's looking right at him, eyes dark and amused, the corner of his lip quirked like the joke's just for them.

"Keep it in your pants on the ice, lover boy," Marleau says, clapping Ilya on the back.

Ilya snorts.

"Don't worry. I save my best for after."

The chirping fades as guys finish gearing up, but the locker room feels lighter, buzzing with that pre-game energy.

They hit the ice for warm-ups. Shane feels extra sharp. Ilya's the same; quick feet, hard shots, feeding Shane pass after pass. The hickey's mostly hidden under the collar of his jersey, but every time Ilya turns his head a certain way, Shane catches the edge of it.

In the tunnel before puck drop, waiting for intros, Ilya bumps Shane's shoulder lightly. No one's looking.

"You okay?" Ilya murmurs, low.

Shane nods once.

"Yeah. I'm great. You?"

Ilya's mouth quirks.

"Better than okay."

Shane risks a tiny smile under his cage.

"Good. Let's win this."

They skate out to the roar of the home crowd. Lights bright, music pounding, the ice clean and fast. Shane glances sideways at Ilya once as they circle up. Ilya meets his eyes, quick and sure.

The puck drops.

Shane feels it in his bones. The click with Ilya is insane, the way their line moves like one body. Every shift they're dangerous and barely looking up as they pass.

First period ends scoreless, but they're buzzing. In the locker room, Coach Glen keeps it short.

"Keep pressing. They're cracking."

Shane's taping his stick again, eyes flicking to Ilya across the room. Ilya's yanking on his jersey, the edge of that dark hickey still visible when he tilts his head. He catches Shane looking again.

They're last out for the second. In the tunnel, waiting for the line change, Ilya leans in close, close enough their shoulder pads brush, voices lost under the arena noise.

Shane feels the heat of Ilya's breath against his ear through his helmet.

"Every goal you score tonight," Ilya murmurs, low and rough, "I make you come for every one. However you want. My mouth, my fingers, my hand, my cock, it's your choice. I think you want to earn it."

Shane's breath catches. His thighs clench under his pads. He can't look at Ilya – can't risk anyone seeing his face right now, holy shit – but he nods once.

Ilya pulls back like nothing happened and skates out for the face-off.

Shane's first goal comes at 4:12 of the second. Ilya threads a perfect saucer pass from the blue line, Shane one-times it, top shelf, blocker side. The red light flashes, the horn blares, the building erupts. Shane throws his arms up, skates backward grinning like an idiot. Teammates crash into him. Beau first, then Marleau, then Connors, then Ilya.

Ilya's the last to hug him. Gloves bump Shane's helmet, quick and teammate-like. He leans in under the celebration chaos.

"That's one," Ilya says.

Shane's cock twitches in his jock. He shoves Ilya off with a laugh, plays it off, but his legs feel shaky the rest of the shift.

Second goal at 11:47. Power play. Ilya cycles low, draws two defenders, flips it back to Shane at the dot. Shane snaps it five-hole before the goalie can drop. Another horn, another pile-up. The crowd is chanting his name, *Hollander, Hollander, Hollander*.

"Holy fucking shit!" Beau roars. "He's back! He's so fucking back! Boys, keep feeding Holly, I wanna see a hattie!"

Ilya finds him again in the scrum, mouth near Shane's ear.

"Two," he whispers.

Shane's face burns under his helmet. He can barely focus on the next face-off, but there's something insane that has been unlocked in his brain. He's *never* fucking played hockey like this.

The third goal comes late in the third period at 19:03, an empty-net goalie-pull from the floundering out-of-town team leaving it wide open. Shane steals the puck at the blue line, races it down and roofs it clean.

Fucking. *Hat. Trick.*

(For those who only celebrate hockey pornographically, this means someone scores three times in one game. It's a very big deal, and traditionally, the spectators throw their caps and hats and scarves and other shit onto the ice.)

The first of his career.

The arena loses its mind. Lights flash, music blasts, his name on the Jumbotron in big letters.

He skates the long way around, stick raised, soaking it in. Teammates mob him again. Ilya's there, arms around him tight for a second longer than necessary, helmet bumping Shane's. People are throwing toques and caps over the glass onto the ice.

“Three,” Ilya breathes against his ear, whacking him on the back.

The celebration after the game spills out after a bottle of champagne gets sprayed all over Shane by an overenthusiastic JJ. Someone yells ‘Bar! We’re going out!’ and the room erupts in agreement. Everyone’s in. They pile into Ubers, smelling like champagne. Shane ends up crammed in the back with Ilya and Connors. Ilya’s thigh presses against his the whole ride. Shane keeps his eyes on the window, counts streetlights, and tries not to think about Ilya’s whisper in the tunnel.

At the bar it’s loud as fuck, with the music thumping, shots lined up, and guys toasting Shane every five minutes. Someone buys a round of tequila.

“To Holly’s first hat trick!”

Shane downs his, feels the burn settle warm in his chest. He laughs at the chirps, fist-bumps everyone and plays along. But every time he glances over, Ilya’s watching him.

He finds a way not to do any more shots, sneakily spitting into a glass or knocking it over when no one is looking. Everyone is so fucked that no one notices. But Shane wants his wits about him for whatever comes later.

Shane excuses himself to the bathroom halfway through the night. He’s washing his hands when the door opens.

Ilya steps in.

“My place. Now,” Ilya says.

Shane swallows hard. His mouth goes dry.

“Yeah.”

Ilya leans in, mouth brushing Shane’s ear.

“Three goals. You ready?”

Shane nods, too fast.

“Yeah. Fuck. Yeah.”

Ilya pulls back.

“I’ll leave first. Meet me at mine as soon as you can.”

Shane exhales shakily.

“Okay. I’m going to go tell them I’m fucking wasted.”

“Are you?” Ilya looks worried for a second.

“No. I mean, I had champagne literally sprayed in my face, and I’ve had one shot, but no.”

“Good.”

Ilya slips out as Shane splashes water on his face, staring at his reflection, seeing his cheeks flushed and eyes too bright. He looks wrecked already.

Back at the table, he plays it up a bit. He sways a little on purpose, rubs his temple and leans on the table.

“Hey, guys... I just threw up. I think I’m way too drunk,” he says, voice slurring just enough to sell it. “Champagne hit me like a... I don’t know. I... gonna head home and crash. I loooove you guys.”

“Love you too!” Marleau says pulling Shane to stand upright.

“No! Don’t go!” Hayden pleads and grabs Shane’s hand. “We were gonna dance! And maybe karaoke!”

“I’m about to throw up again,” Shane slurs. “Next time. Next time we go out!” Shane stumbles again. Maybe he’s selling it a little too hard now.

Beau frowns, looking concerned. “You good, bud? Want someone to walk you?”

“Naaaah, I’m fine. Just need my bed before I embarrass myself, and my mum wants to talk to me.” Shane forces a weak grin. “Celebrate for me, eh?”

They buy it, thank god, and there are more back slaps, promises to text tomorrow, a couple guys yelling ‘Lightweight Chicken!’ as he grabs his coat and slips out.

Ilya’s building is five blocks away; Shane sprints over. (Very cool and nonchalant of him).

Ilya is waiting down at the bottom of the building. He’s still fucking smirking. His apartment door barely clicks shut before they’re on each other again.

Shane exhales against Ilya’s lips, heart still racing from the game, from the bar, from everything.

Three goals.

Oh god. He’s actually not sure he can come three times in one night.

Guess there’s only one way to find out. And Shane’s not a quitter.

Chapter End Notes

[rambling author end note deleted]

Chapter 18: Hat Trick

Chapter Summary

Last time: Shane gives Ilya a massive hickey and Shane scores his first hat trick (with incentives).

This time: a hat trick in the bedroom? Maybe?

Look I'll be honest this is more porn but there IS PLOT at the end okay? There is a point to it all!

Chapter Notes

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

They barely make it through the door of Ilya's apartment before clothes start hitting the floor. Shane's coat gets kicked into a corner, Ilya's hoodie yanked over his head in one rough motion. They stumble down the short hallway, mouths locked and hands greedy. Shane's back hits the bedroom wall with a soft thud. Ilya presses in close, thigh slotting between Shane's legs, grinding once.

Shane gasps into the kiss.

"Fuck. Ilya."

Ilya pulls back just enough to look at him, his eyes dark, the hickey on his own neck obvious under the low hallway light.

"Three goals," he says, voice wrecked and low. "First one now. I give to you on my knees."

Shane's breath hitches. He nods, too fast, already aching.

Ilya drops without another word and kneels right there on the hardwood, hands shoving Shane's pants and boxers down in one go. Shane's cock springs free, hard, flushed dark, already leaking at the tip. Ilya makes a rough sound in his throat, wraps a hand around the base and strokes once slowly.

"Look at you," Ilya murmurs. "So hard for me. All night, thinking about this."

Shane threads fingers into Ilya's hair, gripping lightly.

"Please."

Ilya doesn't tease. He leans in, licks a broad stripe from base to tip, tasting salt and precome. Shane's hips jerk forward. Ilya steadies him with a hand on his thigh, then takes him in, slow at first, lips stretching around the head, tongue swirling.

Shane's head thunks back against the wall.

"Oh, *fuck*."

Ilya hums around him, the vibration shooting straight up Shane's spine. He sinks deeper, cheeks hollowing, working him with steady, wet pulls. One hand strokes what his mouth doesn't reach. The other cups Shane's balls, rolling them gently, thumb pressing behind.

Shane's thighs tremble.

"Ilya, shit, your mouth."

Ilya pulls off just long enough to look up at him through dark lashes.

"Taste so good," he rasps, accent thick. "I wanted this since first goal. Wanted to get on my knees right on bench if I could. Fuck my mouth."

Shane groans, hips rocking shallowly. Ilya takes him deep again, deeper this time, until his nose brushes Shane's stomach. Shane's grip tightens in Ilya's curls and his hips move slightly to make Ilya take all of him.

Ilya bobs faster now, slick and filthy, spit dripping down his chin. The sounds are obscene, all wet and sloppy, but it's perfect. Shane's breathing turns ragged, hips stuttering.

"Ilya, I'm, fuck, close."

Ilya doesn't pull off. Just sucks even harder, tongue pressing flat along the underside, hand twisting at the base of Shane's very wet cock in time with his mouth. Shane's back arches off the wall, thighs clamping around Ilya's shoulders.

"Ilya, gonna—"

He comes hard, spilling down Ilya's throat with a broken moan. Ilya swallows it all, then keeps sucking gently through the aftershocks until Shane is shaking and oversensitive.

Ilya finally pulls off with a wet pop, lips swollen and red, a thin string of spit and come connecting him to Shane's cock for a second before it breaks. He wipes his mouth with the back of his hand, looks up at Shane with a slow, satisfied smirk.

"That's one," he says, voice hoarse. "Two more to go."

Shane slides down the wall until his ass hits the floor, legs splayed, chest heaving. Ilya crawls up between them, kisses him deep. Shane tastes himself on Ilya's tongue.

"Bed," Ilya mutters against his mouth. "Now. We're not done."

Shane laughs weakly, wrecked already. "Yeah. Fuck. Lead the way."

Ilya hauls him up, kisses him again, slow this time, so possessive, and steers him toward the bedroom, and Shane kicks his pants and underwear off, leaving them in the hallway.

They collapse onto Ilya's bed and strip all their remaining clothes off and toss them onto the floor.

Ilya then sits up, and holds up a finger. "Wait, I think we need something."

Shane raises an eyebrow, a little confused, but then Ilya pulls out a towel from under his bed and throws it across the covers. "I know towel is not... sexy. But if you are going to be coming for me all night, then I think it is a good idea, hmm?"

"Yeah, good thinking." Shane isn't sure he can really do much thinking at all right now, so it's good that Ilya seems to have remained capable.

With the towel in place, Ilya lies back down and kisses Shane, running his hand up and down the planes of Shane's chest, giving him tiny goosebumps. He squeezes Shane's pec, and then kisses his neck and his chest.

Shane sprawls on his back, chest heaving, one arm flung over his eyes. Ilya props himself on an elbow beside him, looking down like he's memorising every inch.

Ilya leans in to place another soft kiss to Shane's temple, then the corner of his eye, the bridge of his nose. Shane lets out a small, surprised laugh.

"What are you doing?"

"Kissing you," Ilya murmurs against his cheekbone. "Everywhere."

He moves lower. Lips brush Shane's jaw and under his ear, then to the hollow of his throat. Shane tilts his head back, giving him room. Ilya's mouth trails across his collarbone. Then down his chest with open-mouthed kisses, teeth grazing a nipple just enough to make Shane hiss and arch.

"Fuck," Shane breathes. "You're gonna kill me."

Ilya hums, pleased, and keeps going. He kisses down the center of Shane's stomach, following the faint happy trail, lingering at the sharp cut of his hipbones. He nips lightly at the skin there, soothing it with his tongue. Shane's cock twitches against his thigh, already half-hard again despite coming so recently. (Oh to be so young and so horny.)

Ilya kisses the inside of one thigh, then the other. Shane's legs fall open wider without thought. Ilya presses a kiss to the crease of his groin, then lower, mouthing softly at Shane's balls. He doesn't stop there. Instead he pushes Shane's thighs farther apart, settles his broad shoulders between them, and drags his tongue hot and slow over Shane's hole.

Shane's breath hitches sharply. "You don't have to, Ilya."

"I want to," Ilya murmurs, voice low against slick skin. He presses a firm, open-mouthed kiss right there, then licks again. "It's your prize, Solnyshko. Let me give it to you properly."

"What does sol-nish-ka mean?" Shane asks breathlessly.

Ilya thinks for a moment. "It means sunshine, but more like, sweetheart. Is that okay?"

"That's so cute. Yes. That's okay."

Ilya works Shane open with his mouth, tongue circling and pressing against his hole with flat strokes, pushing Shane's hips down and holding them still every time Shane's hips jerk up and a broken moan escapes. Only when Shane is trembling and slick does Ilya finally pull back just enough to speak against Shane's skin, his voice is even rougher. "Second one. Want to fuck you and make you come, hands-free. See if I can get you there."

Shane exhales shaky. "Yeah. Try it."

Ilya gets the lube and takes the time to slowly open Shane up. They're in no rush, and Shane's body trembles as Ilya slowly eases a finger in, then two. He spends longer fucking Shane with just two fingers until Shane is groaning and telling him to hurry the fuck up. He then also spends longer than normal teasing that spot inside Shane. "Yeah, there, fuck, that's the spot," Shane whimpers, his hands fisting at the sheets.

Then Ilya rolls on a condom quickly and then lines up, pushing in slowly. Shane gasps at the stretch, legs wrapping around Ilya's waist instinctively. Ilya pushes in and then stills for a second to let Shane adjust, his forehead pressed to Shane's.

"Fuck," Ilya breathes. "So tight. Always so good for me."

Shane whimpers. He's so hard again. Already.

"Fuck, feels good, feels really good. You're so fucking big."

He starts moving, long, deep rolls at first, dragging over Shane's prostate every time. Shane's cock is trapped between them, leaking steadily against Ilya's stomach.

"Can't believe you are hard already," Ilya teases, keeping the rhythm consistent. Shane doesn't respond to the teasing and instead arches into each thrust.

Ilya reaches down to pull one of Shane's thigh slightly high, and Shane's nails dig into Ilya's back.

"Ilya, shit, keep going. Right there, that's it, keep doing that."

Ilya picks up speed now, fucking harder and faster. His breathing turns ragged almost immediately, hips snapping as sweat starts to bead on his forehead. Shane can feel how close Ilya is, cock throbbing inside him, thrusts losing rhythm fast. Ilya's trying to look down at him but his eyes are unfocused and he looks so fucking lost in.

Shane moans and his nails dig in even harder into Ilya's back.

"Hold it, please, fuck, I'm getting there, don't come yet, hold it."

Ilya groans, so desperate it's almost a whimper.

"Trying. Fuck, Shane, I'm trying, you feel too good. I can't—"

He slams in one more time and loses it, coming hard with a guttural shout, hips grinding erratically as he spills in the condom. His whole body trembles, face buried in Shane's neck.

When he finally stills, panting, he lifts his head, eyes glassy, cheeks flushed.

"Fuck. I'm sorry, I'm so sorry. Couldn't hold it. I was too fast."

Shane laughs, breathless, fond. "You were getting close and it felt good. But yeah, no hands-free finish today. Too quick."

Ilya exhales a hard half-laugh and half-groan and kisses Shane, quick and messy.

"I promise I can normally last. But not with you. Second one with my mouth again, then. Want to taste you again."

Shane nods, wrecked.

"Yeah. Please, I won't take long, I'm pretty close from fucking."

Ilya slides down, and settles between Shane's thighs. Shane's cock is still hard, slick with precome and some of Ilya's spit from earlier. Ilya licks a slow stripe up the underside, then takes him in, his lips sealing soft around the head, tongue swirling lazily. One hand strokes the base in slow pulls, the other cups Shane's balls, thumb rubbing gentle circles.

Shane's hips lift off the bed.

"Ilya, fuck, that's— oh god."

Ilya takes him deeper, just sucking slow and steady. The wet heat is overwhelming after everything. Shane's hands fist the sheets, head tipping back. It builds slower this time, a steady climb rather than a sprint. Ilya keeps the pace even, sucking gently, tongue pressing flat, letting Shane feel every inch.

Shane's breathing turns ragged again. "Close, close, fuck."

Ilya speeds up just a fraction using his hand where his mouth struggles to reach. Shane comes with a low, shuddering moan, spilling weaker pulses down Ilya's throat. Ilya swallows and keeps sucking softly through the aftershocks until Shane whimpers and pushes weakly at his shoulder.

Ilya pulls off, kisses the inside of Shane's thigh, then crawls back up and kisses him deep, letting Shane taste himself again.

"Two," Ilya whispers against his lips. "One more."

Shane laughs, breathless, wrecked.

"You're trying to kill me."

Ilya rolls him onto his side, spoons up behind him, chest to back. Arms wrap tight. They stay like that for a while, quiet and just breathing together. Shane feels himself soften completely, body heavy and spent, but Ilya's hand keeps stroking slowly down his side.

After a while Ilya kisses the back of Shane's neck.

"Third one. Just fingers inside you. See if I can get you there."

Shane groans into the pillow.

"Ilya. I'm empty. Seriously. There's nothing left. I'm gonna break."

Ilya presses a soft kiss to his shoulder.

"Okay. We stop if you say stop. No pressure."

Shane is quiet for a beat.

"If I quit now it's admitting I can't take it. Right?" he says in a small voice.

Ilya just strokes his hip.

"We don't have to. Really."

Shane exhales hard.

"Fuuuuuck. Fine. Do it. But gentle. I'm so sensitive I might actually cry. And I don't know if I can actually come again."

Ilya kisses his nape.

"If we do it I will be gentle. Promise. But you have to tell me you actually want it."

"Yeah, do it. I want it. We can at least try. Just use your fingers in me." Shane says, pushing his ass up and moving his knees wider apart with his chest on the bed.

Ilya slicks his fingers with more lube again and presses one in slowly. He starts with shallow thrusts, curling his fingers lightly to brush the spot. Shane whimpers right away, hips twitching, oversensitive nerves sparking.

"Too much?" Ilya asks, thumb rubbing Shane's lower back.

"No. Keep going. Slow."

Ilya keeps up a patient, lazy rhythm, every few strokes pressing deeper, holding the curl. Minutes stretch out. Shane's body trembles. His cock stays soft, hanging heavy, but the deep pressure starts to build anyway.

Shane knows from experience that, at least for him, prostate orgasms are not easy to achieve. They take time, perfect consistent pressure, and patience. The sensation creeps in low, a dull, internal swell behind the pubic bone that grows heavier with each pass.

Instead of a sharp edge at the tip, it's a deep, throbbing fullness that spreads outward in slow waves, making Shane's breathing turn shallow, his thighs quivering. His hole flutters around Ilya's fingers in involuntary pulses. The build is long, so long that it's almost frustrating, and it makes him whine and shift, chasing something he can't quite grasp.

Eventually, the pressure starts to mount, really slowly.

"Ilya, it's, fuck, it's building, I think..."

Ilya kisses his shoulder.

"Just breathe. Let it happen. There's no rush."

The pressure keeps climbing, heavy and insistent, until Shane's whole lower body locks with his breath catching. Then it breaks in long, rolling contractions that start deep inside. His hole clenches hard around Ilya's fingers in slow, powerful waves. A thin trickle of clear fluid leaks from his soft cock, more prostate fluid than come, dripping in weak, slow drops in shuddering waves that ripple through him, leaving him gasping, trembling, tears slipping from the corners of his eyes from the overwhelming sensation.

"Fuck, Ilya! I'm fucking— Jesus, *fuck!* I'm still fucking coming, don't stop, *ah!* Fuck!"

When it finally fades, Shane collapses forward onto his stomach, shaking hard. The towel had been a good idea.

Ilya eases his fingers out gently, wipes them on the towel, then pulls Shane close, spooning him tight. He kisses Shane softly, on the neck and then on the shoulder.

"You did it," Ilya whispers. "Three. Fuck, Shane. You're amazing."

Shane makes a hoarse sound, half-laugh, half-grunt.

"I'm dead. For real this time."

Ilya kisses his temple.

"Good dead?"

"Best dead." Shane reaches back, finds Ilya's hand, threads their fingers together. "You're a pervert, you know."

Ilya chuckles.

"Only for you. I think you like it."

"Fucking hat trick," Shane giggles. "I'd say what we did tonight was almost as difficult."

They stay tangled, sticky, breathing each other in. Shane's body feels hollowed out, wrung completely dry but happy and satisfied.

"I'm just gonna say a bunch of stuff, okay?" Shane says as he snuggles into Ilya.

"Of course, are you alright?" Ilya strokes Shane's slightly damp hair.

"Yeah, I'm alright. Just had some thoughts just now. You know, whenever I've fucked girls, for me at least, I had to, make myself come," Shane states.

"You finished yourself? So you jerked off?" Ilya seems baffled. (What the hell?)

"No! If I was having sex, it would take, you know, effort, to come. I'd be like, 'Here we go, Shane, you can do this. Come.'" Shane realises saying this now may be strange maybe-not-sexy pillow talk.

"So you have to focus on it?" Ilya attempts to follow along.

"Yeah! I guess what I'm thinking is, when I'm with guys, it's the opposite. Like, 'Fuck, this feels so good, try not to come immediately'. But then, just now, when you were fingering me, it was a bit more like how I had to concentrate to come every time with girls. Do you know what I mean, at all?"

Ilya bites his lip. He's smiling, but he gestures like he wants Shane to keep going.

"Oh? I think when I am having sex with anyone, I am not focusing on it that much."

Shane groans.

"No, listen, before, when we were fucking, and I said 'Don't come yet', but it felt so good you couldn't stop? I don't get that with women."

"Ah." Ilya doesn't seem sure of the best way to express his thoughts. "I am wondering, when you have fucked girls, do you feel like your mind is... somewhere else? Or are you... focusing on what is happening?"

Shane pauses. No one says anything for a little bit while Shane thinks hard.

"I... I wouldn't say I'm mentally present, no." Shane feels the wheels turning slowly in his mind. Like something is about to click, big time. "I... usually think about guys. Is that weird?"

"Usually? All the time, or sometimes?" Ilya asks gently.

"I think maybe... always, or otherwise I won't... come." Shane whispers.

"And why are you thinking about this tonight?" Ilya holds Shane a little closer.

"I guess it just occurred to me – maybe post-nut clarity – that with girls, I can barely come once. I think three would be... impossible."

Shane clenches his jaw for a bit.

“Ilya... I think I might be gay.”

Ilya nods.

“Well... If you can only come when you think about men...” he starts.

“Oh my fucking god, I’m *gay*.” Shane groans into his pillow. “Oh my god, what the fuck, of *course* I’m fucking gay.”

“It makes sense! Hey, Shane, you’re okay. Try not to panic. So you’re gay, is no big deal.”

“Not a big deal? I think it’s a huge deal, to me, at least. I always thought I was, like, just a bit fruity, but everyone’s a bit fruity, right? Fuck, I guess not. But it is a big deal.” Shane groans and Ilya puts an arm over him to hold him.

“And you’re not gay.” Shane adds.

“No, not completely,” Ilya sighs. “It doesn’t change anything. Listen to me. Try not to panic.”

Shane groans.

“Yeah, yeah. Oh my god, I think I’m going to be sick.” He curls his head down into his chest.

“Shh, shh. You’re okay, Shane. You’re safe. You’re with your boyfriend—”

“Boyfriend?” Shane squeaks.

“Well. Yes. I think, probably, yes. We are exclusive, and we like each other a lot. I think that is boyfriends.”

Shane doesn’t breathe for a second. He said boyfriends. He just said boyfriends about *them*. His heart swells and he struggles to work out what the hell to say back. Boyfriends, you know, like what he and his ex *weren’t*, explicitly. And this naked Russian man lying in his bed has just said it super casually.

“Boyfriends,” Shane repeats dumbly.

“Unless...” Ilya starts. Shane cuts him off quickly.

“Boyfriends is good. Really good.”

“Okay,” Ilya yanks Shane in closer and runs his hand through his soft dark hair.

Shane starts to laugh. And then he keeps on laughing until his chest is vibrating against Ilya’s.

“You are hurting my feelings,” Ilya grumps. “Why are you laughing at me saying boyfriends?”

“No! No! I’m not laughing at ‘boyfriends’. I’m laughing at the fact that the night I score my first hattie, I fuck my – well, *boyfriend* – and realise I’m fully gay, all in one day. What a fucking day.”

“What a fucking day,” Ilya kisses Shane on the forehead.

“What a fucking day,” Shane repeats again.

Chapter End Notes

Edit: Special shoutout to my Beta Team Chocolate_Freckle and Pikelet who helped me run through maybe three drafts of this chapter before we decided it was done (a labour of love, I love my friends!) Thanks for all your millions of suggestions, edits, comments and flailing to encourage me to keep going when I wanted to bang my head on the ground until blood came out of my ears. Truly a joy, I love it all!!!!

There is plenty more plot to come (and porn, duh).

Thank you again for joining me on this journey and patiently waiting week by week!!

Chapter 19: Experience

Chapter Summary

Last time: three consecutive orgasms help Shane realise he's gay. Fellas, is it gay if you can only come if you think about men? (Yes)

This time: porn followed by a bunch of backstory for experienced!Shane. Very lightly touching on Ilya's family as well (including his mother), sappy boys and Sports.

Also fuck yeah let Shane speak Japanese! (We are doing our best with my (high school level) and Freckle's (life crisis Japan stint) skills. We did our best but if we fucked it just tell us and we'll fix it!)

Please note: this is my sandbox and I make the rules about immigration/citizenship in my Alternative Universe Canada so just Deal With It. Let it wash over you.

Apologies if you're from Toronto I mean no offence, promise.

Chapter Notes

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

Ilya's hands clamp down on Shane's hips, fingers digging in hard, pulling him down onto his cock while Shane, straddling him, rolls his hips in slow, filthy circles. The drag is obscene, with every thick inch of Ilya stretching him wide again, the head catching and rolling right over that spot that makes Shane's vision blur. Shane's cock is flushed dark and heavy against Ilya's stomach, leaking steadily, smearing across Ilya's abs with every grind. He clenches deliberately on the downstroke, tight and mean, just to pull a rough curse out of Ilya.

"Fuck— Shane—" Ilya's voice cracks, his accent thick and raw from how fucking good it's feeling. He thrusts up hard to meet the next roll, chasing the heat. "So tight— god, do that again— *please*—"

Shane braces both hands on Ilya's chest, nails scraping down the hard planes of his pecs, and starts riding harder, lifting almost all the way off until only the head is inside, then slamming back down with a wet, echoing slap that fills the darkened room. Sweat beads on his forehead. Ilya's eyes are glued to where they're joined, eyes wide watching his cock disappear into Shane's body over and over.

"Shit— look at you— taking me so deep—" Ilya's words come out desperate and almost whiny. "Harder— fuck, just like that, feel so good around me—"

Shane shifts his angle forward, tilts his hips just right, and Ilya's cock drags relentlessly over his prostate with every stroke. Electric sparks shoot up his spine, thighs shaking, breath

punching out in short, wrecked gasps. His head tips back, mouth falling open on a silent cry as the pleasure coils tighter.

Ilya's hand slides up between them and wraps around Shane's leaking cock in one big, callused grip, stroking firm and fast in perfect time with Shane's bounces. Shane's rhythm stutters, hips jerking forward into the fist.

"Fuck, fuck, Ilya, like that— like that— don't fucking *stop*—"

"Won't stop— ride me— come on my cock—" Ilya moans, his voice breaking. "Want to feel you come— want you squeezing me so hard— fuck, Shane— you're too good—"

Shane grinds down hard, clenching on every lift, chasing that brutal double sensation: the thick stretch filling him, the tight fist working him mercilessly. Ilya's strokes speed up and stay relentless while his hips snap up in shallow, desperate thrusts.

It hits Shane like a freight train.

"Oh shit, I'm gonna come," Shane moans as he slams down one last time, grinding in tight circles, and comes with a broken, high moan, spilling hot and pulsing over Ilya's fist in weak, shuddering waves while his hole flutters and spasms hard around him.

Ilya loses it right after.

"Shane— fuck— *coming*—" His hips jerk up hard, burying deep as he comes with a low desperate groan that vibrates through both of them.

They stay locked together, panting and shaking. Shane collapses forward, forehead dropping to Ilya's shoulder, both of them slick with sweat and come and lube. Ilya's arms wrap around him immediately, one hand sliding up to card through Shane's damp hair, the other stroking slow lines down his spine. They're disgusting and sticky but neither of them seems to give a fuck right now.

After a long minute, Ilya exhales. His voice is still hoarse.

"How the fuck are you so good at that?"

Shane lifts his head, surprised.

"Practice?" He shrugs. "How else? Plus, I'm just doing what feels good for me."

Ilya stares at him, something flickering in his eyes that Shane can't quite read. Ilya pulls out gently and then passes some tissues between them to clean up and deal with the condom.

"So... just wondering something... How many guys have you fucked? Like... including me? If you don't mind asking," Shane says after a beat, sitting on the bed with his knees up by his chest now.

Ilya bites his lip and hesitates.

“My coach’s son. Back in Russia. For a year or so, but not all the time. And then sometimes when I went back to Russia. So you, and him.”

Shane blinks.

“Wait. You haven’t even gotten, like, blow jobs or whatever, from other dudes?”

Ilya shrugs one shoulder.

“No. Russia wasn’t safe like that. And then when I was in Canada, I thought about it, but... never did it.”

He pauses, eyes flicking over Shane’s flushed face.

“Wait. How many men have you been with?” he asks.

Shane feels heat crawl up his neck.

“Uh... look. I’d have to really think about it to give you the real answer. It’s been a while.”

Ilya’s jaw drops.

“Wait. That many? Shane, you’re experienced,” he teases.

Shane shrugs again, ears burning.

“No, not that many! I had that guy back home for a few months. The one that ghosted me. His name was Alex. But there were others before him. Alex and three other guys. Oh, and I guess Hayden, now.” He glances at Ilya. “How many girls have you fucked?”

Ilya pauses like he’s doing quick math. “I don’t know. More than ten, less than sixty. I think.”

Shane grins. “You slut. I’ve only been with eight girls, if you include other stuff that isn’t sex.”

“Yes, but I’m two years older.” Ilya smiles at Shane. They’re both still naked, tangled in the sheets.

“Well, all I’m saying is, if you like the way I ride, you gotta be thankful to some of the other guys out there I got to practice on.”

“Shane,” Ilya warns, but there’s a playful glint in his eye. “You’ll make me jealous again, and I’ll have to bend you in half and fuck you again.”

Shane laughs.

“Didn’t realise you could go again so quickly?”

Ilya growls something low in Russian and shoves him. They wrestle, playfully bumping elbows and knees and laughing until Shane’s pinned under Ilya, both breathless and grinning.

Then Shane's phone starts ringing on the nightstand. A FaceTime request from 'Mama 🥰' lights up the screen.

"Oh god, it's my mum, I gotta take this. I was supposed to call her last night."

Shane scrambles to sit up, dragging the sheet over his lap. Ilya rolls to the side, still naked but out of frame, propping himself on one elbow to watch with faint amusement.

Shane swipes to answer, propping the phone against a pillow so it's angled just enough to keep most of the bed (and Ilya, Jesus) out of frame.

"Hey, Mum!"

Yuna's face fills the screen instantly. She's still in her pyjamas, hair a little messy, but her grin is so wide it crinkles the corners of her eyes.

"Shane-kun! Yoku dekita! Sugoi yo! Hatto torikku! Surī gōru! Terebi ni kōfun shimacchatta yo! Hontou ni, hontou ni sugoi! Ureshii kara naichatta yo!"

(Shane! Well done! It was so amazing! A hat trick! Three goals! I was screaming at the TV! Really, really incredible! I was so happy I started crying!)

Shane laughs, the sound bubbling up warm and surprised. His cheeks were already pink, but now they're burning.

"Arigatou, kaa-san. Sugoi datta yo. *(Thanks, mum, it was incredible.)* The third one just went in, and the whole building completely lost it. It was so loud I couldn't think."

Yuna presses a hand to her cheeks like she's trying to hold the joy in.

"Mitta yo, mitta! Saigo no gōru no toki ni, kamera ga anata no kao ni zoom-in shita – okii bishō yo! Mune ga harisakesou datta!"

(I watched it, I watched it! When that last goal went in, the camera zoomed right in on your face – that smile! Mama's heart almost exploded!)

Shane's laugh turns soft, almost shy.

"I'm so glad you were watching Mama, and I'm sorry I didn't call you. I was out late last night."

Yuna waves a hand.

"Daijoubu, daijoubu. Minna ureshii yo. Ne, oiwai shita? Tanoshii yoru o sugoshita? Tomodachi to? Soretomo... kanojo to isshou de? Hatto torikku kara dareka wa ureshii datta, deshou?"

(It's fine, it's fine. Everyone's happy for you. So... did you celebrate? Was it a good night? With friends? Or... with a girl? You must've had someone all excited about the hat trick, right?)

Shane glances sideways at Ilya, who's now flat on his back, one arm behind his head, biting the inside of his cheek so hard to keep from laughing that his shoulders are shaking silently. Shane elbows him lightly under the sheet, 'don't you dare make a noise', and turns back to the phone.

"Yeah... uh, celebrating. Good night. Really good night."

Ilya claps a hand over his mouth to stay silent, the fucker.

Yuna's eyes narrow playfully. She leans closer to the camera like she's inspecting something.

"Chotto matte... sore wa anata no heya ja nai ne? Kabe no iro ga chigau da yo. Soshite sono haikei no mado... takai basho? Shane, doko ni iru?"

(Wait a second... this isn't your room, is it? The wall colour's different. And that window in the background... high up? Shane, where exactly are you right now?)

Shane's eyes widen.

"Muuuum," he whines, dragging the word out like he's sixteen again. "Don't ask me these things! Come on!"

Ilya looks over curiously.

Yuna gasps theatrically, one hand flying to her chest.

"Ehh! Masaka... hadaka nanno?! Hadaka de hanashiteru no?! Ano ko iru no?! Hatto torikku o iwatte kara o-mochi-kaeri shita?"

(Ehh! No way... are you naked?! Are you talking to me naked?! Is a girl there?! Wow, celebrating the hat trick with a hookup already!)

Shane's face burns hot as hell. He yanks the sheet higher like it'll hide anything. "Mum, yes, okay, yes! I'm... not alone. So can I please, please call you later? Like, in a few hours? When I'm wearing clothes?" Ilya covers his mouth to stifle his laugh, again. Shane shoots him a warning glare.

Yuna cackles, laughing so hard that it makes the phone shake in her hand. Then her expression shifts to that classic mum mix of teasing and genuine concern. "Wakatta, wakatta! Demo, ne... chanto boujoshoku shite ne? Gomu wa tsukatteru no? Mama wa shinpai suru kara."

(Okay okay! But listen... make sure you're using protection, okay? You're using condoms, right? Mama worries, you know.)

Shane groans, burying his face in one hand for a second.

"Mama. I know. I'm being safe, please chill. I promise. Can we not do the safe-sex lecture right now?" Shane's eyes glance to the side to remind Yuna that this isn't a private conversation.

Yuna's smile softens, eyes going suspiciously shiny again.

“Hai, hai, wakatta. Demo ne, hontou ni omedetou. Shane-kun no hatsu hatto torikku... mama wa zutto wasurenai yo.”

(Yes, yes, I understand. But congratulations on the hat trick. Mama will never forget it.)

Then Yuna quickly adds, “Lucky girl, getting with you after! Love you Shane.”

Shane's throat tightens a little, half from the praise, half from the irony. “Muuuum stop! Please! Love you. Bye.”

He ends the call and lets the phone drop onto the mattress like it's suddenly radioactive. For a second he just sits there, staring at the blank screen, cheeks still flaming, a stupid, helpless grin spreading across his face.

Ilya finally lets the laugh out, low and warm against Shane's side. “I don't speak Japanese but I think, maybe, it sounds like she told you to use protection.”

Shane nods, still dazed.

“Yeah. Right after congratulating me on the hat trick. And assuming I'm hooking up with some girl who's impressed by goals.” He flops backward onto the pillows, dragging a hand over his face and groaning dramatically.

Ilya rolls onto his side, propping his head on one hand, looking down at Shane with something soft and fond in his eyes.

“She's proud of you. And she worries. That's... nice.”

Ilya's smile is small and fragile at the edges. His eyes drop to the twisted sheets between them before flicking back up.

“Would they judge you?” he asks quietly. “If you told them you are gay?”

Shane meets his gaze.

“Uhhh... we've never really talked about it outright, but I'm, like, ninety-nine percent sure my mum already knows I've been with guys before. My thing with Alex, the guy back home, back home was intense. He stayed over in my room all the time – we weren't exactly subtle about how close we were. We tried to keep quiet if we did stuff, but, you know...” He shrugs one shoulder. “Kids aren't that slick. And then my dad gave me the safe-sex talk right around then. He made this offhand comment about how condoms aren't just for not getting someone pregnant. It felt... pointed? But no, I haven't told them, they probably wouldn't judge too much.”

Ilya's breath snags in his chest. He tips his head back against the headboard and stares at the ceiling like the answer might be written there.

“Your parents... would still love you.”

Shane watches the muscle jump in Ilya's jaw, the way his throat works as he swallows. Realisation hits like cold water down Shane's spine. This isn't just abstract for Ilya.

Shane's stomach twists. "Yeah... Oh. Fuck." He reaches out slowly, fingers brushing Ilya's forearm, then curling around it gently. "Would yours...?"

"My mother is dead." Ilya's voice is low and careful. He looks away for a moment. "My father... no." He pauses for a second. "It's different in Russia."

The room falls quiet except for the distant hum of the city outside the windows. Shane shifts closer until their bare shoulders touch, then presses his forehead to Ilya's shoulder, breathing in the warm, familiar smell of him.

"I'm sorry," Shane whispers. The words feel small and stupidly inadequate. "I didn't know."

Ilya doesn't answer right away. He just exhales a long and unsteady breath. Then he turns, arms coming around Shane in one sure motion, pulling him in until they're chest to chest, their legs tangled.

"I didn't know about your mother." Shane says leaning into Ilya a little more.

"She died when I was little," Ilya swallows hard. "She was... very sad. She took a whole bottle of pills."

"Oh, Ilya," Shane sits them up to pull Ilya into a hug. He's not sure if they've ever really hugged like this before. "I'm, so, so, sorry."

Ilya's shoulders shake slightly, and Shane realises Ilya is crying.

"I'm sorry," Ilya's voice comes out croaky and wet.

"Don't be sorry for crying." Shane says and leans back to wipe a tear away.

"She was so beautiful. And she loved me. I don't like going back to Russia because it reminds me too much of her. I am not close with my father or my brother. They... they make me so angry."

"That sounds really hard," Shane feels like his words are so inadequate that they're almost meaningless, but he can't think of anything else to say. "I'm here for you. If you ever need anything. I don't know what that looks like, but I... I care for you, Ilya. I want to be there for you."

Ilya nods a tiny little nod, and Shane suddenly can't bear for there to be an inch of air between them. He climbs messily into Ilya's lap and cradles the blond curls against his chest.

Ilya sighs into Shane's skin a little shakily. "I don't want to go back there. Canada is my home now. Our team and my friends here, they are my real family, you know?"

Shane forces a smile. "I'm glad you've got them, then."

“I also have you,” Ilya squeezes Shane a little tighter.

After a few minutes, Ilya speaks again, voice muffled against Shane.

“You know... I’m applying for Canadian citizenship soon. The process is almost done. Should have it by the end of this season.”

Shane pulls back just enough to look at him, eyebrows raised.

“Really? That’s huge.”

Ilya nods, eyes distant.

“Yeah. The NHL... they push for it, especially for Russians. With everything going on, you know the war, the politics, it’s safer. The league doesn’t say it, but they want players like me to... leave Russia, I guess, or at least have options. Avoid the draft risks with the war, the sanctions, all that. I am already resident here in Canada, I have lived here for maybe nearly three years now. It makes it easier for them.”

Shane strokes a thumb along Ilya’s jaw, feeling the faint stubble. “And for you? Personally?”

Ilya’s gaze sharpens and meets his.

“For me... Russia is not just bad because of my family. It’s very... scary. Always has been scary, yes, but now it is fascist state. Russian politics are like poison, so much hate and propaganda. Citizenship means I never have to go back. Means I am not... I think you say, ‘looking over my shoulder’.”

Shane’s chest tightens again. He leans in and kisses Ilya slowly.

“I’m glad you’re doing it. I’m sorry it’s so hard. I didn’t realise your family stuff was so... big. I hope it’s not weird that I’m always talking about my parents. I can stop. I had no idea ___”

Ilya huffs a quiet laugh, pulling him closer again.

“It is not weird, Shane. I have not had family for long time now. When my mother died, that was the end for me. My father is very old; my brother also is much older than me. Like I said, I have new family here.”

“I’m still sorry it’s hard.” Shane gives Ilya’s arm a squeeze.

“Do you think, maybe, you would ever come out?” Ilya nearly whispers.

Shane shrugs.

“I don’t know. Maybe. Maybe one day. I just don’t want to be the first.”

Ilya laughs a little. “Oh, I have heard the rumours. We are not only hockey players who are not straight.”

Shane looks up and splutters. “Rumours? What rumours?”

“Just online. People talk. You know, social media, people on twitter talking.” Ilya shrugs.

“Oh,” Shane sighs. “Yeah. Of course they do. I thought you were joking about, like, Hayden or something.”

“Is he gay?” Ilya asks, then pauses. “Actually, no. Do not answer that, I forgot that I do not care about Hayden Pike.”

“Believe it or not, Hayden believes he’s straight,” Shane laughs.

Ilya nearly chokes on his own spit. “He *what*—”

“*Super* straight.” Shane laughs.

Ilya groans into his neck, “Oh my god.”

Unfortunately, the next game is a straight-up demolition. The Metros face Toronto in Toronto (ugh, *Toronto*), and it's the kind of rivalry night where the building is electric from puck drop, but Montreal shows up flat. They can't clear the zone, can't win board battles, and the Toronto top line carves them apart.

Shane’s not having a good game. Ever since him and Ilya had hung out and Ilya had mentioned the rumours online about queer hockey players, it’s all Shane’s brain can latch onto.

Kent, one of the horrible loud-mouthed pricks from Toronto sneers a “pretty boy” comment at Shane in the first period. It’s probably not actually intended to be directly homophobic, maybe just the homophobic aftertaste of casual misogyny, but it makes Shane’s heart race uncomfortably. Everyone knows Kent is a class-A cunt, but seeing him up close is a nasty reminder of the kind of people that are in the NHL. Shane does his best to shake off the feelings, but he just can’t.

The final score ends up 4–2 Toronto. The Scotiabank Arena crowd is loud and smug, and to make matters worse, by the end of the second, a good chunk of the away fans have already headed for the exits.

Ilya gets into a fight late in the second period. A big Finnish winger cross-checks Ilya hard into the boards after the whistle on a dump-in. Ilya shoves back immediately, and then the sticks drop and gloves fly. It's quick and nasty. Ilya grabs the collar with his left hand, yanks the dude in close, and throws short, heavy right hooks. One catches and splits the big guy’s lip wide open, blood spraying across the ice. But the guy fires back and lands a solid overhand that cracks Ilya's mouthguard against his teeth and splits his own lip in return.

Refs pile in fast, and they both skate to the boxes, side by side, blood dripping down chins, neither looking at the other.

Ilya sits there staring straight ahead while the medic checks the cut, but it's nothing stitches-worthy – just a fat, swollen lip that'll look like hell tomorrow. The fight doesn't spark anything for Montreal; the team stays buried.

The post-game locker room is dead quiet at first, then Coach drops the hammer and tells the team they can do better and that he's disappointed.

"If you play like this, we'll be watching playoffs in the living room again," he says. Then he walks out, leaving Beau to handle media scrums.

On the bus to the hotel, the vibe is unsurprisingly grim. Guys stare at phones or out the windows. Everyone's bruised, tired, and pissed at themselves more than anything.

Shane gets paired with Hayden for the room this time, and he tries not to sulk about not being with Ilya. By the time Shane trudges up to the room, Hayden's already claimed the bed by the window. Shane throws his bag down, strips to boxers, and crashes on the other bed, staring at the ceiling.

Hayden breaks the silence first. "Rough one. Our line got fucked."

Shane grunts. "Whole team got fucked."

They don't talk much after that. They do actually need to talk, but neither of them wants to be first to bring it up, so the weirdness just hangs there. Hayden switches the hotel TV on low – just some ESPN highlights recap that's mostly Toronto goals (ugh).

Shane's mind isn't on the game, though. It's looping back, again, to what Ilya said a couple of nights ago: the fucking rumours. One bad game, and his mind is spiralling, big time.

He's run the mental list again: the guy from camp, the two guys when Shane had been on summer break, Alex who vanished, Hayden. Counting again and again, Shane is pretty sure his male-partner body count is only five. Well, it's six with Ilya.

The first time he had done anything with a boy had been at a hockey camp. He and Liam Kirkland had ended up sneaking out of the cabin, and it was over almost before it started as they touched each other under the cover of the forest nearby. He'd panicked a lot after that. Then, the next night, it had happened again.

Over that summer, Shane had accidentally let his guard down and let himself enjoy this side of himself, bouncing between a couple of guys as well as finally sleeping with girls for the first time, for balance and good measure. It had only been a handful of times with boys, all up. At the time, he hadn't thought about the potential consequences of it all.

Too young, too horny.

But then came Alex, who had gone to school with Shane. They'd gotten close as friends, and that friendship had turned into sleepovers and then into hooking up the moment they had the house to themselves. Sometimes, they'd even risk it in the quiet of the night, trying to stay

quiet while Alex's sister or Shane's parents slept up the hall. It had started to feel more dangerous.

Shane hadn't thought, back then, that he would make the NHL. He wonders if maybe he would have handled things differently, had he known.

Truthfully, a part of him had been slightly relieved when Alex had ghosted him, at the time. It had been heartbreaking, but he'd felt like he'd gotten his experimenting out of the way, and after that, he could be... well, *normal*.

Alex had left the area to join some film programme in another province, but for Shane it had also meant that he had no one to debrief with, an experience that had been deeply isolating. He'd wondered if people would have noticed how hollow he'd felt, because surely people had known how close they were. No one did, for better or for worse.

And then he had met Ash, who had become his girlfriend, and he'd locked all those other experiences up, and tried very, very hard not to think about them while he and Ash had sex (and failed). A quiet corner of Shane's mind had clung to a convenient fiction that if he had a girlfriend, and was able to have sex with her, then somehow that cancelled out the experiences that had come before. If he had a girlfriend, then those electric experiences with those boys – with Alex in particular, where they'd clung to each other as they stroked each other off, trying desperately to stay quiet in Shane's childhood bed, or when Alex would grip Shane's hips and pull him down hard until Shane was biting his fist as he came all over himself – didn't count. He had just been *figuring it out*.

And he had never dared to share his attraction to men with his girlfriend; that secret that was still well and truly alive when his traitorous mind would picture men's faces as they fucked. It was just too much for a confused Shane to hand over to her. Part of Shane had believed that if stayed with her long enough, he'd adapt to liking women. Or maybe he would adapt to like *her* like that, at least.

But the fallacy he had hidden behind has fallen away, and those memories that he'd previously decided *didn't count* are making him sick to his stomach.

Shane racks his brain, as he tosses in the hotel bed, to try and remember the full names of all the guys, so he can stalk their social media. He's pretty sure they're all 'straight'. Or, at least, not out. His heart rate is getting faster and faster.

Because people *talk*, especially in a small town in BC. Even if he had been in his late teens when it happened, all it takes is a drunk story at a party, one old group-chat screenshot, one compromising photo, and *he'll* be on those forums or twitter or whatever.

He rolls over, faces the hotel wall with his lip between his teeth, and he realises he's chewing the same spot Ilya split tonight, like some dumb matching tattoo.

Hayden's out cold across the gap now, soft snores filling the silence. Shane glances at the time on his phone – 11:11, on the dot – and types before he can overthink it.

Shane

23:11

11:11 make a wish

The reply comes almost instantly.

Ilya

23:11

I wish for a cigarette

Shane breathes a quiet little laugh, the sound barely disturbing the room. His thumbs move fast.

Shane

23:11

Wow I was gonna say I wish for us to win our next game and not play like dog shit

Ilya

23:12

You didn't play like shit. Sometimes it is just bad game

Shane exhales through his nose, staring at the ceiling. The loss still sits heavy, but Ilya's words soften the edges a bit.

Shane

23:13

I feel yucky tonight like Im worrying about what you said about the rumours

Ilya

23:13

Don't worry about it Shane. Worrying cannot fix

Shane

23:14

Im too chicken to even google the rumours

Ilya

23:14

Rumours are not about you! They're about Scott Hunter!!!!

Shane's eyebrows shoot up. He props himself on one elbow.

Shane

23:14

!!!!!!! wait NO WAY thats gotta be fake then wtf

Ilya

23:15

See? Nothing to worry about. Go to sleep. Four days and we are back in Montreal. I decided on my new wish...

Shane

23:15

you cant make a wish now. its not 11:11

Ilya

23:16

I can make a wish. I want to see if I can challenge you to something

Shane's stomach flips. His mind leaps straight to it being something filthy, maybe something they haven't done yet.

Shane

23:16

Oh? hmmmmm ask me

Ilya

23:17

You must promise not to laugh and you should try and say yes to me!

Shane

23:17

anything. ask me

Ilya

23:17

I want to see if you can cook me dinner without giving me food poisoning

Shane snorts so hard he has to clap a hand over his mouth. Hayden grumbles and rolls over.

Shane

23:18

fuck you!!! there's no way that's your wish

Ilya

23:18

What? Why can't I ask my boyfriend to cook me dinner? Romance is dead

Shane's cheeks burn at *boyfriend*. He bites his lip to keep from grinning too wide.

Shane

23:19

fine

Ilya

23:19

You do it?

Shane

23:20

I'll do it

Ilya

23:20

Yippee 

Shane

23:21

you're such an asshole

Ilya

23:21

Night night my Shane 

Shane presses the phone to his chest for a second, his stupid smile refusing to fade. The heart emoji makes his whole chest tight and warm.

My Shane.

My Shane.

Four days until Montreal. Four days until he can try (and probably fail spectacularly) to cook dinner for his ridiculous Russian boyfriend. His *boyfriend*.

Shane

23:22

night 

He sets the phone face-down, rolls onto his side, and, for the first time since the buzzer, feels the knot in his chest loosen just a little.

Chapter End Notes

[rambling author end note deleted]

(Please don't share my fic on social media I am allergic to weirdos)

Chapter 20: Discovery

Chapter Summary

Last time: Ilya and Shane fuck and they talk about their body counts. Yuna calls and congratulates Shane on his hat trick (if only she knew). Shane finds out about rumours in the ice hockey world about potentially gay players. He feels kind of sick about it. The games are going badly. He still hasn't talked to Hayden.

This time: They're still on the road, and games are shitty. Ilya got into a fight last chapter so his lip is busted up still. Oh, also, Hayden POV? HAYDEN POV. And a special third POV too...

Fair warning, the word count on these chapters just keeps exploding and I'm not sorry.

Posting early bc a cyclone is gonna blow through my part of the world and we may be without power! So this is an early treat!

Chapter Notes

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

The Metros are still on the road, and are now in Ottawa for a road game against the Centaurs. They lose a heartbreaker, 2–1. It's devastating because they're actually playing some of their best hockey lately, controlling the play, generating chances and looking dangerous, but the puck just won't go in for them, and Ottawa finds just enough to steal it. The boys are gutted in the locker room after.

Next up is New Jersey, against the Devils. They come out flying, dominating the first period, but they can't hold the lead. They drop another close one, 3–2. The frustration is building; it's a good effort, but bad results.

Shane and Ilya finally get roomed together again, a small mercy on this brutal road trip. Ilya's lip is still fucked from that scrap with Toronto, now swollen, bruised purple and nasty. They step into the hotel room, and as soon as the door clicks shut, Shane locks it, turns, and shoves Ilya back against the wood, leaning in to kiss him.

Ilya flinches hard.

Shane jerks back instantly. “Ah. Shit. Sorry, your lip.”

“Don't be sorry. I am sorry,” Ilya says quietly. “You know I want to kiss you.”

Ilya reaches out and tries to pull Shane in this time. But now Shane's the one who winces, sucking in a breath.

“Fuck,” he hisses.

“You are hurt.” Ilya drops his hand.

“Just fucking bruised.” Shane had gotten absolutely planted into the boards in the Ottawa game. It was a clean hit, nothing broken, but the trainers had taped his ribs up tight. Everything aches.

“We are falling apart,” Ilya groans, half-joking, but half serious too. It’s a brutal sport, and their bodies are taking a beating.

Shane lets out a tired laugh that doesn't reach his eyes and then groans.

“My whole body feels so fucking sore. My neck's killing me. Sides hurt. I feel... wrung out.”

Ilya pauses, then brushes his thumb gently over the freckles on Shane's cheekbone. “Please explain to me ‘wrung out’, what it means here?”

Shane exhales. “You know when your T-shirt is soaked and you twist it and twist it to squeeze all the water out? Kinda like that. Everything's just... drained and tight and tired. Like empty.”

Ilya nods slowly. “I feel wrung out too.”

“Sorry. I'm so fucking tired,” Shane murmurs, dropping his forehead against Ilya's shoulder. They're still standing right inside the door.

Ilya strokes his back. “Maybe we shower. Together?”

They strip and step under the hot water. Kissing's still out, far too painful, so they just stand there, chest to chest, arms around each other as the spray beats down on them loosening knots in their shoulders.

Ilya chuckles low against Shane's ear. “You are hard for me already.” He can feel Shane pressed against his thigh.

“Mmm.” Shane doesn't move, though. “I haven't come in... four days. Give me a break.”

Ilya pulls back just enough to stare at him.

“Four days! *Four days!* Shane! Why are you torturing yourself?”

Shane looks genuinely confused.

“I mean... I've been rooming with Hayden.”

“So you jerk off in the shower,” Ilya huffs like it's obvious. “I do it every morning. Also most nights, too.”

Shane groans, feeling embarrassed. "I'm gonna sound insane, but I don't like the feeling of it in the shower. And I really hate doing it in showers that... aren't mine."

Ilya mutters something filthy-sounding in Russian under his breath.

"We better hurry to the bed then. I worry you might explode. Four days..." Ilya mutters something else in Russian but his tone sounds like he might be saying *'fucking unbelievable'*.

They dry off. Ilya rummages in his bag, sets condoms and lube on the nightstand without making a big deal of it. Shane, already sprawled naked on the bed, notices and lets out a long sigh.

Not a happy one.

"Oh," Ilya says quickly, hands up. "No, no, sorry, Shane. We don't have to. I just thought... maybe you wanted. I got the stuff for it to be ready."

Shane shakes his head, his cheeks going pink. "Uh... well... I do, but..."

Ilya lies down beside him and props himself on an elbow. "What is it? You are blushing? Shane! I have licked your asshole. Why are you shy now?"

"Ilya... I'm not... prepared. For, like, full sex. We've been on the road, traveling, no time to, uh—"

"Oh!" Ilya rolls onto his side and slots himself along Shane's body. "We don't have to do anything, don't have to have sex. I was just thinking that... if you haven't come in four days, I thought tonight I could finally make you come hands-free. But we will not do that tonight. We don't have to do anything you don't want. Ever."

"No! I mean, yes! Fuck yes. I want other stuff." Shane giggles, nervous and a little relieved. "Ilya, I'm gonna nut so fast it's gonna be embarrassing."

Ilya cups his face gently, kisses his cheeks, the bridge of his nose, still being careful of his own bruised lip, and maneuvers them so he's sitting against the headboard.

"Here. Sit on my lap. I wish I could blow you, but I don't want to split my lip open again."

"Yeah, imagine explaining that to the medic." Shane straddles him and faces Ilya. Ilya warms some lube between his palms, then wraps his hand around both their cocks to stroke them together.

Shane groans, his forehead dropping to Ilya's.

"Fuck. Feels so fucking good, Ilya."

They keep going, building slowly, slowly. Shane's breathing gets ragged quickly.

"Fuck, I'm gonna come already," he whispers.

Ilya stops immediately.

“It doesn't feel as good when you shoot too fast, da? We can make it take longer, you know. Make it last and feel nice.”

Shane lets out a frustrated groan, hips twitching uselessly. Ilya starts again, slow and steady, keeping the rhythm even so Shane can't rush it.

He leans in close, voice quiet against Shane's ear.

“Shane. I think about you when I touch myself. Every time. I think about you on top of me, riding me slowly until you can't anymore. I think about your mouth around my cock, taking me so deep, looking up at me with your pretty brown eyes.”

Shane's breath hitches hard. His forehead drops to Ilya's shoulder again, fingers digging into Ilya's arms.

“Fuck,” he whispers. “I always imagine you touching yourself and hope you're picturing me. And then I remember... when you push my legs back and fuck me hard. Like you can't hold back. And how you sound when you get close.”

Ilya moans quietly.

“Yeah, I like to think about your legs over my shoulders, you begging me to fuck you harder even when I know I'll come if I do. I think about how tight you feel. How you shake when I hit deep again and again.”

Shane's hips jerk forward involuntarily.

“Keep talking. Don't stop.”

Ilya doesn't. He keeps the strokes slow, deliberate, murmuring filthy things, like how he jerks off fast in the shower thinking about Shane's ass, even that very morning. How he replays the sounds Shane makes when he's desperate. How he wants to fuck him until neither of them can move.

“When I touch myself, I try not to come too fast, imagining I finally make you come with my cock. I think about it all the time. I think about you telling me you're going to come and then, *fuck*, I can never last.”

He edges Shane twice more like this, pulling right back every time Shane starts to tense and gasp, until Shane is shaking.

“No more games, Ilya. Please. I can't take it.”

“Then fucking come for me,” Ilya growls.

Shane holds his breath because he doesn't trust himself not to scream, and his whole body locks up, shuddering hard as he spills over Ilya's fist. Ilya works him through it, still stroking them both, and Shane's vision blurs, from the pleasure, and also from the lack of oxygen.

Then, it's filthy in the best way: Ilya's stroking just himself now, slick with Shane's come and lube, eyes locked on Shane's face. Shane's mesmerised, trying to burn the sight into his brain.

"Fuck," Ilya pants. "This is how I touch myself when I'm thinking about you."

"Come for me, show me, I want to imagine this next time I'm alone," Shane whispers right in his ear.

Ilya squeezes his eyes shut, head tipping back, like he's right on the edge. "Shane— *Shane*— cover my mouth, please."

Shane presses his palm gently over Ilya's mouth (careful of the lip, again) and feels the hot, muffled groan against his skin as Ilya comes hard, abs clenching and body shaking.

Eventually, Shane pulls his hand away.

Ilya exhales shakily.

"*Motherfucker*. I've never come so hard from my own hand."

Shane giggles and grabs a fistful of tissues to clean them up.

"I held my breath when I came. Swear to god, I would've screamed otherwise."

"Ah, then our secret is out," Ilya sighs dramatically. "Everyone would know I'm a sex god and made Shane Hollander scream."

"Alright, it was a glorified handjob, you dick," Shane laughs, smacking him lightly on the arm.

Ilya grins, then sighs and brushes his finger tips down Shane's arm. "Okay, okay. Come on. Smoke half a cigarette with me."

They throw on sweats and hoodies and step out onto the balcony. The city lights glitter below, and the chilly wind bites.

Ilya takes a drag and exhales slowly. He watches the smoke disappear.

"Have you spoken to Hayden?"

Shane looks down at his hands.

"Yes. Kind of. No. Not properly. I don't know what to say. I feel bad. I've been... icing him out a little. Not on purpose. I just don't know where to start."

"You think he... likes you?" Ilya asks carefully.

"I don't know. I think... just as a friend? But he's my best friend. I miss him. I want things to not be weird. And I hate hiding all this from him. I think he'd be happy for us. Even if he still

thinks you're a dick. Maybe he'd get it. I think he would be cool with me being gay and you being... bisexual? Actually, is that what you feel suits you?"

Ilya nods, passes the cigarette to Shane.

"Yes. Bisexual. And, yes, you need to talk to him. Tell him about us, I don't mind. You know when your friends get a boyfriend or girlfriend and they disappear?"

"Yeah." Shane stares out over the city. "I don't want to do that to him. He doesn't deserve it."

"Then when we get back to Montreal, you talk to him. It will be okay."

"Okay." Shane sighs. "I've also been thinking about the rumours online, about gay hockey players and stuff, and people trying to put together who is or isn't gay. I think I've decided something." Shane takes a drag of the cigarette. It's nearly finished.

"Yes?" Ilya nudges Shane's arm gently.

"If I was to get outed, I'd be pissed if I couldn't tell my parents myself, on my own terms. When they come to Montreal next time, I'm going to tell them I'm gay."

"That is very brave, good idea," Ilya wraps his arm around Shane. "It is good plan."

"I won't mention you – I just want to tell them I'm gay, and also that I'm seeing someone. They don't need to know who."

Ilya pulls back.

"I don't care if they know. If you don't mind it, I maybe want them to know. You are important to me Shane."

"I am?" Shane repeats back. His heart squeezes.

He reaches over to lace their fingers together. "You're important to me too, Ilya. And if you're okay for me to tell my parents about us, then I'll be happy to do it, if you're sure."

"I am sure. I am very sure," Ilya smiles and kisses Shane very lightly on the forehead. (That damned split lip!) He takes the cigarette back off Shane. Shane only ever wants a drag or two anyways.

"Okay, then, I'll tell them. Sorry, I just assumed I couldn't." Shane smiles sheepishly.

"One day, I want to meet them," Ilya takes one last drag and finishes the cigarette, then stubs it on the railing of the balcony. "Would be nice to see the parents that made my Shane."

"Okay. One day. Soon, I hope."

A day later, Shane's finally home in his apartment, and he's got a day off. He drags himself up, goes for a run, showers, and decides it's time to put on his big boy pants and deal with

Hayden and clear the air. He unplugs his phone from the charger.

Right then, the most unhinged and potentially the scariest text of all time lights up the screen:

Hayden:

13:09

YOU NEED TO COME OVER I HAVE A REALLY BIG THING TO TALK TO YOU
ABOUT PLEASE COME RIGHT NOW

Hayden is a man of routine.

Routine, only in the sense that he starts every weekday the exact same way: scrolling on TikTok for at least 45 minutes until he's going to be late for practice. Then he yanks on his hoodie and runs to the ice rink, hoping he's not the last person to show up.

On the weekend though, Hayden's routine is that he sits on TikTok for hours and hours. He fucking loves it. He loves the hot girls doing dances in bikinis, he likes the penguin videos, he likes the ASMR soap cutting videos, and he loves the double-screen videos with Subway Surfer on one side and a robotic voice reading out a story from Reddit.

The last few months have been the weirdest months of Hayden's life.

Back in early December, Hayden had ended up in Shane's bed after a wedding. Then they'd kissed. Which was weird, but kind of nice?

Then in the morning, they'd kissed again, which was also nice, but then they had ended up jerking each other off. That had been kind of... hot? Hayden had come super hard.

It would all have been weird enough if it had only happened once. But then, at Christmas, when they were high, it had happened again.

Hayden had kind of talked to Shane about it after the first time, just to make sure it was clear that they were both straight. Because Hayden *knows* he's not gay! He's always found women extremely hot, and up until the last couple of months of his life, he's never even so much as kissed a dude.

And then, over a week ago, when the season had started back up after Christmas break, it was the most confusing night ever.

Hayden knows Ilya has never really liked him. Truth be told, he doesn't like Ilya much either. Ilya's always fucking smoking cigarettes and being loud and chirping everyone and being an asshole. And he parties hard and gets super loud and hogs the karaoke machine. Somehow, everyone else seems to like him, and Ilya doesn't seem to have to try.

Anyways. Ilya and him aren't best buddies. Whatever.

But the other night, he had ended up at Shane's, and they had been making out again. Kind of out of nowhere. And then he'd found himself hauled onto Shane's lap, and they were literally dry humping.

Oh, but then the door knock had happened, and when Shane had opened the door, Ilya had been standing there. It's not like he'd caught them red-handed, but it wouldn't take a genius to put two and two together. Hayden had been in the middle of trying to pull his T-shirt down.

And since then – even more than normal – Ilya had been a fucking *dick* to Hayden.

And to be fair, Ilya had been a dick to Shane too – but only for one day. And then they were back to *best buddies*!

Also, Shane is kind of avoiding him. He's always got an excuse like needing to get groceries or call his mum or whatever, but Hayden knows it's fucking bullshit. It's been weird since they got caught. Even when they roomed in Toronto they hadn't talked about it, but Shane had been in a grumpy mood because the game had been super shit, so it hasn't been the night to go and bring up all *that*.

It occurs to him, Saturday morning mid-TikTok scroll, that maybe Ilya thinks Hayden is gay, based on catching Hayden and Shane.

The way Shane had chased after Ilya to talk had been kind of frantic and not super chill. And then Shane had said that Ilya wouldn't say anything, which – like, cool, awesome.

But what was it that Ilya wasn't going to tell anyone? That Hayden and Shane, who are both straight, sometimes let off steam together?

Or maybe Ilya thinks Hayden is gay and has a problem with it.

Hayden stops scrolling.

Oh my god. What the fuck. What if he *is* gay?

His mind starts to panic.

He can't be gay! He likes *girls*!

And he... likes...? Likes sex. Can like sex. He has liked sex with girls.

He really can like sex though! He's liked it sometimes! With girls! He's only ever had sex with girls!

And hand stuff isn't sex...? (Right.)

Shane looks at the paused TikTok video. It's one of those Reddit story ones.

Hah! He'll ask Reddit. Yes! Crowdfund some smartness or whatever! That's normal and also kind of genius!

Hayden Pike, you're a genius!

He opens the app and starts typing in a subreddit.

Yo guys/ gals/ inclusive term

Im worried that I could be gay.

I only ever have sex with girls and I have never ever fucked a guy. I don't find guys hot in the way I find girls hot. Like some guys are super attractive, like Pedro Pascal, but I don't think of them that way sexually. I don't jerk off to men.

However, recently me and my homie jerked each other off twice and then ended up nearly doing it again but we got interrupted (LMFAO)

This is the thing tho. I really like the guy I did stuff with but not like in a sexy way.

We're best buds and he makes me feel super safe. I kind of feel really dumb with sex stuff and kind of like Im embarrassing myself and when I have had one night stands I kind of feel like dying afterward like huge huge regret or whatever and then I have to shower for like an hour (LMFAO). If its relevant me and the dude did kiss too.

Anyways. I jerked off with my guy friend but I don't want to ever do anything more than that with a guy I think and I think I could only do that with someone if I was like reeeeeeeallly really close with, maybe only him bc we're best friends. And it doesn't feel romantic to the point it doesn't feel like sex.

Anyways help am I gay lol

He goes to hit post and then panics. Holy shit. He nearly posted that as 'HaydPike2005'

(Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!!!)

Close call! Whoops!

He copies the text and makes a burner account. Sixseven676767. Unreal that no one has that username yet.

He hits post on r/askgaybros and r/TooAfraidToAsk and waits, heart hammering like he's waiting for a shootout.

The replies start rolling in pretty quickly, thank god.

u/throwaway_demi_dude: Dude, this screams demisexual to me. Demisexual means you only feel sexual attraction after a strong emotional bond forms. Like, you're not attracted to random guys (or girls) the way most people are, but when you're super close with someone (like best buds level) you can feel attraction that wouldn't happen otherwise. Doesn't make you gay if you're still primarily into girls. You could be demi and bi, or demi and bi but heteroromantic, or demi and heteroflexible. Check out r/demisexuality, lots of people describe exactly this: "I'm straight but I only want to do stuff with people I'm really emotionally connected to."

u/notyouraveragebro87778: Not gay. You literally said you don't find guys sexually hot except in this one super-specific context with your close friend. That's not typical gay attraction. Sounds more like situational or bond-based attraction. Demisexuality fits perfectly bc sexual attraction only kicks in after deep emotional trust/safety. You can still be into women primarily. Explore that label, it might take the pressure off.

u/confusedandchill97: Broooooooooo this is textbook demisexuality. I'm demi and I only ever feel anything sexual with people I'm insanely close to. Random hookups... Noooooo waaaay. One-night stands are just not for me. But with my best friend (who I'm now dating lol), it felt natural because of the trust. You're not gay unless you're not attracted to women. You're just demi, either bisexual or maybe from the way you describe yourself possibly straight-leaning or bi-curious in a very narrow way.

u/ace_spec_king_Lond8: Welcome to the grey-ace/demi club, my guy. You don't have to be gay or straight binary. Demisexuality is on the ace spectrum because attraction is conditional on emotional closeness. The fact that you panic about "am I gay" but only this happens with one person you feel safe with is classic. And the post-sex regret with casual stuff is super common for demi folks!! Welcome!

u/justaskingquestionss: Not gay. You like girls, you've only had sex with girls, you don't fantasise about guys generally. What you did with your friend sounds like experimenting within a safe friendship. Could be demi, could be bi with a strong female preference, could just be "bros being bros" in a horny moment. But the "only if I'm really close" part points to demisexuality. Read up on it before you spiral. It's okay to experiment!

Hayden stares at the screen, mouth hanging open. Demisexual.

He taps the word into Reddit search and falls down the deepest rabbit hole of his life. Thread after thread, story after story of guys saying they only feel anything sexual when they're insanely emotionally attached, how random hookups feel gross or empty, and how they can be straight-leaning but still have that one person they're super close to who flips the switch. It's like someone's reading his brain out loud.

He's not gay. Holy shit. He's not gay! He had experimented sexually! Because he felt close! To Shane! As a friend!

Of course he felt safe enough to experiment with Shane, that makes total sense. And also insane that there's a name for all the things he feels with girls too.

He's still got the Reddit app open, but he switches straight to messages and fires off a text to Shane without even pausing to breathe. This is massive. He needs his best friend, like, right fucking now.

Hayden:

11:27

YOU NEED TO COME OVER I HAVE A REALLY BIG THING TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT PLEASE COME RIGHT NOW

He hits send and stares at the delivered tick like it's gonna explode.

Shane shows up in five minutes flat, looking pale as a sheet and shaky, jacket half-zipped with his hair a mess like he sprinted the whole way. He stands in the doorway staring at Hayden like he's expecting a bomb to go off.

“Dude. I am so worried. What the actual fuck is going on? Do you know how scary that text sounded? I fucking ran here. If you’ve got something to say, please just say it right now. I’m sorry I’ve been a bad friend, I get it if you’re mad at me.”

Hayden blows out a long breath. “What? I’m not mad at you. I just wanted to talk. I’ll get us some beer.”

“Fuck the beer, Hayden! Please. The anticipation is killing me.”

“Okay, okay.” Hayden gestures wildly toward the couch. “Let’s sit down.”

They drop onto the cushions. Hayden rubs his hands on his thighs and then together like an excited fly. Shane stares.

Hayden begins.

“Okay. Remember when we talked after we jerked each other off after the wedding? And we said it wasn’t gay, it was just... hand stuff? And then we did it again at Christmas when we were high. Anyway. I’ve been having this huge panic spiral, like, holy shit, what if I’m gay? Then what? But I can’t be, right? Because I don’t like guys. Like, I don’t find guys hot. But then we did stuff, and I came both times. So I was fucking freaking the fuck out. So I went on Reddit—”

Shane nods once, slowly. “Okay.”

“And Reddit said I’m not gay. There’s a word for it. Demisexual. It means I only feel sexual stuff when I’m, like, super emotionally close to someone, like... you. Because you make me feel safe, and not dumb about sex stuff. But then, also, I’ve had sex with girls, and sometimes it’s been awesome, but sometimes I had one-night stands with girls and I felt so bad afterwards. Like, so terrible and horrible, and the sex was terrible. So, anyways, I got looking into it. And I’m not gay! And maybe you’re demisexual too! I just felt safe enough to experiment with you and I don’t like men! We’re not gay, Shane! We’re allowed to experiment! It’s normal!”

Shane swallows hard and looks at Hayden for a long second.

“Okay. Thank you for telling me,” he says. “It sounds like you’ve done a lot of thinking on this.”

“Oh! No. Not really. All this panic and research was in the last two hours, maybe less.” Hayden sighs. What a weight off his chest.

Shane blinks. “Okay. Okay. Well... It must feel good to feel like you’re not alone in your experience. But Hayd, when you say ‘I’m not gay’ like that, it kind of feels like you think being gay is bad? Also what we did was definitely not straight. I feel like I need to say this.”

“No! No, I don’t think being gay is bad. I think I just panicked and thought what if the sex I had with so many girls was bad and the stuff we did was good meant that I was gay. I don’t think I’m straight-straight. Obviously, the whole demisexual thing, but sexuality is a

spectrum, apparently, and I obviously had a nice time when we did stuff. I just didn't know there were words for *this*. Just because you jerk off your friend doesn't mean you're gay, that's all. Do you think you're maybe demisexual or just a bit not-straight?"

Shane sighs. "Well, I'm not demisexual."

Hayden's eyes go wide.

"Oh. Are you straight? Fuck. I was hoping you'd get it." He sighs sadly. "That's fine."

Shane squeezes his eyes shut for a second, like he's bracing himself. Hayden starts to worry he's made this whole thing super awkward.

Maybe he needs to explain a bit more how experimenting works. He's done some looking into that, and lots of straight people experiment with someone of the same gender, and then decide it's not for them. Apparently.

"Shane? Are we good? Are you weird about this now? Are you weird because of us experimenting? Like I said, sexuality is a bit of a spectrum and lots of people choose not to label it."

Shane shakes his head slowly and takes a deep breath.

"No. Buddy. I'm gay."

Hayden's jaw actually drops. "But you... wait. You had a girlfriend. And fucked girls... and..."

Shane shrugs nervously.

"You know how you said you felt bad after one-night stands? I felt like that, doing anything with girls. It didn't turn me on at all. I just... pretended. A lot. And thought about men during."

Hayden nods, processing.

"Okay. Okay. Wait... did I make you gay?"

Shane laughs and snorts a little.

"No! No, no. No. No, you did not."

Hayden pauses and thinks.

"Oh. So you've been with other guys?"

Shane nods.

"Yeah, I have. And, like... more than jerking off. Hayden, you gotta believe me. I really am gay."

And then, all of a sudden, after years of concussions and everyone calling him ‘a little slow, academically’ and always being the last person to get the joke, every single dormant brain cell in Hayden’s head wakes up at the exact same moment, like sleeper agents being activated.

“Wait...” He holds up a hand like he’s stopping traffic. “Wait. I’m having a moment.”

Shane waits, eyebrows raised.

A hundred little flashes hit Hayden at once: Shane and Rozanov sometimes sharing a hotel room on road trips. Shane coming back smelling like cigarette smoke the next morning. How Rozanov had been extra-pissy toward Hayden right after walking in on them dry-humping. How they’d been icy for one practice, then suddenly back to being weirdly in sync on the ice. How Shane had been ‘busy’ lately. How Ilya had left the rink at the same time as Shane over the last few days.

Rozanov hadn’t been being homophobic when he had caught them and stormed off.

No! Rozanov was *jealous*. Jealous? Jealous!

Hayden lowers his hand.

“You and Rozanov are fucking.”

He doesn’t say it like a question. He says it like he’s stating an actual, provable fact, because right now, it kind of is, at least to him.

Shane goes completely still.

“What.”

“You are!” Hayden’s voice cracks with sudden glee. “That’s why he fucking hates me! He’s *jealous*! And then you guys got roomed together, which I bet he organised, and now you’re back to playing in sync after the fight at your place the night I was there... which means you made up. Tell me I’m wrong, Shane. Tell me I’m wrong. Go ahead.”

Shane shakes his head, slow, eyes huge and suddenly teary.

“Please. Hayden. You can’t tell anyone. You really can’t. Please. It has to be a secret.”

“Oh my god, I’m a fucking genius. I’m a fucking *genius*,” Hayden mutters to himself quietly. Then louder, “I swear on my life I will never tell anyone. Ever.”

“Oh my god,” Shane whispers. He looks like he might actually pass out. Or throw up. Maybe both.

“Bud, do you need a hug?” Hayden says, already moving. “Hey. You’re okay. I swear. No one will find out.”

“Oh god, we have to be more careful. I can’t believe you worked it out,” Shane says, voice shaky. “I hope no one else has worked it out. We’re so fucking stupid.”

“No! No one else will. I only noticed because I was freaking out about being gay because of what we did! You didn’t jerk anyone else off, right?” Hayden teases, hoping it’ll snap Shane out of the spiral.

Shane just shakes his head. Thankfully, a small smile has finally cracked through.

“No. No one else. Also we’re not just fucking. I really like him. He’s... my boyfriend. We’re boyfriends. But it’s a secret. No one knows. Well, except you. Oh, god, I really, *really* hope no one else has noticed. I think I’m gonna throw up.”

“If you haven’t jerked anyone else off, you’re safe!” Hayden yanks Shane in and wraps him up in a bear hug. “You’re fine. You’ll be totally fine. No one fucking knows, okay? Calm down. I’m going to go get some beers for us.”

“Thanks, Hayden.” Shane buries his head in Hayden’s sweatshirt.

“I love you, man,” Hayden says back. “Also, thanks for telling me you’re gay. Must’ve been confusing to be gay and fucking all those girls.”

Shane groans.

“Yes. Yes. Also I didn’t fuck that many girls, let’s not blow that out of proportion, okay? And thanks. I love you too. Thanks for being cool.”

“You’re my best friend,” Hayden whispers. “However. Would you mind telling Roz to lay off the teasing a little though? And maybe can you also please tell him I don’t want to fuck you? I promise Shane. I promise I don’t want to fuck you. Then we could all be friends and it wouldn’t be weird.”

“I can try,” Shane chuckles, his eyes are still a little wet. “I’m sure it’ll help for him to know he’s not competing against you to get me into bed.”

“No hand job competition then? You know I’m an expert,” Hayden jokes.

“Fuck off Hayden.” Shane gives Hayden a harder squeeze and then pulls back. “Beers. We need beers.”

Beau gets home from captaining the Montreal Metros and steps straight into the usual storm: kids yelling over who gets the Bluey cup, Wendy in the kitchen swearing at a pot that's boiling over while the toddler flings Cheerios everywhere. Beau grabs the sponge before Wendy can even turn around and sorts out the spill, decrees that Billy had the cup yesterday so it's Max's turn, and grabs a broom before kissing his wife hello.

By the time they're all in pyjamas, teeth brushed, stories read, and lights out, Beau's back is screaming and his head feels like it's full of cotton.

He flops onto the couch next to Wendy. She's already got some trash reality show queued up (classic 'couples screaming about backsplashes and crying over paint chips' renovation disaster TV). He doesn't care. He just wants noise that isn't his own thoughts. She curls into his side, head on his chest, and he wraps an arm around her.

"You look like shit," she says.

"Feel like shit," he mutters. "Playoff odds are sitting at under fifteen percent. Coach and I stared at the standings 'til my eyes crossed. We're playing well, but not well enough to get through."

"You're still getting the boys to play hard, and you're all playing better than last year. Improvement's not nothing."

He shrugs. He loves the job anyway. He loves being captain, loves the guys leaning on him, loves the ice even when his body's falling apart and sore every night. Mid-thirties is a brutal grind in this industry. His back's always tight. He's made playoffs twice, way back when he could still bounce back from a hard hit within a day or two.

He rubs his temples slowly. He's prepared to not make playoffs again. However, nothing in captain training camps or seminars could have prepared him for whatever the hell is going on lately.

Beau's always noticed things. When the young guys are homesick, when Patrice was trying to hide his sore knee, when someone's going through some heavy family shit and trying to throw themselves into playing hard to escape it all. He can tell when someone's bullshitting. But he also clocks... other stuff.

And unfortunately, he's overheard shit he wishes he hadn't.

In early December, shortly after Patrice's sister's wedding, he was grabbing fresh tape when he overheard Shane and Hayden in the back corner of the gym, talking in low voices. Unfortunately, not low enough.

He couldn't hear every word, but he heard enough to glean some key facts: Shane and Hayden had jerked each other off. But also, they're both straight. Jesus.

His brain had short-circuited for a second. He'd backed out quietly before they'd noticed him, shaking his head the whole way to the locker room. Horny, stupid boys, he'd thought.

But then there was the New York Road trip in late December. Beau hadn't been able to sleep after a badly timed late afternoon coffee. He'd dragged himself to the hotel gym at 2am, ridden the bike 'til his legs burned while listening to his favourite Doobie Brothers album, then hauled his ass back upstairs, hoping for even an hour of solid sleep.

The hallway had been dead quiet except for the air-con, humming down the way.

And... then he'd heard it.

It was that unmistakable Russian accent.

"You feel so fucking good. So tight. Taking me like this."

Beau had stopped dead. Immediate fury slammed him.

Rozanov, you selfish fucking prick, he'd thought. It's curfew. You're rooming with the baby rookie, and poor little Holly's probably been kicked out to the hallway or the lobby so you can bring some random girl up here and get your dick wet. Jesus Christ, have some goddamn respect. You're treating poor little Hollander like an afterthought so you can fuck around?

He'd already been clenching his fist, ready to hammer on the door and read Ilya the riot act about looking after your linemate, when the other voice started.

"Fuck! I'm coming, I'm coming!"

Oh *no*. Beau knew that voice. That's Holly!

Then, again, Roz, wrecked and desperate:

"Oh god, fuck, *Hollander!*"

Beau's brain had screeched to a halt. The anger had evaporated and been replaced by pure, stunned disbelief. He'd had to slap a hand over his mouth, because a laugh (half-horrified, half-hysterical) had tried to rip its way out.

No. Fucking. Way.

Shane? Sweet, baby-faced Shane Hollander? Getting absolutely railed by Rozanov in their shared hotel room, on the road?

Beau had stood there in the dim hallway, shoulders shaking with silent laughter he couldn't let out. *Jesus Christ, boys. Keep it in your pants for five goddamn minutes. Or at least crank the TV up loud enough to drown out the greatest hits. Or maybe bite the pillow next time. Or don't let your loudmouthed fuckhead Russian disaster of a linemate turn your shared room into a full-on porn shoot while the captain's just trying to shuffle past without dying of second-hand embarrassment.*

Fuck. He hadn't just heard them fucking. No, it was worse. That had been straight-up orgasm noises. Actual, unmistakable, holy-shit-I'm-fucking-coming noises. Yikes! Yikes, yikes, *yikes*. He had shaken his head to try and get rid of the mental image. *Was Roz taking him from behind? Jesus, stop.*

He'd crept past and slipped into his room, locked the door, and collapsed onto the bed wheezing into his pillow. It was the most unexpected, batshit, hilarious thing he'd ever overheard in seventeen years of locker-room bullshit. These two absolute *clowns*. Roz and Holly. Fucking. In the hotel. On the road. He'd snorted into the pillow thinking about it. The baby rookie and the chain-smoking Russian asshole. Of all the pairings! Priceless.

Since then, Beau feels like all he can do is notice. *Of course* Rozanov wanted them to room together. And then, whatever the fuck was going on with that Pike-Holly-Rozanov love triangle had exploded, and Beau hadn't really known what to do except to tell Rozanov to fix

it. He's not sure if it was actually Rozanov at fault, but he was the biggest dick by far, historically, so the odds seemed good.

Well, props to himself, he guesses, because whatever needed to be done had apparently been done, and it all seems to have resolved itself. He'd made a joke about them kissing and making up, and the colour had completely drained from poor Holly's face.

Beau had laughed to himself the whole way home in the car. When Roz had showed up two days later with a massive fucking hickey on his neck and scratches down his back, Beau had decided that he didn't feel so bad for teasing Holly. Clearly, he wasn't that innocent after all.

But god, Shane and Rozanov aren't slick, at *all*. Shortly after the Great Love Triangle Meltdown, Hollander had scored a hat trick. Beau had watched as Holly kept eyeing Rozanov across the bar, then had watched Holly try and secretly get rid of drinks. Then Holly had (very badly) pretended to be wasted.

Beau had then watched Hollander stumble (wow, no career in acting for him) out of the bar, look around, and then literally break into a sprint towards Rozzy's house.

Oh, and Beau watches them text each other. All the damn time. One of them types something, then puts their phone down. Then the other one's phone vibrates and is grabbed immediately. Then they both blush, maybe bite their lip, and quickly put their phones face down.

It actually is really cute.

Even if the team's not likely to make playoffs, this tiny sliver of queer joy makes Beau's heart squishy and warm.

Because... yeah, that had been him, once upon a time.

Granted, he and Matt hadn't actually fucked-fucked, and were always so quiet and careful as they touched each other in the dark in hotels far from home. But life had moved on, and he and Matt had grown apart. Then they'd both found wives. And Beau fucking loves Wendy. Wendy is intelligent, sassy, and bisexual like him. She makes him feel safe, and he adores the life they have together.

They'd talked about it, years ago, over too many beers. He'd told her about Matt. She'd told him about the girls in university she'd quietly loved, and the way she'd pieced herself together while everyone assumed she was straight. When the right third person occasionally came along, she and Beau had had some threesomes. She'd squeezed his hand that night, and said she loved every messy part of him.

Now he looks down at her, half-asleep against his chest, hair a mess, mouth slightly open, still the hottest woman he knows, even in ratty pyjamas while some couple on TV sobs over a crooked tile like it's the end times. He kisses the top of her head.

"You okay?" she mumbles, voice thick and sleepy.

“Yeah,” he says, squeezing her tighter. “Just thinking about the young guys. They’re fucking idiots.”

She snorts, eyes still closed.

“Surprise, surprise.”

“Hazard of the job,” he mutters, grinning into her hair.

She pats his arm lazily, already drifting again.

“They’ve got you, eh?”

He nods. But inside, he’s still chuckling to himself. Roz and Holly.

Fucking.

He knows the risks. He’s the captain. He’s supposed to keep them safe. And he remembers too well what it felt like to bury shit so deep it hurt to breathe. If times were different, maybe he and Matt could have had something... who knows.

But it’s 2025, and maybe things are different now. Younger GMs have come up. Players are coming out in other leagues, although not the NHL. Not just yet.

It’s not perfect, but there’s momentum. Maybe they could get what he and Matt never had. Just maybe.

He pulls Wendy closer, her warm weight grounding him. The TV drones on about paint swatches and someone’s crying over a backslash again.

Chapter End Notes

[kept this end note as a treat]

WHEW: MORE PLOT IN MY PORN! WHAT HAPPENED?!? Oh my god plot plot plot. Also I kept the porn in. Yay.

Sorry for the 67 jump scare. I told a friend I would get 67 into this fic.

Also, as a nod to the Phans in my life / on here, yes “Hayden Pike, you’re a genius!” is said in the Dan Howell voice. IYKYK

Oh, and for the long winded author note...

Author Disclaimer: please read before you say anything mean in my comments.
Let me be very very clear: Hayden is still working his sexuality out. Hayden’s

experience is not the same as all demisexual folks' experience. There's also a bit of internalised homophobia in there so don't take any of this as gospel. People on the internet are not the ultimate source of truth.

But, what Hayden does know is that a. Sex with girls is not always good if he doesn't know them and b. He felt comfy to explore with Shane, but doesn't find men hot. It's a very weird place for him to be in, but he will be fine!

As a wise person once said: Your Individual Mileage May Vary (and this story is in no way intended to be bi-erasure or ace erasure at all).

Hayden is only 19 nearly 20 and hasn't thought about this for more than 2 hours in his whole life, so let's give him credit for trying. (Do 'straight' people experiment? Maybe??? I don't know! I'm not straight at all!!! Are you straight? Did you experiment? Feel free to share your experiences! Genuinely!)

Also, welcome to my fic where I decide everyone is queer! It's my sandbox, it's my party, I am having the most fun of all!! Have fun looking back at past chapters for snippets of where Beau has been accidentally hearing things by the way. This has always been part of The Plan™.

Thanks for enduring the author note. Please don't throw tomatoes at me: I'm trying to write realistically how undereducated ice hockey boys might feel about queerness. It isn't supposed to be perfect!! And also everyone on reddit doesn't know Hayden's full story either. They are just trying to help.

The Shayden Journey was a Tool for Jealous Ilya to Shine, and the Hayden queer panic is a Means to a Shane coming out to his bestie End.

Oh lmfaio my home is about to be battered by a cyclone, no joke, so I guess fingers crossed???????

Thank you for all your kind congratulations on my last chapter for hitting a million hits. What a fun time!

As always, stay subscribed, comment your feelings, hit kudos. All that good stuff. As a WiP writer it means a lottttt!!!

FINALLY (OH MY GOD shut up please everyone has gone home): when this fic is complete, I will be locking it down for AO3 users only, but giving the non-users a little bit of time to download it beforehand. After seeing how insane people get on completed works, I am avoiding that For Me. I am well aware I'm not one of those big fandom award winning everyone reading masterpiece fics (genuinely I do this just for me, this is not some compliment fishing agenda iSTG), but I also don't want to get bullied bc my mental health is fragile at the best of times and I will not subject myself to unnecessary risks. Peace out, et cetera.

(Also are you a WIP writer too??? SHARE YOUR WIP WITH LINKS IN MY COMMENTS. I AM ADDICTED TO GETTING UPDATE NOTIFS!)

Don't share my fic online guys. I have enough readers and we're all cool and nice here!

Chapter 21: Lunch, Dinner, Dessert

Chapter Summary

Last time: Hayden works it out, with his big, beautiful, potentially demisexual brain.

Oh and it turns out Beau had heard them fucking, OOPSY DAISY! Real slick, guys!

This time: Shane promised Ilya dinner! And he wants to tell his parents! Oh my god cuuute!

And Shane and Ilya are going to remember to be really careful so they don't get caught (coughing and spluttering oh my god guuuuys!!)

Chapter Notes

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

Shane

18:09

hey I talked to Hayden. he's fine. he knows about us but he's fine. I didn't tell him, he worked it out

Ilya

18:09

Oh I am glad you have talked. He worked it out? You say he is fine. Were we worried he was not fine?

Shane

18:10

oh lol he sent me a text saying he needed to talk asap so I ran to his house but yeah it was actually about something else. He worked it out. I told him we're boyfriends and he's happy for us but also wanted me to tell you he 100% doesn't want to fuck me so please stop being mean to him

Ilya

18:10

 I'm not mean he is bad at hockey

Shane

18:10

Ilya...

Ilya

18:11

 fine maybe I can try, especially if he promises he doesn't want your body

Shane

18:11

asgsdgdshshsh want your body is sending me lol I've had six beers tho haha we got drunk and it's been ages since I have drank

Ilya

18:11

Fun for you. I am doing paperwork with my agent for citizenship so I need to pay attention 

Shane

18:12

come to my house for dinner tomorrow bc I said I would cook for you in Toronto

Ilya

18:12

yes!! I can bring things too but please do not poison me I am star player

Shane

18:13

im researching what to make you do you have allergies

Ilya

18:14

no Russians don't have allergies

Shane

18:14

that's literally fake but okay sure

Ilya

18:15

I can bring dessert

Shane

18:15

oh yeah good idea

Ilya

18:15

 

Shane

18:15

I haven't come since NJ btw lol so maybe you can finally give me what I want

Ilya

18:15

oh my god Shane you are torturing yourself!!!! That is like 3 days!! I will jerk of tomorrow two times before so I last for you I want you to come on my cock so bad fuck

Shane

18:15

are you hard rn

Ilya

18:16

😏 yes very hard

Shane

18:16

me too but I'll save it for you x

Ilya

18:17

I am so excited !!!!!

Ilya

18:17

also yes I will bring real dessert not just dick

Ilya

18:18

Shane I am excited to have dinner with you and for you to cook for me!!

Ilya

18:18

very excited

Shane

18:20

me too but I'm a rly bad cook also we gotta stop texting I'm so fucking hard rn I need a cold shower

Ilya

18:21

okay see you tomorrow I will come at 6

Ilya

18:23

and then you will come 🤔

Shane

18:23

okay xx

The next day, Shane wakes up so fucking hard. By some miracle, he manages to remember that he's not going to touch himself, and eventually his hard-on goes away. But he's still fucking horny. He has another cold shower, which helps a bit, but he practically has to pinch his arm to avoid getting lost in thoughts of Ilya's mouth on his chest, on his stomach, pulling down his boxers... yeah. He's horny.

So Shane drags himself to the grocery store. He's also a bit hung over from drinking with Hayden, even though he only had six beers. The bright lights of the supermarket are overwhelming and harsh overhead, but he puts in his noise cancelling earbuds and it's much more bearable.

He buys a bunch of ingredients for cooking a nice dinner. Shane has never been a great cook, at all, but he fully plans to do his best to impress Ilya. Hopefully, he won't give them both food poisoning. The recipe he's found online is for eight, so he cuts it in half. It'll still be too much food, but maybe it could be nice for leftovers. Shane also buys other necessary things, like full-sugar Coke and a box of condoms. He's pretty sure the last time they had sex at his own house, there had only been one or two left in the box in his bottom bedside drawer.

A naughty thought sneaks in: *what if we didn't use condoms?* Luckily, someone's screaming toddler pulls Shane right out of that particular fantasy. Now is *not* the time for those fantasies.

After unloading the groceries, he tidies the house, despite the fact that Ilya won't really care. He vacuums, pulls all the cushions off the couch and vacuums again, cleans the bathroom, then has a very long and thorough shower. Afterwards, he sits on the edge of his bed, staring at his phone. 6pm can't come soon enough. And he's *so* fucking horny. He needs to get laid, *immediately*.

Fuck it, Shane thinks, and texts Ilya. Maybe it's a little bit desperate, but it's been *days*, and Ilya appreciates honesty, even if he might tease Shane a little. The risk is worth the embarrassment.

Shane

15:24

I know we said 6 but can you come earlier? Im so fucking horny Im gonna die

Ilya

15:25

😬 On My Way! right now

The second Ilya steps through the door, Shane shoves him up against the wall and kisses him like he's starving.

"I want you so fucking bad," Shane pants between kisses. "I can't stop thinking about you."

Ilya laughs breathlessly.

"This is why you need to jerk off more." He nips at Shane's bottom lip. "But I want to make you feel so good. You ready if we fuck?"

“Yeah. I’m ready.” Shane yanks at Ilya’s jacket while Ilya shrugs out of his layers without breaking the kiss. It only breaks long enough for Ilya to kick off his shoes, then Shane’s dragging him down the hallway by the wrist.

“You were not kidding,” Ilya says the moment they hit the bedroom, his eyes landing on the towel already spread across the bed, the lube on the nightstand next to an entire box of condoms. He laughs and kisses Shane again.

“Your lip looks better,” Shane says, reaching up to touch the still slightly swollen bruise.

“It’s fine,” Ilya leans back down to kiss Shane hard and then pulls back. “As long as you don’t fuck my face, I think it will stay fine.”

“I just really want you to fuck me, and fuck me hard. I’m so pent up,” Shane is almost shy, except for the fact he’s completely tenting the front of his shorts.

“I am happy to do that, but I really, really want to make you come on my cock. Have you come like that before?” Ilya pauses.

Shane nods, already flushed and pulling off his T-shirt. “Yeah, but not many times. It’s easier for me on all fours.”

Ilya jerks his chin toward the bed. “Then get on all fours. I’ll start.”

Shane curses under his breath and strips fast, climbing onto the bed and settling into position. He’s more than ready; he’d spent the better part of twenty minutes in the shower working himself open with his fingers.

But Ilya doesn’t go straight for his cock or start with his fingers. Instead, he spreads Shane’s cheeks and licks over his hole, slow and filthy.

“Oh, fuck—” Shane buries his face in the pillow. “God, that feels insane.” He still can’t get over how eagerly Ilya does this for him.

Ilya smirks against him and keeps going, licking slow, then faster, until he finally presses a finger inside.

“Oh? You’ve been practicing,” he teases, voice just a little smug.

“Just so you could fuck me sooner,” Shane mumbles into the pillow, moaning softly as Ilya brushes that perfect spot. Even after only a few times, Ilya already knows exactly how to play him.

“There’s no rush tonight,” Ilya murmurs, crooking his finger before adding a second. “I want it to be so good for you.”

“It’s always good,” Shane pants. “Really.”

“But I want to feel you coming around my cock.”

Oh, fuck.

Shane's cock is painfully hard now. He has to fight the urge to grind against the towel for any kind of friction.

Ilya just keeps fingering him. He keeps at it for ages, patiently and slowly, until Shane's thighs start shaking.

"Stop, stop, stop—" Shane gasps.

Ilya freezes instantly. "Is it bad? Sorry, Shane I—"

"No, too good. I'm getting close," Shane moans. "Fuck me. Please. I'm so ready."

"Fuck, yes," Ilya grins, and then rolls onto his knees behind Shane. Shane grabs the box of condoms from within arms reach and tosses them behind.

"A whole box? Will it be enough?" Ilya teases.

Ilya struggles with the stupid plastic wrap, pulls out a strip, yanks one free, rips it open and rolls it on. Then he finally slicks himself up and presses in with a shaky breath.

"So fucking tight for me..."

Once he's sure Shane's good, Ilya starts moving, deep and steady.

"Is this okay? Right feeling?"

Shane whimpers.

"Yes, yes, just like that. Fuck, like that."

Ilya picks up the pace, breathing ragged.

"Feels so fucking good... *oh, fuck.*"

He grabs Shane's hips hard, pulling him back onto his cock with every thrust, then plants a firm hand between Shane's shoulder blades and pushes his chest down into the mattress. The new angle makes Ilya hit that spot even harder and deeper.

Shane pushes back desperately, voice breaking as he cries out.

"Oh, shit— there, right there— fuck!"

"Is it too hard? Are you okay?"

"Yes! Not too hard! Good! Keep going, fuck, I'm getting there, keep going like that and I'll come, fuck!"

Ilya keeps fucking him, he's not one to disobey orders.

“Fuck,” Ilya moans, “want to feel you come on my cock. Fucking come for me, come for me, Shane.”

Then Shane starts moaning louder and louder. “There! Fuck! Fuckmefuckmefuckme—”

“Are you—?” Ilya is moaning with every thrust, damp with sweat as he leans over Shane.

“I’m coming— don’t you fucking stop—” Shane begs.

Ilya thrusts harder, gripping Shane’s hips tight enough to bruise, driving straight into his prostate over and over. Shane’s whole body starts shaking as the orgasm hits him deep, not from his cock, but that intense, rolling prostate pleasure that makes his hole clench and flutter wildly around Ilya. He moans loud and broken into the pillow, thighs trembling, cock leaking untouched onto the towel as waves of his orgasm crash through him.

And Ilya loses it. A string of English and Russian curses spill out of him as he slams in deep a few more times, feeling Shane pulse and milk his cock. He comes hard, filling the condom while Shane’s still riding it out.

“Oh god, I’m still coming— fuck!” Shane whimpers.

When Shane finally goes boneless, Ilya pulls out carefully and collapses beside him on the bed, chest heaving.

“Was that okay?” he asks, out of breath despite being a professional athlete.

Shane rolls onto his side, still trying to catch his breath, smiling hard. When he’d come, Ilya had pressed his chest down into the towel, so the front of him is all sticky and gross.

“That was... unbelievable.”

Ilya leans over and kisses Shane’s sweaty forehead, then his cheeks, then finally his lips.

“I cannot believe I did not come before you,” Ilya chuckles. “As soon as I was inside you, I thought I would lose it.”

Shane smiles. His whole body feels like a pile of jello.

“Well, it was fucking incredible. God knows how I’m going to cook us dinner. I could sleep for ten hours.”

“You don’t have to cook,” Ilya says quickly. “It was just an idea. Something nice to do, yeah?”

“No, no,” Shane sits up, feeling a little lightheaded from doing that so quickly. “I bought salmon and everything. I’m going to make us miso glazed salmon with rice and broccoli.”

Ilya nods. “Very healthy. Very responsible. Very Hollander.”

Shane looks down at his stomach, smeared in come, and Ilya's still got the used condom on him.

"Hey, could you reach down the side and grab the tissue box? I think it's on the floor."

"Oh, sure," Ilya stretches an arm back to feel around on the ground on the far side of the bed.

"Oh? Hello?"

And Shane wishes the earth would swallow him because there, in Ilya's hand, is his Snoopy toy.

"Oh, shit, don't touch that!" Shane panics.

Ilya drops Snoopy on the ground with a thud. Shane winces as if Snoopy is Real and can Feel Pain.

Ilya catches that, and he beams.

"Baby Hollander and his Baby Dog!"

"Shut up asshole, I've had him my whole life, okay?"

Ilya is just laughing outright now.

"The things this dog has seen! The things he has heard!"

"Leave him alone! Get the tissues!" Shane groans, realising he's gendered his Snoopy toy out loud to his hot Russian boyfriend. Oops.

"Not down here, I think," Ilya says, now facing away and dangling over the side of the mattress rummaging around.

And then oh, fuck. Oh, no, oh *no*.

Shane hears Ilya reach for the bottom drawer handle and it clicks as it opens.

"No!" Shane squeaks.

But it's too late.

The bottom drawer of Shane's nightstand is open. His special bottom drawer. That no one should open. Ever.

"Oh!" Ilya turns back and grins. "I have found the tissues, and also my competition?"

"Ilya..." Shane groans. "Stop! You're such a dick!"

Ilya takes the dildo (Jesus Christ) out of the bottom drawer.

"I know you like my dick, but this! It's big! Almost as big as me! Do you practice?"

“Put that down!” Shane groans.

“It’s like meeting an old friend!” Ilya cackles and then drops the dildo back into the drawer with a loud thud and hands Shane the tissues that he’s located. “Why are you blushing?” Ilya asks, as if Shane is being completely ridiculous.

“Because you saw my dildo! And my Snoopy!”

Ilya shrugs.

“I just ate your ass and made you come hands-free. I can handle these things.”

Shane stammers. Hard to argue with that.

“I need to shower,” he says finally, after giving his stomach a wipe down. “You want to join?”

“Will we bring the dildo?” Ilya teases.

Shane glares.

“No,” he says in the grumpiest voice he can muster.

“You are like angry kitten,” Ilya smirks. “Okay. No dildo this time.”

Shane rolls his eyes.

“Asshole.”

“Mm, I think you like it,” Ilya gets off the bed and offers Shane a hand to pull him up.

Unfortunately, Shane burns the salmon for dinner. Not even in a ‘kind of crispy but overcooked’ way. Shane burns the salmon until it’s completely inedible.

The pan is way too hot to begin with, and he gets distracted laughing with Ilya about Hayden working them out. Also, apparently because the miso glaze he made had sugar in it, all the fish is now also superglued to the shitty pan.

“I couldn’t believe it!” Shane says again, waving a dish towel overhead to fan the smoke away from the screaming smoke detector.

Ilya sighs.

“And he showed you the Reddit post he made?”

“Yeah. Get this – he almost posted as ‘Hayden Pike 2005’ or some shit.” Shane scrapes a spatula along the bottom of the pan, making an absolutely horrible screeching noise, in an attempt to salvage the very burnt, very stuck fish. “Jesus. Sorry, Ilya. We’re gonna have to order pizza. Or just eat rice and broccoli for dinner.”

“I will order pizza,” Ilya laughs, then glances toward the doorway and groans. “Fuck! I brought ice cream but we were so busy fucking I forgot to put it in the freezer.” He nods at the sad, slightly damp fabric bag still sitting by the door.

Shane goes over to check it. “It’s edible! Pretty soft, but it’ll be fine.”

They end up on the couch shirtless, sharing very melted ice cream straight from the tub while they wait for the pizza.

“So,” Shane starts. “I was gonna ask you...”

“I cannot have sex again right now,” Ilya interrupts. “I am sorry if this is what you want, but I already came two times before tonight so I would last for you.”

“Shush!” Shane hisses, laughing. “I was going to ask if you’ll come to my cottage after the season ends, or even over summer.”

Ilya pauses. “Cottage?”

“Yeah, it’s in BC. Super private. We could stay a week or two. My parents are going to Japan, so it’d just be us. There’s a lake, and we have kayaks and a fire pit.”

Ilya goes quiet for a second, then leans into Shane’s side.

“Yes. I would really like that. I am not going to Russia this summer. My citizenship is almost... how do you say it? Final?”

“Finalised?” Shane offers.

“Finalised. But I need to stay in Canada in case there is more paperwork, and anyway, I do not want to go to Russia. Shane Hollander, I would love to come to your cottage.”

Shane grins, bright and relieved.

“Okay! Amazing. And I’ll probably have to learn to cook, because there’s not much food delivery out there. Or we can eat frozen food.”

Ilya rolls his eyes.

“Shane. I can cook. I will make food for us. I am a very good cook.”

Shane sighs in relief.

“Okay. Incredible, thank god.” He pauses. “Oh, I should actually ask my parents. But they’ll be cool with it. I’ll just need to tell them I’m bringing you. I’m seeing them tomorrow actually. Are you sure I can tell them about you?”

“I am very sure, Shane,” Ilya says, lacing his fingers through Shane’s. “I wanted to ask you something too. I really want to tell my friends Svetlana about us. You remember she was the

one who convinced me to go and confess my feelings to you? She has asked me some questions, and I know you don't know her, so—"

"Of course," Shane squeezes his hand. "If you trust her, then go ahead."

"Thank you, Shane." Ilya brings their hands up to kiss Shane's fingertips. "And I am excited to relax with you at your cottage."

At lunch in a nice restaurant with his parents the next day, Shane sets his fork down and takes a breath. He'd had the foresight to book a table in a quiet booth down the back. It's nice of his parents to visit, and usually they'd go somewhere nice to eat anyways, but Shane had booked an extra-nice spot for this occasion. He has a late home game that night, so might not be able to see them after, and lunch had seemed like as sensible a time as any to Do The Thing.

The waiter has just checked in on their drinks, so they'll have some privacy.

"Okay. I have something I need to tell you." Shane begins.

Yuna and David both look up, eyebrows raised.

"What is it, honey?" Yuna asks.

Shane swallows.

"I'm gay."

There's a short pause. Then Yuna reaches over and gives his hand a gentle squeeze.

"Thank you for telling us, Shane," she says warmly. David nods beside her.

"Yeah, thanks for telling us Shane.

Shane purses his lips.

"You're not... surprised?"

"We can't lie," David adds with a small smile, "I don't think we're exactly shocked. We had wondered. But I think I speak for us both when I say – we're really glad you felt comfortable enough to tell us."

Shane lets out a breath.

"Phew. Okay, that wasn't so bad," he says, almost to himself. Now he just has to bring himself to talk about Ilya.

Yuna tilts her head, and leans in to speak softly.

"So... are you dating Hayden then?"

Shane nearly chokes on his water. oh god.

“Oh! No. No, no. Hayden’s just a buddy. Why would you say that?”

“You two are very close,” Yuna insists, still talking quietly. “And at Christmas, it seemed like you had a special bond. We wouldn’t judge you dating a teammate, even if it’s a little bit complicated. He’s a lovely boy.”

Shane’s cheeks burn at the memory. Now is definitely not the time to think about *all that*.

“Ah! No. No I promise it’s not Hayden.”

David raises an eyebrow; he’s sharp.

“But – wait. It’s a teammate.”

Shane quickly pivots.

“You know Ilya? Ilya Rozanov?”

Yuna’s fork clatters against her plate. “Oh! Him! Wow. I did *not* expect that.”

“He’s my boyfriend,” Shane says, the words tumbling out. “We’re boyfriends. I know he seems like kind of an asshole on the ice, but he’s actually so nice. He’s really, really nice. And funny. And sweet, and—”

“Oh my god,” Yuna cuts in, eyes widening. “Night of the hat trick. That was *him*? You were at *his house*?”

“Yuna, stop prying,” David says, though he’s clearly fighting a smile.

Shane laughs a little, cheeks still warm.

“Yes, mum. Yeah. That was at his house. Anyway... I just wanted to check. Can I bring him to the cottage this summer? Just us two?”

Yuna and David exchange a quick look, then both of them nod almost at the same time.

“Yeah, of course,” Yuna says, surprisingly chill. “If he makes you this happy, we’d love to have him there.”

David shrugs, reaching for his glass. “As long as you two don’t burn the place down, it’s fine with us. I’ll buy some frozen meals for the freezer.”

“No need,” Shane smiles. “Ilya’s a good cook. We’ll be fine.”

“That’s settled, then,” Yuna says, then frowns for a second.

“Now, I’m not trying to bring down the mood with logistics talk here, honey, but have you thought all this through?” She glances around quickly. “Are there other gay ice hockey players?”

“Apparently,” Shane shrugs. “We aren’t totally sure how we’ll handle it all, but for now, you guys know, Hayden knows, Ilya’s best friend knows. We can manage it.”

“We should put something together anyway,” Yuna says. “Just to be sensible. And what about Ilya being Russian? Isn’t that really risky?”

“Yeah,” Shane says. “But he’s nearly a Canadian citizen and doesn’t really have ties to Russia. He doesn’t want to live there or even go back. Canada is his home.”

David nods solemnly.

“I think things are changing in the NHL,” he says. “All the rumours about Scott Hunter aside. The culture has shifted, at least in Canada. I’m glad you could tell us, Shane. About being gay, and about Rozanov.”

“Ilya,” Shane corrects, then continues on. “Yeah,” Shane says, going solemn for a second. “If this had happened, like, fifteen years ago, we might have had to sneak around our whole lives. But you’re right. I think there’s a shift that’s been happening for some time.”

“If you’re happy, then we’re happy,” Yuna says gently. “It might be tricky, but it’ll be alright. Now, tell us about the night of the hat trick!”

The Bell Centre feels heavier than usual tonight as the team plays a home game against the visiting San Jose Sharks.

Montreal plays hard, like they always do. They battle along the boards, block shots until their bodies ache, and pour everything into every shift. The home crowd roars, willing them forward. But *hard* isn’t *enough*.

It ends 4–3, another fucking loss. The fourth in a row after Ottawa, Toronto and New Jersey.

It hurts more because the fans stay until the final horn, clapping politely while disappointment settles thick over the arena.

Shane sits on the bench in front of his locker, still in his sweaty undershirt, skates kicked off, hair damp with sweat. He’d scored two goals tonight.

‘Generational talent’, the announcers keep calling him. Online it’s also become embarrassing, what with the edits everywhere. Slow-motion clips of his shot, his release, his face after every goal set to trending songs on TikTok. There are comments calling him hot in languages Shane doesn’t even speak.

There’s also the issue of #PregnantHollander where an untold number of people online talk about how badly they want Shane to get pregnant and edit thousands of photos, create drawings and even upload video edits to make his stomach stick out. It’s all very weird and very confusing and worse, it’s kind of *everywhere* when Shane goes online.

It should feel good to be a ‘star’ rookie with rabid fans, but it feels so hollow and stupid right now. Because none of it matters if the team isn’t going to make it to the playoffs.

Across the room, Patrice, the goalie, stands at his stall, moving slower than usual. He laughs at something one of the younger guys says and claps him on the shoulder, but everyone sees the way he favours that left knee. No one mentions it, and the trainers don't push it either. The coaches also don't address it, so the team definitely doesn't. They all keep pretending the injury isn't there, the same way they pretend their playoff chances aren't circling the drain.

Even if they squeak into the second wildcard spot if everything breaks perfectly, there's very little chance that they would win a round. And winning the Cup? That dream already feels gone. The dressing room carries a heavy sadness now. Marleau isn't even playing his shitty millennial banger tunes. An injured goalie is a death sentence, and everyone knows it.

Eventually, most of the team is showering off in the locker room, and Ilya texts Shane.

Ilya

21:09

try and shower last

Shane

21:09

? sure

Ilya

21:09

trust me you will want to be alone in there

Shane

21:10

oh fuck okay

Ilya

21:10

I want you to fuck my mouth

Shane

21:10

!!! yes please

Ilya

21:10

I want you to pull out at the last second and come all over me

Shane

21:10

Ilya holy fuck yes yes yes

So Shane waits. He sits on his phone and scrolls for a bit. Hayden comes over to see what he's looking at so Shane shows him the gif of Olaf the snowman's animatronic body falling over and looking defeated. It's quite a funny gif, and probably a reflection of how the team are feeling.

“Why aren’t you getting in the showers?” Hayden finally asks.

“Uh, just felt like chilling for a bit,” Shane lies, badly.

Hayden’s eyes go wide, and he looks around the room before leaning close and cupping his hand to whisper in Shane’s ear.

“Is it because you’re bricked up from Roz messaging you? I saw him text, and then you blushed at your phone.”

“Shut up,” Shane hisses. But then he gives Hayden a tiny nod and Hayden smirks with a departing “have fun,” and walks to the shower.

One by one, the guys finish, slap towels over their shoulders and trickle out. The showers eventually grow quiet.

Only when the locker room falls almost completely silent does Shane finally strip and step under the spray, letting the hot water hit his shoulders. A second later, Ilya slips in.

Ilya checks the coast is clear one last time, then drops to his knees right there on the wet tiles.

“Even if our team played like shit,” he murmurs, water already soaking his hair, “you were amazing. Sorry the mood in here means we cannot celebrate you.” His hands slide up Shane’s thighs. “Your third period goal was so fucking beautiful I wanted to pull you over the boards and suck your dick right there.”

Shane’s breath catches. Ilya doesn’t wait for an answer. He leans in, takes Shane into his mouth in one smooth glide, hot and wet and perfect. Shane’s head falls back against the tile with a quiet thud. Ilya works him expertly, pressing his tongue and relaxing his throat. The only sounds are water running and the wet, filthy noises of Ilya sucking him.

Shane bites his fist to stay quiet, hips jerking and fucking Shane’s mouth. Ilya moans around him, encouraging, and Shane threads his fingers through Ilya’s wet hair, fucking his face in short, desperate thrusts. Pleasure coils tight and fast in his gut.

He’s right on the edge, thighs shaking, when a loud clatter makes them both jump.

Captain Beau fucking Mackenzie stands there in nothing but a towel slung low on his hips, hair still sweaty from the game. In his shock, he’s dropped his shower caddy, which crashes to the ground and sends different bottles ricocheting across the wet tiles.

“What the fuck? Shit— sorry! I thought everyone was gone—”

Ilya startles and pulls off with a wet, and frankly far too loud, pop, scrambling backward until he lands hard on his ass on the cold tiles with a thud. Shane instinctively covers his quickly softening erection with both hands and lunges for a towel.

Beau immediately slaps a hand over his eyes. “Oh my god. Fuck. Okay. Uh... I need to shower. But can we talk after this? Just in the locker room, real quick. Wait for me out there.”

Shane's heart hammers so hard he feels dizzy. He hands Ilya another towel without looking. Ilya takes it, unusually silent. When Shane helps pull him up off the floor, Ilya's face is pale, jaw tight, all trace of his usual cocky smirk gone.

Out in the locker room, Shane and Ilya sit side by side on the bench. They've both put on their post-game suits, but the nerves have them both feeling cold and shaky.

"How was lunch?" Ilya asks, apparently just to try and help break Shane out of his spiralling.

"Oh. Yeah it was amazing. I told them about me being gay, and also about you. They were pretty cool with it all. You're allowed to stay at the cottage with me."

Ilya gives a small smile but he still looks pale and shaky.

"Do you feel like we're sitting outside the principal's office?" Shane says, reaching over to grab Ilya's hand.

Ilya gives a tiny nod. "Yes."

Shane gives Ilya's hand a squeeze. "Hey, it'll be okay. I'm sure. His first reaction was to apologise for seeing us. I hope this means he's not angry. We need to get our story straight."

Ilya shrugs and swallows.

"We're boyfriends. Neither of us are out. We're sorry we did sexy stuff in the team showers. Won't happen again, all that?"

Ilya balks. "This is serious Shane!"

"I'm being serious too," Shane whispers to try and encourage Ilya to talk quietly. "We aren't doing anything wrong. Except we probably shouldn't have done it in there. Our contracts don't say we can't date each other. I checked! Actually, my mum checked. At lunch. On her phone. It was a whole thing. She's a real tiger mum. She thinks we need to prepare a statement if we ever get outed or whatever."

Ilya swallows and then lets out a shaky breath.

"I know you are saying a lot of words right now, but I am struggling to understand all of it. But, okay. I understand we aren't doing anything wrong by being together. Sorry. For my whole life in Russia, this was wrong. It's... a big change in my brain."

"Yeah," Shane gives his hand another squeeze. For some reason the sight of Ilya in a complete tailspin means he's able to be decidedly calm and ignore his own internal thought spiral. "And Beau's cool. He's *so* cool. It'll be fine. We're just going to get told off for not taking our activities home. Also he's probably in shock from seeing you suck my dick."

The sound of water flowing stops, and Shane and Ilya brace for impact.

Beau emerges, towel around his waist and sits opposite them on the other bench.

“Right.” He says, hands slapping his thighs. “I just have a couple of questions. Are you two together?”

“We’re boyfriends.” Shane says, as bravely as he can manage.

Beau smiles. (Smiles?? Ah!!)

“Ah. Okay. So you’ve put a label on it. Wonderful. Who else knows?”

“Hayden,” Ilya offers up, “Shane’s parents. And my best friend. Captain, you do not seem surprised?”

“Look,” Beau rubs his hands on his thighs nervously. “I was never going to say anything, to anyone, alright? But, let’s just say, you two aren’t exactly quiet, and sometimes when we’re on road trips and I can’t sleep, I may have overheard things I wish I hadn’t. If you’re gonna get it on in a hotel full of your teammates, my advice would be to, er, keep it down, maybe turn on the TV or something.”

Shane can feel the blush burning his face and down his neck. Oh my god. Oh my *god*.

“Which hotel?” Ilya asks. (For fuck’s sake shut up Jesus Christ.)

Shane squeezes his eyes shut. Way to go, Ilya. Now he knows it wasn’t a once-off.

“New York.” Beau replies quickly.

“Oh! Our first time doing that, remember?” Ilya squeaks and bumps Shane’s shoulder. Whatever Ilya-brand coping mechanism for dealing with stress this is, it’s stressing Shane the fuck out.

“Shut up,” Shane hisses.

Beau is blushing now too.

“I, er, look. I know about Hayden too. Which I gather has been a complicating factor in your... dynamic? Ilya, don’t look at me like that, the way you tease him makes it obvious enough.”

“You heard them in hotel too?” Ilya guesses.

“We didn’t do anything in hotels!” Shane says emphatically, his voice breaking embarrassingly.

“No! No I didn’t hear you guys, um, doing things. Just you guys talking after Patrice’s wedding. I didn’t hear it all, but I got the gist of what was going on. Anyways, I noticed that, and I noticed the shift in the friendship. Roz, you were such a dick to Holly *and* Pike. It really wasn’t subtle. I guess that’s what I’m trying to say here, guys.”

Shane and Ilya both sit still, waiting for the anvil to drop.

“Please understand. I’m *so* happy for you two. You do genuinely seem happy together, and you play nasty ice hockey out there together too. But if this,” he gestures between them, “is what you want, then let’s do it properly. The last fucking thing you guys need to end up on Twitter, making out in the back of one of Connors’ dumb TikTok videos.”

“I think more likely to be Pike,” Ilya adds, unhelpfully. Shane resists the urge to facepalm.

“Sure! Or Pike! But my point is, you have to be careful. You can control the narrative. If you guys ever want to go public, I will back you, one hundred percent. Karen will also back you two, and importantly, I know for a *fact* that Coach Glen will be in your corner. What I’m saying is, please be careful. Please be more subtle. You have the chance to get to come out on your own terms, so don’t waste it.”

Ilya and Shane stare. This was *not* what they had expected.

“Damn. I didn’t realise you were cool like this,” Shane says, uncooly and awkwardly, like the nineteen-year-old he is.

Beau rubs his neck nervously. “Look, guys, I’m going to tell you guys something, and you’re never going to repeat a word of it. I had someone in an old team when I was younger, and we had something special, and I’m not going into details or anything, but we did stuff like you guys did in hotels. Neither of us were out. In the end, the timing wasn’t right, we both moved on when we finally realised we could never make a real go of it. I’m bisexual, my wife knows, and I love my wife very much and I would never change that. But, in a way, I’ve kind of been here before. Okay?”

“Okay,” both the guys reply.

“And thank you for not exploding at us,” Shane adds weakly.

“I thought I was going to throw up,” Ilya adds, “thank you, Beau.”

Beau crosses his arms. “Okay now, speaking as your grouchy captain, I need to tell you both off.”

Shane and Ilya look down at their shoes. Here we go.

“What the *fuck* were you *thinking*? The team shower? This isn’t some HBO show – they’re *communal*! We *all* use those! Please! Please do your sexy stuff in your own homes! *Off* the clock!”

“Yes, captain. Sorry, captain,” Shane and Ilya both mumble.

“You’re both playing wicked ice hockey. Look, we all know playoffs are a pipe dream at this stage, but you’re young, and every game is good experience. Also, I have one more thing to add: if you two have some kind of domestic dispute, like the situation with Hayden or otherwise, keep it off my fucking ice. That’s where I draw the line. I don’t care who anyone is fucking if they play good ice hockey. So keep it professional.”

Beau sighs, and Shane and Ilya finally dare to look up and nod.

“Okay that’s the end of my grumpy captain speech. I need to go and get some eye bleach or something because fucking hell, I can’t believe I walked in on... god. Never mind.”

“We’re really sorry you had to see that,” Shane says. “And message received. Thank you. Thanks for not being weird about it all.”

Beau pauses.

“You don’t have to answer, but, are you both bi?”

“I’m bisexual. Shane is super gay,” Ilya announces.

Shane elbows Ilya. “I’m *regular* gay.”

“Oh, cool. Cool.”

Beau gets up and starts getting changed. The chat’s over. Thank fuck.

Shane and Ilya exit the building and both hop into Shane’s car.

“As far as scenarios for getting caught go, that might have been the best case.” Shane says finally.

“He is right. We need to be more careful. That was a close call, and we are lucky,” Ilya sighs.

“Yeah,” Shane says. “We are. We do.”

“But cottage will be private, yes?”

Shane laughs. “So private. It’s down a long driveway, we have no neighbours, and my parents will be overseas. It’s private as fuck.”

“Then I cannot *wait*,” Ilya beams.

Chapter End Notes

[keeping this end note bc I want to]

Okay ngl I was absolutely floored by the positive reaction to Beau’s POV (and also Hayden’s.)

NEXT CHAPTER IS 7k+ WORDS SO MIGHT BE A COUPLE DAYS LATER THAN NORMAL, PLEASE GO READ MY OTHER WORKS IF YOU WANT SOMETHING ELSE IN THE MEANTIME XXXX LOVE ISTO4U

Here is the author note:

Guys, do you know how insane it is to be relatively young but then still see people now

getting to live the life I didn't get as a teenager? That's what I channeled into Beau. What if I could have dated whoever and not had to be so secretive and afraid when I was younger? Then what? Huh? What if I didn't hate myself for years??? (I don't hate myself now. Me and myself have made peace and we're great mates.)

And I love to see queer joy around me, but sometimes it makes my heart ache and long for a past I can never have.

Those of you who have known me for a few years through my writing (yes, you xx) know that Heartstopper was a biggy for me. I watched that show and it made me so happy but also crushed me in a way words truly cannot describe. Yeah it gets a lot of heat for being cringy, but queer people don't usually get fluffy cringy little shows like our straight counterparts do. Our queer shows were always sad and heavy and loaded.

So I guess maybe that's what's wrong/right with this fic I'm writing. It's the Heartstopper-ification of Heated Rivalry: what if everyone is a bit gay and people just got to be themselves and be happy and have it all. Obviously the real world doesn't allow this, but if I have to live in the real, homophobic, corrupt, bullshit world, then I'll be damned if my imaginary sandbox can't be a little happy place.

So yeah, look, it's all unrealistic. But maybe one day it won't be?

Thanks for reading, friends. The story is nearly finished being written. You will not be left hanging. As a reminder, a week after I finish this story I will be locking it for ao3 users only. If you're not an ao3 user you'll need to download it.

Important Notice

Also: don't share this story on social media.

I have enough readers! Thank you! And we're all cool here so I don't need anyone else joining our bubble 

Chapter 22: Cottage

Chapter Summary

Last time: Shane had Ilya over for dinner, and they ended up ordering pizza. Shane came out to his parents and they were very cool about it (and they are cool with BF Ilya too). Bad Hockey game leads to Ilya blowing Shane but getting walked in on by Cap Mac.

This time: THE COTTAGE OH MY GOD

Chapter Notes

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

The flight from Montreal to Vancouver lands in the late afternoon. By the time they collect their bags at YVR, the disappointment of another missed season has already started to fade. Montreal didn't make the playoffs this year.

Unfortunately, there was no wildcard spot for them, just an early April end to the regular season and a long quiet stretch ahead. Now it's mid-April, and this week at the cottage feels like the first real freedom either of them has tasted in months.

Since getting walked in on in the showers by Beau, Shane and Ilya have been *extremely* careful. Hayden has also been brought on-side, to give them 'the look' if they start slipping into old habits. Mercifully, Beau had still let them room together in hotels for some of the away games, and as instructed, Shane and Ilya had made it a habit to be as quiet as possible, and if they couldn't help themselves, to turn on the TV.

Lying in a hotel bed one night, after an especially slow fuck, Ilya had brushed his fingers over Shane's hand.

"I wish it wasn't a secret. I wish I could hold your hand and kiss you outside of our apartments."

Shane had sighed.

"Me too. I want that too. Maybe soon."

By the time the season had drawn to a close, they were both more than ready to be away from any prying eyes.

Now, Shane leads the way through the airport to the rental counter and grabs the keys for a black SUV.

“Two and a half hours to the cottage, give or take,” he says, as he loads their duffels into the back. “The mountains are super fucking pretty.”

Ilya folds his long body into the passenger seat and stretches out.

“Mountains later. Groceries first, and I’m paying for everything.”

Shane glances over as he pulls out of the parking lot.

“You’re my guest. It’s my family’s cottage. I’ll pay for the food, as long as you cook it.”

Ilya’s hand settles warm and heavy on Shane’s thigh.

“No. You invited me to your family place. I pay for the ingredients. And I *have* to cook, so we don’t get sick.”

“I’m not *that* bad!” Shane insists.

“I think maybe you are.” Ilya teases.

The drive is stunning. The Sea-to-Sky Highway hugs the edge of Howe Sound, with sheer cliffs on one side and massive peaks rising straight out of the water on the other. Traffic is light, and about an hour in, Shane exits in Squamish.

He does a little drive around the town, pointing out buildings, saying things like “That’s where I went to school,” and “That’s where I got my first concussion.”

Eventually, he pulls them into the parking lot of a large grocery store, Save-On-Foods.

“This is where we did our grocery shopping growing up.”

It’s definitely a mundane type of lore, but Ilya has seemed interested in all the little details of Shane’s childhood, like this.

They push a cart up and down the bright aisles together, loading it with steaks, fresh salmon, eggs, bread, pasta, vegetables, and drinks. Shane also adds in some Nutella and extra snacks. He can’t help but enjoy how domestic it all is, just browsing produce and listening to Ilya muse about what meals he’s going to make.

Back on the road, they make one more quick stop at a classic highway gas station, just north of Squamish. The big red sign glows against the mountain backdrop. Ilya insists on buying them both enormous soft-serve ice-cream cones while Shane fills the tank. They lean against the SUV in the cool spring air, licking melting ice cream off their fingers and laughing when Ilya gets a smear of chocolate on his nose.

Forty-five minutes later, they turn onto a quiet lakeside road. The cottage appears at the end of a long gravel driveway, nestled among tall evergreens, right on the water.

It’s a spacious two-storey cedar-shingled home with a wide wraparound deck, large windows that overlook the lake and mountain views, and a stone chimney rising from the roof.

Ilya stands in the driveway, duffel slung over one shoulder, staring at the house.

“When you say ‘cottage’, I am thinking of small house in western movie,” he says. “Made of logs, only one room, maybe toilet outside. Cowboy shit, you know.”

“It’s nothing fancy,” Shane says, pulling more bags out of the trunk of the SUV.

Ilya shakes his head.

“This is fancy. This is very nice. Thank you for bringing me.”

Shane gives him the full tour: the bright living room, with its huge windows and stone fireplace, the updated kitchen where they unpack the groceries, the cozy bedrooms upstairs, and the cupboard stuffed with old board games, puzzles and PlayStation games. Finally, they step out onto the deck. A hot tub sits on the lower deck overlooking the private dock and canoes.

Shane points at the hot tub.

“We can have a soak later. I’ll just need to turn it on, so it has time to warm up.”

Ilya turns and gives him a slow, cheeky look, stepping in until their chests brush. “Sexy.”

Shane plants a hand on Ilya’s sternum, cheeks already burning. “This is my *family* cottage, Ilya. My parents and cousins have been in that hot tub. When I get my own place one day, we can go sex crazy in a hot tub.”

Ilya’s rolls his eyes.

“Fine, I will not blow you in your hot tub. Whatever.”

Outside, the lake laps gently against the dock and the mountains turn pink in the setting sun. Inside the warm cedar walls, the two of them finally start to unwind.

“So, this is my room,” Shane shows Ilya one of the upstairs bedrooms. It’s a bit plain. There are some homemade blankets on the beds, and old photos of Shane as a boy on the wall. In one of them, he’s holding a skateboard and looking very seriously at the camera.

“I didn’t know you could skateboard?” Ilya asks.

“No. Well, I used to.” Shane scoffs. “But then I realised I was much better at hockey.”

“Shane Hollander, you are *so cool*” Ilya teases.

Shane tackles Ilya onto the mattress. “Hey, I *am cool*!”

The play-fighting and wrestling eventually turns into them tangled up and making out like they’ve been starving for it. Ilya’s hands are everywhere, sliding under Shane’s shirt, gripping his hips, pulling him closer until Shane is straddling his lap. The kisses turn deep and messy fast. Shane rocks against him, already hard, breathing shaky.

“Fuck, I want you,” Shane whispers against Ilya's mouth. “Like, right now.”

Ilya makes a low sound. Clothes come off in a rush. Shirts hit the floor, then jeans, then boxers. They roll back together after they're finally naked, skin against skin, hands greedy.

They're grinding together, hot and desperate, when Shane pulls back just enough to look at him. His voice is low and a little shy.

“Would you ever want to... not use condoms?”

Ilya's eyes go wide.

“Fuck yes. Oh my god. Are you serious?”

“Yeah. I got tested a couple months ago and I'm all clear. And I haven't been with anyone else since... well, since last year.”

Ilya stares at him, breathing hard.

“Me too. Tested right after Christmas. All good.” He hesitates, then adds quietly, “And I have not slept with anyone else either. Not since we hooked up in New York last year.”

Shane blinks. “Since New York?”

“Yeah.” Ilya gives a small, almost shy smile. “After then, I just... did not want to.”

Shane's chest tightens. He kisses Ilya hard and threads his fingers through his hair, pulling slightly on the curls.

Before they get too carried away, Shane pulls back and runs naked down the hall to grab an old towel for his bed. Definitely a smart move if they aren't using condoms.

Finally, Shane lies back and Ilya climbs on top of him and kisses him, and then keeps slowly kissing him all the way down his chest and to his hips. Being a nasty tease, Ilya licks along his stomach and then traces his tongue along Shane's hip bones until Shane is lifting his hips up off the bed.

Ilya grabs the lube from his bag and settles between Shane's spread thighs like he has all the time in the world.

He then takes fucking forever opening him up. One finger first, curling gently until Shane is already breathing harder. Then two, stretching carefully, stroking over that spot until Shane's hips twitch again. By the time Ilya adds a third finger, Shane is shaking, with his thighs trembling on either side of Ilya's ribs, pushing back onto his hand. Ilya lies down next to Shane while he keeps fucking him with his fingers and sucks one of Shane's nipples.

“Fuck... Ilya,” Shane gasps, voice wrecked. “It's too good—stop, fuck, stop or I'm gonna come, I'm serious.”

Ilya chuckles against Shane's nipple, then presses a lazy kiss there. His fingers stop for a second but then keep moving.

"Already?"

"Mhmm," Shane manages. "Stop, stop!"

Ilya pauses again.

"You know, I am worried. As soon as I am inside you, I will come in two seconds."

Shane lets out a breathless laugh that turns into a moan when Ilya crooks his fingers again.

"I don't mind. You've got me so fucking close already... just, please, hurry up and fuck me."

"I want to get you really close," Ilya explains. "If I know I'm not going to last, I should do my best to still make sure you come first."

Over the last couple of months, as they've spent more time exploring each other's bodies, Ilya has made it his mission to try and ensure he makes Shane come first, every time.

It's taken a lot of practice, but it's been worth it, because Ilya's confessed that seeing—and feeling—Shane coming on his cock is the hottest thing he can imagine. Shane knows Ilya usually wouldn't be this thorough with fingering him unless he was actively trying to make him come just from this, but knowing that there will be no condom this time, it's obvious that Ilya wants to get Shane as close as possible before he fucks him bare.

So, Ilya keeps fingering him for a few more torturous minutes—really slowly, stopping every time Shane warns him, edging and edging—all the while murmuring filthy praise in a mix of English and Russian until Shane is writhing and leaking steadily onto his own stomach.

"So fucking wet for me," Ilya purrs, and Shane doesn't even have the brainpower to make any smart remarks back.

Finally, Ilya pulls his fingers out and wipes his hand on the towel, then slicks himself up and lines up.

"Are you sure?" Ilya checks.

"I'm so sure. Hurry up," Shane whines, lifting his own hips off the bed.

Ilya pushes both of Shane's legs up, takes a breath and then presses in bare. He's so slow and steady to start, and they both groan loud at the feeling—with no condom, there's a tight, scorching heat and nothing between them.

"Fuck," Ilya breathes, forehead dropping to Shane's shoulder. "So hot. So tight. You feel insane. Shane, I won't last, it feels so different, so good."

Shane's head tips back, mouth open. "Oh my god... move, Ilya. Please move."

Ilya starts with deep rolls of his hips that drag right over Shane's prostate every time. Thankfully, it doesn't stay slow for long. Soon he's fucking him harder and faster, the slap of skin loud in the quiet cottage bedroom. Ilya lifts one of Shane's legs up even higher, almost folding him in half so he can drive in deeper, and Shane cries out at the intensity of it all. As they're alone and miles from anyone else, they both moan loudly and shamelessly.

"Fuck, right there, right there," Shane gasps, nails digging into Ilya's back. "Harder, Ilya, come on."

Ilya moans against his neck, hips snapping.

"You feel so good. So fucking good. I love being inside you like this. I can't go any faster or I'll come."

Shane keens when Ilya hits the perfect angle again and again.

"I'm close, fuck, I don't care, I'm so close already, fuck me fuck me fuck—"

"Oh fuck, yes," Ilya pants, still pounding into him. "I'm right there too. Come with me. Come on, Shane, come with me, come on my cock, come for me Shane."

Shane's whole body locks up.

"Fuck— I'm coming, I'm coming— don't stop— Ilya—"

Shane comes untouched, spilling hot between their stomachs with a loud moan. The clench of it drags Ilya over the edge right behind him.

"Oh god, Shane!"

Shane locks his legs around Ilya's waist and keeps pulling him in. "In me, in me, fuck Ilya, fuck—"

"Fuck— Shane—" Ilya buries himself deep and comes hard, hips jerking a little as he fills him.

"I'm still coming, fuck!" Shane pants and squeezes his eyes shut. The feeling is so overwhelming he has to remind himself to breathe, as he keeps his legs wrapped tightly around Ilya's waist. After their orgasms finally fade, they stay locked together, their bodies trembling, breathing each other's air in desperate gasps.

Ilya collapses forward in a sweaty, sticky mess, resting his head next to Shane's shoulder.

Shane realises his eyes are wet. Tears are slipping down his temples into his hair. He tries to wipe them away quickly, a bit embarrassed.

Ilya shifts immediately, still buried inside him, and cups Shane's face with both hands.

"Hey. Hey, Shane. Look at me, are you okay? Was that okay? Was it too hard?"

“Sorry,” Shane mumbles, his voice thick and a little wet. “No, it was amazing. So amazing. Fuck, I’ve never cried after sex before. Ahh, I’m being weird. Shit. It just felt so intense.”

Ilya brushes the tears away gently with his thumbs, eyes soft and full of so much warmth it almost makes Shane cry harder.

“Shh, it is okay,” he whispers. “Ya tebya lyublyu.”

The words land and Shane feels even more tears leaking out and rolling down his cheeks. His heart flips hard. He looks up at Ilya and says, without hesitation, his voice cracking just a little, “I love you too.”

Ilya freezes, surprised, eyes searching Shane’s face.

“What? You speak Russian now?”

Shane smiles, a little watery, thumb stroking along Ilya’s stubbly jaw.

“Yeah. I learned how to say it in Russian. I wanted to surprise you. I’ve been practicing, and I wanted to be able to say it in Russian when the time was right.”

Ilya’s eyes shine all bright and glassy. His breath catches.

“Say it,” he says, and now Ilya is crying too.

Shane takes a breath and says carefully and slowly, “Ya tebya lyublyu.”

Ilya makes a small broken sound and pulls him even closer, burying his face in Shane’s neck.

“Shane, ya tebya lyublyu.”

More tears come, but now they’re both crying and holding each other close. Ilya kisses his forehead, his cheeks, his mouth, murmuring the words again and again like he can’t stop.

“Ya lyublyu tebya... Ya tebya lyublyu, I love you, Shane. Fuck, I have wanted to say it for so long. I thought maybe I was crazy. That this was only me.”

“It’s not,” Shane whispers, fingers threading through Ilya’s messy hair. “God, it’s not. I’ve been scared shitless I was falling too hard and too fast. You’re the only person who’s ever made me feel like this—like I don’t have to be perfect all the time. Like I can just... be Shane.”

Ilya pulls back just enough to rest their foreheads together, noses brushing.

“You are more than enough. You are everything. I love every part.”

Shane laughs wetly, the sound shaky with leftover tears.

“I love you too, I love you, Ilya.”

They stay like that for a long time, wrapped up in each other, hearts still racing from more than just the sex now.

After a long quiet minute, Ilya pulls back just enough to look at Shane, thumb tracing Shane's bottom lip.

"How do you say it in Japanese?"

Shane laughs softly through the leftover tears. "Aishiteru."

Ilya tries it out slowly, hesitating on every syllable.

"Aishiteru." He says it again, then presses their foreheads together. "Aishiteru, Shane."

"Aishiteru, Ilya."

"Is there a washcloth in the bathroom?" Ilya says, "I want to clean you up."

Shane nods. "Under the sink."

Ilya pulls out, and Shane instinctively clenches his thighs closed. Ilya doesn't take long, and then he's back with a couple of damp washcloths. He uses one to wipe Shane's chest and stomach, then uses the other one to wipe down Shane's thighs, ass and dick. He spends a little bit longer on Shane's hole, and that causes Shane to shudder slightly.

"Sore here?" Ilya checks.

"No. I mean, yes, a little, but it's nice. Keep doing that."

Shane closes his eyes and smiles. After Ilya is done cleaning them both up, he rolls into Shane's side.

"I love you. Ya lyublyu tebya. Remind me of the Japanese again, please?"

Shane leans down to kiss Ilya's fluffy curls. "Aishiteru. Ai, shi, teru."

"Aishiteru."

The kitchen fills with the smell of garlic and simmering tomatoes. Ilya moves around, fussing, sleeves pushed up, curls still messy from earlier. He boils pasta, throws together a quick sauce from the fresh tomatoes, basil, and cream they bought, then seasons it perfectly with salt, chili flakes, and lots of black pepper.

He slices the fancy bread, brushes it thickly with garlic butter, and toasts it until it's golden and crispy. At the end, he grates fresh parmesan over everything in generous, fluffy piles.

Shane leans against the counter and watches, impressed.

"Man, you really know what you're doing."

Ilya shrugs with a small grin.

“Shane, you already know I can cook.”

“Yeah, but all this?” Shane gestures to the counter of ingredients.

“Shane, this is not complicated. I had to feed myself often, growing up.”

“But you don’t even have a recipe open!” Shane insists. “How are you doing this?”

Ilya thinks for a moment and wipes his hands on a hand towel.

“Is easy. You think I am sexy like this?”

“Oh, for sure.”

Ilya plates two big servings and carries them to the table.

“Eat while it is hot.”

It tastes even better than it smells. Creamy, spicy, comforting pasta with perfectly cooked garlic bread on the side. They eat and keep chatting, and Shane rubs his foot up and down Ilya’s shin instinctively.

After dinner they bundle up in hoodies and take a couple of beers outside to the fire pit on the lower deck. Shane gets the fire going while Ilya grabs blankets. The night air is cool and crisp, the lake perfectly still under the stars, and the fire crackles warmly between them.

“Have you thought more about going back to Russia?” Shane asks.

Ilya shakes his head.

“I don’t want to go back. They all suck. There’s nothing for me there.”

Shane stares into the flames for a moment.

“Sorry your family sucks,” he says quietly.

Ilya is quiet for a second, poking at the fire with a stick.

“My mother did not suck. She was the good part.” His voice softens. “She would have loved you. A lot.”

Shane looks over.

“What was her name?”

“Irina.”

“It is a beautiful name.” Shane bites his lip, not sure how to ease the heaviness that comes with Ilya talking about his family, but also wanting Ilya to be able to share.

Ilya nods.

“Yeah. It is beautiful name. She was very beautiful. And very funny. But very sad.” He takes a sip of beer. “When we make it in the NHL for real, I want to give back. We get so much money, so much attention. Feels wrong to just keep it.”

“Exactly,” Shane says. “I think about that too. We have this insane privilege. We should use it to help people who actually need it.”

Ilya leans back in his chair.

“In my culture we do not really talk about mental health. Just be strong. Have a drink. Be angry. Be horny. There is no room for other feelings, especially for guys. I want to donate a big chunk of my next bonus to a mental health charity. Maybe one day, start my own.”

Shane nods slowly.

“That would be really good.” He pauses, then adds, “Being Japanese-Canadian comes with its own pressure too. People expect me to be quiet, polite, hardworking and never complain. And online... you’ve probably seen, they feminize me a lot, and infantilize me. It’s like, the way they talk about me is so different from the other players. They call me pretty all the time and I wonder if it’s because I’m Asian? Like a feminization thing? And oh my god, don’t even get me started on the TikTok and Twitter memes where they make edits of my photos saying they want to get me pregnant and shit, or talk about how I’m looking pregnant. It’s not even like the odd person, it’s thousandsof people. It’s so constant, and kind of weird.”

Ilya looks at him, his eyebrows raised.

“Well, if we don’t use condoms...”

Shane gives him a look and crosses his arms.

“I’m being serious, Ilya.”

“Okay. Sorry. I’m sorry, Shane.” Ilya reaches over and squeezes his knee, thumb stroking once. “No, you are right. No one is making edits about me getting pregnant.”

Shane lets out a short laugh, but it fades quickly.

“I can’t help but feel like they don’t see me as a real man because I’m Asian, or something like that. It messes with my head sometimes. Like the whole ‘making me pregnant’ thing was funny at first, but like, everywhere I go online, they’ve got me photoshopped with my stomach sticking out, or if I’m holding snacks they’re like ‘oh look, he’s craving chips!’ Or they screenshot any photo where my Under Armour sticks to my skin and says it’s a baby bump.”

“I have seen those memes,” Ilya adds. “I think even if they’re just trying to be funny, it’s not good if it’s not funny for you anymore.”

“But that’s the thing, right? As an Asian guy, I think I’m expected to just roll with it, be chill, be polite and let people say whatever. And I mean, I guess it kind of was funny sometimes, but

the other times, it stings that I'm the only NHL player with, fuck, pregnancy allegations."

Ilya is quiet for a long moment, just watching the fire.

"That must be very, very strange. I think I get it, even if I don't experience it. And I am sorry that happens." He shifts closer so their shoulders touch, then slides an arm around Shane's back. "You are the strongest, toughest guy I know on the ice. And off the ice... you are still a man. My man. Fuck what they say online. They do not know you. They do not get to decide what you are. I love you."

Shane leans into him, letting out a long breath.

"I love you too."

Ilya sighs and then twists his hands together.

"Do you hate it when I say you are pretty?"

Shane shakes his head.

"No, I think it's lovely. But you're my boyfriend. I don't feel like less of a man because you say I'm pretty. I think it's more just when strangers want to put me in a box. Sometimes, I think that's part of why I'm scared to come out. Then they'll be right. I'll just be a pretty, weak, gay, Asian hockey player."

"Then I think they are not watching you play," Ilya says, leaning into Shane. "There is nothing weak about being 'generational talent' in a sport like ice hockey."

Shane shrugs.

"I guess. And it is a tough sport. Maybe me coming out would show people that just because you're gay doesn't mean you can't be good at sports. Sometimes, I think that if I had seen gay NHL players growing up, I wouldn't have felt like I needed to pretend to be straight for so long."

Ilya sighs again.

"Maybe there are some kids out there that will see us, one day, and feel like they can be themselves."

"Yeah, like with giving money to charity or whatever—we get all this attention and it would be good to use it for good. I'm still kind of scared though."

"Being scared is normal." Ilya pokes the fire with a stick. "But I am less scared when I am with you."

"Fuck, I love you," Shane leans over and holds Ilya's chin, tilting him towards himself. "We'll be okay."

Ilya leans in and kisses Shane. “We will be okay. I will be a Canadian citizen in less than a month, too. That will also be less scary.”

Later on that night, the living room is dimly lit by the fire and the big TV. They’re sprawled on the couch with controllers in hand, playing an old NHL game from a few years back on the PlayStation. The graphics look a little dated, but it’s still fun as hell.

“One day, I’ll be on the cover of the game,” Ilya says gleefully as they load another game.

“Not likely,” Shane teases. “It’ll be me, for sure.”

Shane’s phone lights up on the coffee table. Hayden’s name flashes across the screen. Ilya rolls his eyes dramatically.

“Do you have to take it?”

“Fuck off, he never calls me.” Shane picks up. “Hey man, what’s up?”

“Shane! Oh my god, I have to tell you something,” Hayden says, buzzing with excitement. “Remember Jackie, from the social media team? The one who runs the TikTok account?”

“Yeah, of course. She’s super nice.”

“I was at the rink and I ran into her, and anyways we ended up getting lunch. Her sister was supposed to drop her lunch but then she didn’t show up, so I’m like, well, let me get you lunch! And I was going to Tim Horton’s anyways so I invited her along and we were chatting for ages! And then after she had some errands to run so I just tagged along, and we ended up just walking around and talking for ages, like I didn’t want to go home. But then I’m panicking now, dude. Because what if, even though she seems like the kind of girl I’d wanna date, because I’m demi, those feelings just don’t happen? Then what? And then I think fuck! I don’t want to string her along, but she’s really pretty and I—”

Ilya, sitting right next to Shane, suddenly leans over and bumps his nose against Shane’s thigh like an annoying, attention starved, dog.

“Shane,” he whispers. “Shane. Shane. Shane. Shane.”

Shane tries to shove his face away without dropping the phone.

“Yeah I see what you mean. So she’s kind of ticking all the boxes but you’re worried the feelings won’t be there?”

Ilya doesn’t stop. He nuzzles higher, right against the front of Shane’s pants, breathing warm through the fabric.

“What are you doing?” Shane hisses, muting the phone for half a second.

Ilya looks up with a wicked little grin.

"I think you know."

"No. Ilya. Stop."

"Shane. I won't touch you if you don't get hard."

Shane resumes the phone call. But, of course, his body betrays him immediately. Blood rushes south, while Hayden keeps talking happily on the other end.

"Yeah exactly! When we were hanging out we went to this bridge, we just sat there forever. Did you know she has this whole photography thing on the side? She showed me some of her pictures and—"

Ilya tugs Shane's pants and boxers down just enough, and takes him into his mouth in one smooth motion. Shane's breath catches hard.

"Mmm-hm. Yeah. Okay," Shane manages, voice strained. His free hand flies to Ilya's hair, and he grips the curls hard. If Ilya is going to play dirty, then so is Shane.

Hayden is still rambling on.

"She's super smart, Shane. And she laughs at my jokes which is always amazing. But then I'm sitting there like, fuck, dude, what if she was subtly hinting that I should have kissed her and I didn't? And what if she thinks I'm not interested. Like, am I interested? I could be? But then, thankfully, her brother texted her about this thing and she was telling me this funny story about him and the badger or skunk or something, and I swear I could listen to her talk forever—"

Shane is biting his lip so hard it hurts as Hayden goes on and on and on. Ilya continues to work him with slow, filthy sucks, tongue doing things that make his toes curl. He can't focus on a single word.

Eventually, Shane can't hold on any longer.

"One second, Hayden," Shane gasps.

He fumbles to mute the phone again and pushes Ilya's head down harder into his lap, forcing his cock down Ilya's throat.

"Fuh-fuckkk, oh fuck, oh fuck, take it, fuck, Jesus—"

He comes hard, hips jerking and pulsing down Ilya's throat, a broken moan slipping out before he can stop it. Ilya swallows around him and keeps sucking until Shane yanks him off by his curls roughly.

Ilya collapses back onto the couch, now a little out of breath, but looking very pleased with himself as he smiles gleefully.

There's a beat of silence on the line.

“Hello?” Hayden says. “Oh my god.”

Shane’s eyes snap wide open. He didn’t actually hit mute the second time. (Oops. Will they ever stop getting caught?)

“Oh fuck. Sorry Hayden. You hear all that?”

Ilya beams, looking absolutely fucking elated. Shane whacks him on the arm and flips him off.

“Well,” Hayden says dryly, “it’s not the first time I’ve heard you coming.”

Ilya leans toward the phone, grinning.

“Hi, Hayden. I’m right here.”

Hayden lets out a disgusted laugh.

“Ew. Did you seriously just blow him while I was spiralling about Jackie? I was being wholesome, man.”

Ilya shrugs even though Hayden can’t see it.

“Could not help myself,” he says loud enough that the speaker phone will definitely pick it up.

“Gross. You’re both gross,” Hayden says.

Shane covers his face with one hand, still flushed and breathless.

“Fuck. Hayden. Okay, yeah, sorry about that. Ilya is in a horny mood tonight. And I am here to hear you out. I guess from what I’m hearing she could be interested in you, but you’re just waiting to see if the feelings land for you. You’re in no rush, maybe just see if she wants to hang out another time and maybe do something together. There’s no pressure for you to marry this girl or anything so take your time.”

“Yeah, actually, I think I might see her again tomorrow, I said I’d help her film some content for our team page, so yeah, I’ll try not to panic about it,” Hayden replies, clearly amused now. “And also, I’m gonna hang up, before I hear anything else I can’t unhear. Have fun, you fucking freaks.”

“’Night, Hayden,” Shane says with a chuckle.

The call ends. Shane drops the phone on the couch and stares at Ilya.

“Fuck. I can’t believe I didn’t mute that.”

Ilya wipes his mouth with the back of his hand and crawls up Shane’s body, looking sneaky and extremely pleased with himself.

“You liiiiiiiked it,” he sing-songs.

“You’re so possessive, oh my god.” Shane laughs despite himself. “You literally wanted him to know.”

Ilya kisses the corner of his mouth, smug.

“Maybe, yes. And so what? I just had to show him I know how to do it better.”

“Jesus, Ilya. Hayden and I only ever did hand jobs. And, like, literally only twice.”

“I know, you’ve told me,” Ilya says with a little laugh, nuzzling into Shane’s neck. “But now he really knows. Also, you’re a pervert too, I haven’t seen you come so fast before.”

“Fuck off.” Shane grumps.

“Or, maybe you love Hayden,” Ilya teases.

“I love you,” Shane bumps Ilya with his shoulder.

“And I love you too.”

Shane shakes his head, still pink-cheeked, and pulls Ilya in for a proper kiss.

Shane wakes up first the next day. Soft sunlight is leaking through the curtains they forgot to close properly last night. Ilya is curled tight against his side, still dead asleep, one arm slung heavy across Shane’s stomach. They’d stayed up until almost 4am, first playing NHL on the PlayStation, then having sex, then showering together, then messing around again forty-five minutes later like idiots who didn’t need sleep.

Gently, Shane slides out from under Ilya’s arm. Ilya is still dead to the world, his messy curls catching that little sliver of light coming in and shining golden. Shane takes one last look at him and then creeps downstairs, careful not to make the old wooden steps creak. Ilya might be the king of home-cooked dinners, but Shane is determined to at least be the king of breakfast in bed. Breakfast is easy.

He gets the coffee going, finds one of Yuna’s old wooden trays under the sink, and puts together a few slices of the good bread Ilya bought yesterday. He toasts them, spreads them thick with Nutella, then adds banana slices on top for health reasons. Once it’s all set out on the tray, with coffee pot, spoons, plates, cups and glasses of juice, it looks stupidly cute. He balances everything so it doesn’t wobble and carries the heavy tray slowly back upstairs.

“Morning,” Shane whispers, setting the tray on the nightstand and leaning down to kiss Ilya’s messy hair.

Ilya rolls over with a sleepy grunt and squints one eye open.

“Oh... this is very special.”

"I'm a good host," Shane says, beaming as he climbs back into bed and crosses his legs. "Hope you like Nutella."

"Oh, I have only ever had Nutella in Russia, let me see if Canadian Nutella is good," Ilya says, sniffing the toast suspiciously.

"I love it," Shane says. "And it goes so well with bananas, you'll love the combination."

They cozy up together under the blankets. Shane pours them both coffee from the coffee pot and stirs in sugar for Ilya while Ilya takes a big bite of the toast.

"Very tasty," Ilya mumbles through a mouthful, grinning. "I like it. Thank you, I love you."

"I love you too," Shane says, and Ilya holds the toast up so Shane can have a bite.

They sit like that for a while, legs tangled, sipping coffee, alternating taking bites of the toast and scrolling their phones in comfortable silence.

Then Ilya coughs.

"Ugh. I don't feel too good."

Shane glances over.

"Like you're getting sick?"

Ilya shakes his head, frowning.

"No. My throat feels... tight? Itchy?" He coughs again, sharper this time, and clears his throat with a slight wheeze.

Shane freezes.

"You don't have allergies, right?"

"I don't think so?" Ilya says, coughing again. "Russians—" wheeze "don't have allergies, remember?"

Shane's brain is already spinning. He sits up straighter.

"Are you allergic to chocolate?"

"No. Like I said, I don't have allergies," Ilya says again, but his voice sounds a little strained now. He tries to clear his throat again and winces.

Shane pulls the tray off Ilya's lap.

"Come on. Get dressed. We're going to the clinic."

"Like the hospital?" Ilya's eyes go wide. "Shane, I am just coughing. I need more coffee."

“No. We’re going now. You’re having an allergic reaction to something and it could be serious. Better safe than sorry. Come on.” Shane grabs a sweater from the floor and tosses it Ilya’s way, then grabs another hoodie from a drawer and gets changed in a hurry.

Shane snaps a quick photo of the back of the Nutella jar before they leave while Ilya, still coughing and wheezing, ties his shoes. Then Shane grabs a bottle of water for the road and starts the SUV.

Luckily, the Sea to Sky Walk-In Clinic in Squamish is only about a thirty-minute drive. By the time they get there, Ilya is definitely uncomfortable, with his throat tight with the occasional wheeze, and now a bit of swelling in his lips.

Thankfully, the doctor sees them pretty quickly. After a quick exam and some questions, she confirms it: likely just a mild allergic reaction to Nutella, and also likely his first exposure.

“But I have eaten Nutella in Russia!” Ilya whines.

The doctor explains that it could be a preservative in the Canadian or North American version and Ilya rolls his eyes. “Canada is ridiculous.”

She gives him a dose of antihistamine and a puff from a sample inhaler to ease the wheezing.

Shane notices a couple of girls in the waiting room snapping photos of them, but he’s too focused on Ilya to care about that right now.

They wait in the little observation area for an hour to make sure it doesn’t get worse. Luckily, it doesn’t. Ilya’s already breathing easier by the time they leave with a prescription for an EpiPen (just in case) and instructions to avoid Nutella.

They finally make it back to the cottage by the early afternoon. Ilya flops dramatically onto the couch like he’s been through war.

“Russians don’t have fucking allergies, Canada is making me weak,” he mutters.

Shane laughs despite himself and kisses the top of Ilya’s head.

“This Russian does now. I can’t believe I poisoned you making toast,” Shane groans and leans into Ilya. “Do you know how fucking stupid I feel?”

“How could you know?” Ilya says gently and kisses Shane’s forehead. “It was still such a sweet thing to do.”

“It ruined my plan,” Shane groans.

“Plan?” Ilya’s perks up. “What plan?”

Annoyingly, Hayden calls, again. Shane picks up, and Ilya, predictably, rolls his eyes. Not Hayden again.

“Hey Hayden, what’s up buddy?”

“Hey! You and Ilya are trending on Twitter for going to the hospital together,” comes Hayden’s voice. Shane immediately puts it on speakerphone.

“For going to hospital?” Ilya pipes up. “Why would that trend?”

Hayden sighs.

“Shane, they’re saying you’ve delivered your baby. Also that Ilya might be the dad.”

Shane groans and drops his forehead onto the couch arm with a thud. “What the actual fuck. Ilya had an allergic reaction to Nutella. That’s all.”

Hayden then goes on to explain it all from start to finish. Apparently someone recognised them at the clinic and within two hours the rumors have already spiraled:

#PregnantHollander is trending on Twitter, TikTok and Instagram.

Hayden sends Shane some of the links. Clearly, those girls in the waiting room had been filming Shane and Ilya during Ilya’s hour of observation. Luckily they’d just been scrolling their phones and hadn’t been chatting; god forbid someone lip read any of their conversations. Instead it’s just a bunch of people making jokes about the Metros raising a child, and speculating about which game Ilya would have knocked Shane up at.

“People are so fucking dumb,” Shane mutters. “He had a real medical thing, and they turn it into this parasocial, obsessive bullshit.”

“Sorry buddy,” Hayden sighs. “I know the jokes are getting old.”

The team group chat explodes a few minutes later.

THIS YEAR IS OUR YEAR

Patrice: *Why is my family asking me if Holly is pregnant??? What have I missed*

Marleau: *This is old news. They’ve been saying he’s pregnant for months. Apparently he’s had the baby today. I was going to joke and say congrats but then saw you actually were at the hospital with Roz... all okay?*

Holly: *not pregnant lol fuck off, Roz had an allergic reaction to Nutella. he’s fine now and staying at my family cottage this week*

Roz: *Holly tried to poison star player but I survived the assassination attempt 🙄*

Holly: *fuck you*

Connors: *I still can’t believe you guys hang out off the ice*

Patrice: *Yeah, you don’t have to do that you know.*

Roz: *I just want to use his family cottage, but unfortunately it is package deal with babysitting Holly. He cannot cook, so I am taking care of him. Don’t worry, I will not allow him to prepare food for me again*

Shane looks up from where he's sitting and smirks at Ilya.

"It's gonna blow their fucking minds when they find out we're together."

Ilya grins.

"I think they will say it makes sense in hindsight."

Later that afternoon, Karen, the team liaison and also Team Mom, calls Ilya.

"Hey, I saw you were at the hospital. Everything okay?"

Ilya, still lounging on the couch, grins.

"Yes. I am not Shane's baby daddy, before you ask."

Karen laughs a loud hearty laugh and Ilya gives Shane a thumbs up. He nailed that joke with Gen X. Fuck yeah.

Shane whacks him hard in the arm and rolls his eyes.

Ilya laughs and then explains, again, the real story. That he's staying at Shane's family cottage and experienced a first-time Nutella allergy from Canadian Nutella. Karen sounds relieved and tells him she'll have the social media team put up a light-hearted post, deciding that Ilya's quote "even Russians can have allergies" is funny and good content for the fans.

Shane pipes up.

"Hi Karen! Can we do anything about 'hashtag Pregnant Hollander?"

Karen laughs again.

"Oh boy, that tickled me. Don't worry, it'll die down. Sorry, Holly. You must be sick of it by now. At least now you've had your imaginary baby, so maybe they'll move on to terrorising a new rookie next season."

Shane rolls his eyes and huffs.

"Okay. Thanks."

Later that night they're curled up on the couch again, the fireplace burning low. Shane tucks himself into Ilya's arms, cheek against his chest.

"How do you think people are going to take it when we actually tell them we're together, one day?"

Ilya runs a hand slowly up and down Shane's back.

"Some people will not be normal about it. There will be noise and probably nasty people. But the best thing we can do is stay off social media when it happens. The people who matter will

be okay. Beau, Karen, Coach Glen. Your family. I think all the guys on the team will be cool with it. We will just ignore the rest of the bullshit."

Shane lets out a long breath and nods, pressing closer.

"Yeah," he says quietly. "We'll ignore the bullshit."

"What was your plan this morning? Before you tried to feed me poison?" Ilya asks.

"Why don't we get in the hot tub, and I'll tell you in there? I've had it warming up."

"Ah, but I didn't bring bathing suit," Ilya smirks.

"You did. I saw it." Shane scoffs. "Nice try. Come on, let's get changed."

About ten minutes later, they're both dipping their toes into the hot tub water, which feels scalding hot compared to the slightly chilly night air. Eventually, they both sink in up to their chests. The hot tub overlooks the lake, and they can see a few stars through the cloud cover.

Shane takes Ilya's hand in his and gives it a squeeze.

"So this is my plan. I was going to suggest that when my lease is up, we could find a place together, if you wanted."

Ilya leans down and kisses Shane's hand.

"I want that. I want that so much."

Shane bites his lip.

"You don't think it's too soon?"

Ilya shakes his head.

"No. It would be so nice."

"Do you think we'd need to wait 'til we make an announcement that we're together, or something like that?"

Ilya shakes his head.

"Where we live is none of people's business. Lots of players live together. Don't overthink it."

"But lots of players are not secretly dating," Shane adds.

"That we know of," Ilya supplies. "I have a feeling that there are more gay hockey players out there, more than just Scott Hunter."

"But he's not actually gay, is he?" Shane says.

Ilya raises an eyebrow.

“Why not?”

Shane shrugs.

“I mean, look at him.”

Ilya tuts.

“So big strong hockey players can’t suck dick? Weren’t you the one saying people assume stereotypes? You know I like sucking your dick, and I’m taller than Hunter.”

Shane sighs and concedes.

“Okay. Yeah, that’s true. Maybe he is. Maybe there are others. Who knows.”

Ilya squeezes Shane’s hand again.

“I am still thinking about what Cap Mac said, about himself and his old teammate. To me, if someone like him has had these experiences, there will be many, many other players in the closet. Do you know the children’s game, where you push one block and then the next block falls over and pushes the next one?”

“Dominoes?” Shane offers.

“I think there just needs to be one domino. The rest will take care of itself.”

Shane nods.

“Aishiteru. It’ll be okay in the end.”

Ilya leans his head on Shane’s shoulder. “Ya lyublyu tebya.”

Chapter End Notes

[keeping this end note]

Thank you for reading. **Please don’t share on social media** let’s just gatekeep this and keep me safe from crazies. All of you readers are PLENTY and I feel sick to my stomach seeing OVER 100K hits already. Like who are you all! AHH!!

Once again: please don’t question the realism of my fic, I know it’s unrealistic! And also so many beautiful WIPs are so fleshed out and angsty and DEEP. This is a romcom fic!

Please note this fic is not me hating on mpreg lol it’s more about the feminisation of Asian folk against their will. Thank you to Maya for being a gem and offering insight into the Asian experience (at least their experience) as we all know that everyone has their own experiences with race. I am well aware that everyone’s experience is different.

Also yeah this is my hot take on people being parasocial online don't eat me alive I'm just a small frog with a big iPad.

Chapter 23: Playoff

Chapter Summary

Last time: The Cottage, I love yous, deep and meaningful conversations, and also Ilya is allergic to Canadian Nutella bc I said so.

This time: In an extraordinary turn of events (for fanfic convenience) the Final Game is actually the Final Game bc fictional New York and Colorado teams have both won 3 games out of 7 in the Playoffs.

Oh my god, is that Scott Fucking Hunter?

Chapter Notes

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

June 2025

Ilya throws a big party at his house the night of the Stanley Cup game seven final. It's highly unusual, but with Colorado and New York both winning three games so far, whoever wins tonight will be the champions of the season.

The place is packed shoulder to shoulder with teammates, and with the winner taking all, it's going to be a fun game to watch.

Music thumps loud from the speakers and bounces off the walls. The neighbours will complain, for sure, but Ilya already has plans to win their favour back with some nice bottles of vodka.

As the night carries on, beers flow fast and cold from the fridge in the kitchen. The whole house has that rowdy, loud energy only a bunch of hammered hockey guys can create when they have no morning skate waiting for them until next season.

JJ is already three sheets to the wind after coming over early to help with set up and getting into some light vodka tasting hours ago. He yells at the TV every single time New York touches the puck. Patrice, also pretty wasted, keeps trying to start chants, but no-one joins in, because they're too busy laughing and watching the game. Beau sprawls across the couch with a beer in each hand, double-parked as he is wont to do, and laughs his ass off at everything Marleau says. Hayden is there too, of course, red-faced and louder than usual, which means *way* too fucking loud. He pulls Shane into a tight hug and refuses to let go. He keeps squeezing Shane until Ilya comes over and pries him off with a rough but friendly shove. The whole crew is wasted in the best possible way.

Hoodies and jerseys lie tossed over every chair, the back of the couches and the floor. The game stays intense for a while, back and forth, but it becomes clear quite quickly that tonight is New York's night. Scott Hunter plays amazingly, so it'll be the kind of game that will live on highlight reels for years, even before it's over.

By the third period, the score pulls away. The guys still yell and pound the coffee table, but New York has this locked down for sure. With the score at 3-1 this late, it's fucking over for Colorado, and Colorado knows it.

When the final buzzer sounds and New York wins the Cup, the room cheers. Half the guys celebrate a good series; the other half groan and curse and mutter 'could have been us'.

Patrice starts a chant of 'Next year! Next year!' He screams it like volume alone will make it happen. Everyone joins in, because why the fuck not. Watching another team lift the Cup feels bittersweet; the hockey is incredible to watch, but it stings when it's not your team. Again.

On the screen, Scott Hunter skates over to the Cup. He hoists it high above his head with a huge grin. Then he lowers it and waves someone down from the seats. The cameras pan up to the seating but it's all a little bit confused and clearly unplanned.

"What the fuck is he doing?" Connors wonders aloud.

"I heard both his parents are dead," Beau says solemnly. He squints at the TV. "Doesn't have family there. Wonder who it is..."

Scott keeps gesturing at the crowd. The announcers sound confused, too. It looks a little clumsy at first as cameras pan back and forth from the seats to the ice and then back to the seating. Finally, a handsome guy in a New York jersey makes his way down the stairs over the boards and onto the ice.

The second the man reaches him, Scott Hunter pulls him in and kisses him hard, right on the fucking mouth. It's passionate and intense, and also right there in front of the whole arena, with the cameras and the entire hockey world watching live.

The living room goes dead silent for half a second. Then it *erupts*.

"Ohhhhhh!" Marleau bellows. "Would you look at that! He's got a man!"

"Oh my god, the rumours are true!" someone else yells.

"Bet! Go Scott!" Hayden stands up fast and raises his beer. "Cheers to Scott Hunter and his man!" Bottles clink all around him.

Patrice clutches his chest.

"Guys, I'm gonna cry. Can you believe this? I've never seen anything like this."

"Fucking legend," JJ pounds the arm of the couch. "So happy for him, man. After everything he went through, he deserves this."

Marleau leans forward and squints at the screen.

“Damn. Okay, is it problematic to say his man is low-key hot? Like, stupidly hot. Good for him.”

Connors raises his beer and clinks it with Marleau.

“Not problematic, look at him! Cheers to that. Respect.”

Beau grins wide and shakes his head. “Never thought I’d see the day. But yeah good for Scott. He looks so damn happy.” His eyes look a little moist. He glances over at Shane and Ilya.

Ilya sits on the rug with Shane tucked right beside him. Shane’s cheeks are flushed from the beer and the heat of the crowded room.

Shane looks around the room at his teammates cheering and clinking bottles. Not a single person has made a comment that could be construed as even remotely homophobic.

It’s the opposite, really. They’re all over the moon for Scott. His heart clenches, and he looks at his beautiful Russian boyfriend. This wasn’t part of the plan. In fact, the plan—as discussed with Coach Glen and Karen earlier—was to wait a few months and see how things go between them, and maybe give it until next season.

But, in this moment, that thought-out plan fucking sucks a fat one.

Shane’s eyes meet Ilya’s. Ilya raises one eyebrow in a small question. Shane holds the look for a second, then gives a slow and deliberate nod.

“I’m ready if you are,” he says quietly.

The party keeps rolling late into the night. More beers get cracked open. The karaoke gets worse and louder, especially when Hayden covers Buttons. The whole house is a mess of noise and bodies and kind of stinks like Boy. Empty cans cover every table and counter; the music thumps from the speakers and the air feels warm and thick, even with the balcony doors slid open.

Ilya stands up suddenly, grabs the karaoke mic from Hayden (thank god) and holds up his hand.

“My teammates, my friends, I have an announcement. Please take a seat, bring the fuckers outside in.”

The room settles down for a second, and everyone else is called in from the kitchen and out from the balcony back to the living room, eventually all being tightly squeezed onto the three living room couches and the rug. Ilya is always loud, but he never does speeches or anything *formal*, so it’s a little unusual. Everyone looks over at him.

“Some of you are wondering if your star player is sticking around,” Ilya says into the karaoke mic. The feedback screeches and squeaks so he tosses it aside with a clunk.

“Fuck off, Roz!” Marleau yells from the couch.

Ilya flips him off with a grin.

“Nah, I’m not fucking off. Is the opposite. As of the end of this month I’m becoming a Canadian citizen. I will have details soon, but I would like you guys to come to my ceremony, if you are free.”

The place erupts and people whoop loudly. Marleau launches off the couch and tackles Ilya into a big bear hug, ruffling his hair like crazy. Everyone cheers and yells and clinks their bottles together again.

“Fuck yeah! Fuck yeah, Canada!” Marleau bellows as he hangs off Ilya’s shoulder.

“And that’s not even the biggest news,” Ilya says once the noise dies down a little. He pushes Marleau away and holds out his hand towards Shane. “Holly, get up here. I need your help for this.”

Heads turn all over the room. Hayden grins wide and gives Shane a big thumbs up as Shane pushes to his feet and walks over. “Go little chicken!” JJ yelps.

Ilya looks right at Shane after he’s up the front and next to him.

“You like me, right?”

Everyone chuckles a little at whatever the fuck Ilya is up to here.

Shane sways a little from all the beers.

“Yeah, I guess you’re... alright.”

Everyone laughs again and jeers at Ilya, someone yells something about him being an asshole.

Ilya steps closer, his voice lower but still loud enough for everyone to hear.

“I don’t think our teammates believe you.”

The guys all laugh again, but they’re all leaning forward now, all their eyes locked on the two of them looking a little confused and curious and everyone is dead quiet for the first time tonight.

Shane rolls his eyes in that dramatic way he does when he’s trying to be cheeky.

“Don’t *believeme*? Why wouldn’t they believe me?”

“No, I don’t think they believe. Prove it,” Ilya says. “Prove you like me.”

Shane’s eyes light up and he takes a glance at all their teammates watching.

“How would you like me to prove it?”

“Gimme kiss.” Ilya says softly.

The music seems to drop away. The whole room holds its breath and some of the guys look confused, perhaps wondering if it’s some kind of elaborate joke or prank.

Ilya and Shane stand there for a long second, staring at each other. Ilya’s eyes flick across Shane’s face like he’s checking one last time. Shane looks back, cheeks flushed, a tiny nervous smile tugging at his mouth. Their eyes lock. The hesitation hangs there for a moment. They both know this is the moment everything changes.

There’s no going back.

Then they both move at the same time.

Ilya reaches out and pulls Shane in hard. Their mouths crash together. It’s not a quick joke peck. It’s a real kiss. A kiss that is deep and hungry and months in the making. Ilya’s hand slides into Shane’s hair and grips tighter. Shane’s fingers fist in the front of Ilya’s shirt, yanking him closer until their bodies press flush. They kiss like no one else is watching (despite the fact that literally everyone is), slow and passionate, eyes closed, right there in front of the entire team. The kiss is hot and full of everything they’ve been hiding and everything they can’t hide any more.

When they finally pull apart, both of them breathing hard, the room stays completely silent for a long beat.

“Surprise,” Shane says, his voice a little higher than he meant. “We’re together.”

“Not a joke,” Ilya adds quickly. “We’re boyfriends. We’ve been together since early January.”

Then the room fucking explodes, louder than it has the entire night, louder than the Stanley Cup win, the Scott Hunter kiss, or the Canadian citizenship announcement. Guys jump up from couches and chairs whooping and cheering at the top of their lungs, lunging in to hug Shane and Ilya and slap them on the back. Beers get thrust into the air. The noise is so loud it feels like the walls tremble. Connors stands there with his jaw hanging open, mouthing *no fucking way* to himself again and again.

“Oh, come on!” Patrice laughs loudly and he slaps his huge goalie thighs. “Rest of you guys didn’t see that coming? Really? Am I the only one with eyes on this team?”

“I knew,” Beau says, taking another big swig of his (probably ninth) beer. All heads snap toward him. “But I also *heard* them, so...”

“Thank fucking god!” JJ laughs, and he sounds genuinely relieved. “I’ve known for *ages*. I had the room next to them in January!”

One of the second-liners jumps in.

“Yeah, I was rooming with JJ! We heard fucking *everything*!”

“What! But we were quiet in Toronto! Specifically!” Shane protests, but he’s blushing at the memory. Hilarious that it was one of the times that they’d actually been trying to keep it down. Woopsie.

“Not quiet enough, apparently,” Hayden shoots back with a smirk.

“No one has had it as bad as Beau,” Ilya pipes up. “He walked in on us in the showers.”

“The *showers*?” JJ chokes on his beer. “What the fuck were you *doing* in the showers? *Our* showers?”

Ilya nods and everyone groans.

“Jesus Christ!” Marleau mutters, “Beau, is that how you found out?”

“Nope,” Shane answers for Beau. “He heard us in New York, so—”

Everyone just keeps laughing. It’s kind of perfect, and insane, and like a dam has been broken so all the feelings and stories just start tumbling out. When it started; when they’d finally gotten together. Everyone starts piecing together bits and pieces.

“And your fight in January?” someone asks.

“Stupid misunderstanding,” Ilya answers. He locks eyes with Hayden for just a microsecond and Hayden gives him another wide grin and motions that he’s locking his lips and throwing away the key.

Finally, after everyone is done investigating the timeline of events, Ilya throws an arm around Shane’s shoulders. “For the record, I’m bi. Shane is super gay.”

“I’m regular gay, asshole,” Shane says and elbows him hard in the side.

“Wait,” Ilya says. “So, wait, some of you knew, and you didn’t say anything? To anyone?”

“Bro, of course not,” JJ says. “I didn’t want to out you guys. I figured you’d tell us when you were ready. I was never going to tell a soul.”

Shane looks a little teary-eyed.

“You guys are the fucking best. Also, sorry we were loud, and sorry about the showers.”

Ilya’s hand rubs up Shane’s back, and he pulls him in closer by the waist.

“I love you,” he says proudly.

“I love you too,” Shane looks up at his Russian boyfriend, now knowing everyone also knows that this is *his* Russian boyfriend.

“Kiss again!” Hayden yells. “Do it! Do it again! Do it! Kiss! Kiss!”

The whole room picks it up right away. Fists slam on tables, feet stomp the floor, and the chant fills the apartment. “Kiss! Kiss! Kiss!”

Shane and Ilya glance at each other and shrug with matching grins then they go right back in. They pull each other close and share a long, deep, passionate kiss right there in the middle of everything, not bothering to hold back. The guys lose their minds around them all over again, cheering and yelling like the team just won the Cup.

“This also explains Ilya staying at your cottage, doesn’t it, Holly,” one of the second liners calls out with a big grin. “You guys needed space, didn’t ya?”

“Guys, I can’t believe we have Scott Hunter at home, except we have *two*!” someone else says.

“Scott Hunter is boring,” Ilya teases, “and Shane is hotter.”

“I know that’s right!” Hayden drunkenly yelps the Cardi B line, he really does need some water.

Beau stands up after a minute more of the chatter and raises his hands for quiet.

“Okay, what’s the play, boys? You want us to keep this quiet for now?”

“Yeah, if that’s cool,” Shane says. He’s still tucked under Ilya’s arm. “Coach Glen and Karen already know, but I think they still need to talk to management and get the statement out and all that official shit. But we’ll tell everyone soon. After seeing Scott Hunter, I guess we just thought, well, fuck it.”

“We’ve got your backs,” Marleau yells, voice hoarse from all the cheering. “You guys are our brothers. Ride or die, boys!”

“Fuck yeah, we do! Group hug!” Patrice shouts.

The whole team piles in at once. A massive crush of big sweaty arms wraps around Shane and Ilya from every side. Backs get slapped hard, hair gets ruffled again, and right in the middle of that squish of bodies, Shane and Ilya lock eyes again.

“I love you,” Shane mouths.

After the last person finally leaves and the door clicks shut, Ilya’s on Shane instantly. He kisses him down the hallway, greedy and a little clumsy, all the way into the bedroom like he can’t wait another second.

“Fuck, I want you so bad,” he mutters against Shane’s mouth, barely bothering to pull back enough to speak. “Want to fuck you so deep and so hard, fuck.”

Shane laughs breathy and still half-drunk.

“Ilya! I’m not even prepped, come on, you know how sex works, right? After all this time?” They’ve sobered up a bit, but not enough for Ilya to be sensible.

“Mmm, don’t care,” Ilya says, lips dragging down his neck.

“I care, asshole,” Shane teases, shoving at his chest with a grin before dragging him right back in. “We can still get off, though.”

They tumble onto the bed, peeling clothes off each other, fast and messy until there’s nothing left between them. Shane swings a leg over and settles on Ilya’s thighs, straddling him, their bare cocks brushing hot against each other. The lamp on the nightstand throws a soft, warm light over everything, catching on the curve of Ilya’s shoulder, the glint of his necklace, the flush creeping up Shane’s chest.

Ilya reaches for the lube and warms it in his palm quickly, then wraps his hand around both of them. The first slow stroke makes Shane whimper. For a while they just kiss like that, deep, wet, a little sloppy and uncoordinated, while Ilya works them together.

Eventually Shane can’t keep kissing through it. He rests his forehead against Ilya’s, breathing hard, noses bumping every time Ilya strokes them faster or squeezes tighter. The pace stays slow at first letting the heat build steadily between them.

“Feel good?” Ilya asks, panting a little.

Shane just whimpers.

“No, tell me,” Ilya murmurs and tightens his grip. Shane whimpers louder. “Say it. Want to hear you.”

“Fuck... your hand feels so good,” Shane breathes shakily. “So warm and tight. Feels like we’re pressed together so close.”

Ilya groans and the sound rumbles in his chest. He keeps stroking and spreading the mess they’re both making.

“Love feeling your cock like this, Shane. So hard for me. You get so wet for me, every time. Dripping all over us, huh?”

Shane nods against him and his cheeks burn.

“Say it.” Ilya growls.

“I get so fucking wet for you,” Shane manages to say, his voice cracking a little.

They stay locked like that for a long time; their foreheads together, eyes half-closed, breathing the same air. Ilya’s hand keeps moving, sometimes slowing right when it gets too intense to draw it out. Shane’s thighs start to tremble. Their skin grows slick with sweat where they touch.

“I wanna come with you,” Ilya says eventually and squeezes their cocks a little tighter.

Shane nods, but his breath is catching now. “Then you gotta hurry... I’m getting really close, Ilya. Fuck, I’m so fucking close.”

Ilya doesn’t speed up right away. He keeps that same devastating rhythm a little longer. “Remember Toronto? You came first and I used your come to finish?”

“Shit—yeah,” Shane gasps. The memory hits him immediately: how Shane had come first then and then watched as Ilya had jacked himself off and come with Shane’s hand pressed over his mouth. “I think about that all the time. It was so fucking hot.”

“I wanted to kiss you so bad while you were coming,” Ilya murmurs. “Couldn’t even do that with my split lip that night.”

“We were already loud enough,” Shane pants, a tiny laugh slipping out between the heavy breathing. His hips twitch. “Ilya—slow down or I’m gonna lose it. Please—”

“Hold it,” Ilya whispers, more commanding than normal. “I’m close too. Just hold it for me, sweetheart. A little longer.”

Shane squeezes his eyes shut, whimpering, his whole body tightening up as he fights it.

“Please, Ilya... please come for me. I need you to.”

Ilya’s groan is deep and wrecked. “Again.” he pleads, “say it again.”

“Come for me,” Shane begs, voice breaking again. “Come all over us. Please, Ilya, come for me, wanna see it.”

That does it. Ilya’s hand speeds up, getting messy and desperate. “Oh fuck— Shane— I’m right there—”

“Me too— god, I’m gonna come,” Shane groans.

“Come for me,” Ilya pants, almost pleading. “Now, Shane. Come now.”

Shane comes hard, quickly smashing their mouths together, a raw sound tearing out of him as he pulses between them, streaking Ilya’s stomach and fist. Ilya follows right after with a deep groan, thrusting up into his own hand, spilling hot and thick over both of them while Shane kisses him through it, all messy and desperate and dirty and nasty.

They stay tangled like that afterwards, sticky, sweaty, and breathing hard while their hearts hammer. In the lamplight, Shane’s cheeks are flushed pink, and Ilya’s messy curls look golden and soft.

Shane cups Ilya’s face gently, thumb brushing his cheek.

“You’re so beautiful,” he whispers, voice a little hoarse. “I’m so fucking proud of us. I love you.”

Ilya turns his head and kisses the inside of Shane's wrist, eyes shining. "I love you too. So much. I'm so happy you're mine, my Shane."

Chapter End Notes

GUYS I KNOW I made this all far too convenient for my own good but just let me have this "Final Game" scenario because this is how I pictured it when I planned this story in January.

January? Has it been That Long? Oh my god.

You guys there's only two chapters left.

Friendly reminder to not share this on social media (don't worry no one has I think lol I think I'm chill if someone is like oh Rookie Mistakes has this premise but I'm not chill with sharing snippets online), because every time I see a screenshot of a fic on tiktok I breathe a little too fast. Gatekeep!!

Hopefully the next chapter isn't too far away (I am completely normal about Finishing the Fic and not at all scared my life will lose meaning).

Guys imagine if you were a gay / queer hockey player and got to come out to your team like this and they all cheered? I know it's cheesy but sometimes we need a little levity. (The Entire Fic is Levity).

Leave me a comment or make a funny bookmark of this fic. I love it when someone leaves a public bookmark because I often check! Someone left me one in a different language and I put it through Google translate. What a joy!

ALSO: and finally, I write other one shots. Go and have a snoop on my profile. You might find something you like. When I'm not writing for plot there's just a tonne of porn.

Chapter 24: Reaction

Chapter Summary

Last time: Scott Hunter kisses his boyfriend on the ice!! And Shane and Ilya come out to their team!! It goes super well!!

This time: Waking up to social media, a flashback to Ilya meeting Yuna and David, and a decision of their own.

Chapter Notes

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

The morning after the party, Shane wakes up with Ilya half on top of him, one heavy arm slung across his chest, and his phone vibrating itself across the bedside table. He grabs it quickly before it wakes up Ilya. The screen is flooded with messages, news alerts and social media notifications.

SCOTT HUNTER KISSES BOYFRIEND ON ICE AFTER STANLEY CUP WIN

The clip is everywhere, naturally. Hunter in full gear, yanking his boyfriend closer on the ice and kissing him like the rest of the world doesn't exist. Twitter is already splitting in half.

Of course, #KeepSexualityOutOfHockey is trending.

Some dumb commentary accounts are calling it 'disrespectful to the game'. A retired goalie from the nineties is ranting about sports needing to be 'apolitical', and getting roasted alive in the replies about his own terrible behaviour, way back when.

But right underneath the firey, angry posts are the counter-posts: kids in junior leagues holding up rainbow tape on their sticks, little girls in Hunter jerseys screaming at their TVs and jumping up and down. It's pretty wholesome, and rainbow heart emojis are flooding almost every damn post.

The NHL commissioner still hasn't said a word. Classic.

Shane is still scrolling when Ilya stirs, presses his face into Shane's neck.

"What's going on?" he mumbles.

"Look," Shane says, tilting the screen to show Ilya an Instagram post.

Ilya squints. Then his eyebrows shoot up.

“Holy shit. He’s posted and everything.”

They look together. Hunter has hard-launched his relationship. The post is stupidly cute: a carousel of photos, one of him and his boyfriend (Kip) at a tiny smoothie shop, another one of them both of them laughing over breakfast. The caption reads:

I still can’t believe he’s mine. happy stanley cup day to us, babe

#LoveWins #StanleyCupChamp #Admirals2025

The last slide is the kiss on the ice, frozen mid-frame, Hunter’s gloved hand cupping Kip’s face like it’s the most natural thing in the world.

He keeps scrolling. And then he sees it.

Shane’s chest does something wobbly.

“We’re not alone – look.”

Troy Barrett of the Ottawa Centaurs, their divisional rival, has posted too. It’s a simple black-and-white photo of him and a guy with a gorgeous smile in a Centaurs hoodie. They’re on a balcony somewhere, foreheads pressed together. The caption says:

Been keeping this quiet for ages because I didn’t want the noise. But after watching Scott last night... nah! I’m gay! This is Harris, my boyfriend. He puts up with my shit every single day and he’s the best thing that’s ever happened to me. #QueerInHockey

Ilya leans over Shane’s shoulder, his breath warm on his ear.

“Wow. That’s so fucking cool.” Shane reaches his arm behind to gently play with Ilya’s hair while they keep watching Shane’s phone.

The floodgates seem to open after Hunter, and then Barrett’s, social media posts.

As they watch, Ryan Price—a massive Toronto enforcer—posts a photo of himself slow-dancing with a beautiful man tagged as Fabian Salah—a musician, apparently—in what seems to be their kitchen, Fabian’s head on Ryan’s chest:

No longer hiding. I love you, Fabian. #QueerInHockey

Then, Eric Bennett, the now retired veteran Admirals goalie, posts a goofy selfie with a cute guy tagged as ‘Kyle’.

We’re queer, we’re here, we ain’t going anywhere. #QueerInHockey

Then it’s not just NHL guys anymore. A Swedish defenseman posts with his boyfriend. An Australian forward in the AHL poses with a bisexual flag, a kid in New Zealand’s national under-20 program tags his boyfriend mid-hug on a beach in Auckland, and the posts just keep coming and coming.

The hashtag #QueerInHockey is climbing fast, with new posts being added constantly. Fans share and retweet their support so much that it overtakes #KeepSexualityOutOfHockey in ‘Trending topics’ like it was never there.

Shane and Ilya are still in their boxers scrolling their phones with messy hair when Shane looks up at Ilya.

“We should call Glen,” he says.

They’d already told Coach Glen the day before the New York vs Colorado game, nervous, for sure, standing in the office while Karen sat there tapping away notes on her iPad. Glen had listened and nodded once.

“My youngest son is gay. He stopped playing hockey at twelve, because he thought the dressing room would eat him alive. You two are changing that for some kid somewhere. I’m proud of you, and I’ve got your backs, boys.”

To be fair, they hadn’t planned to do anything public this soon. But Hunter’s kiss on the ice has changed everything.

Ilya nods.

“Yeah, we should call him now. I don’t want to hide anymore.”

Glen picks up on the first ring.

“Morning, boys. Figured I’d hear from you soon.”

He sounds calm and happy, and also like he’s been waiting eagerly for this call, which is sweet.

“You already know how I feel. My son’s been texting me nonstop since Hunter’s post went up. He’s fucking over the moon with it all, and so am I.”

Shane exhales.

“I think we’re ready to do the statement. But we also want to do an instagram post like other players are doing. Is that going to be okay? Or do we still need to wait to do anything official?”

“Owners are already on board,” Glen says. “They want you to do whatever feels right. No pressure of course. Karen’s had a release drafted, and she’s been sitting on it and texting me all morning just in case you guys wanted to do something. The statement is kind of corporate and boring—hold on, let me pull it up.”

There’s a muffled noise of Coach Glen shuffling papers around.

“Okay, I found it. It says, ‘The organization fully supports Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov and their relationship. We are proud to foster an inclusive environment.’ Karen will blast it the second you post anything online. Just call her when you’re ready to rumble.”

“Thank you Coach,” Ilya says, leaning in so he can talk into Shane’s phone better. “We told the rest of the team last night, and they were all very cool about it. I think we are both a little nervous?” He looks at Shane, who nods. “Both a little nervous,” he confirms quickly. “People might be weird for a bit, but we are ready to face it.”

“You’ve got us all behind you, seriously. I’m proud of you two, and I think it’s going to mean so much to a lot of people out there.”

They put on some clothes and have a bite to eat. Ilya throws together some bacon and eggs while Shane makes some coffee. They’re a little bit hungover from the night before, but the excitement of the day seems to push all that aside for a moment.

While he drinks his coffee, Shane and Ilya facetime Yuna and David to fill them in on the plan.

“As long as you feel ready, then that’s all that matters,” Yuna says, smiling on the propped up phone screen.

Shane had been so fucking nervous for Ilya to meet his parents, earlier in the year. They’d flown into town for a game a couple months ago, and Shane had organised for them to come over to his place and meet Ilya, in private, over a nice lunch (prepared by Ilya for maximum brownie points). Ilya had been helping Shane tidy up the apartment that morning, but then wound up sitting on the couch tapping his foot against the floorboards until Shane had yanked Ilya up by his legs, laid him flat on the couch, and squished him like a 200lb weighted blanket.

Surprisingly, that had worked to calm Ilya down, but it had also led to them making out on the couch, getting side-tracked, kissing down the hallway and landing on Shane’s bed.

Ilya had pushed his hands under Shane’s shirt to play with his nipples while they kissed, then let his hands come back down to push Shane’s pants down.

“Fuck, Ilya,” Shane had panted. He pushed his hips up into Ilya’s hand, clearly hard as fuck already. “Baby, please—”

“Baby?” Ilya had paused.

“Fuck off, that just slipped out,” Shane panted and tried to push himself back into the kiss so Ilya would shut the fuck up about his embarrassing slip-up.

“What if I *like* ‘baby’?” Ilya pulled his head up and out of Shane’s reach.

“Then,” Shane grabbed Ilya’s hair and pulled his back down, “hurry up and fuck me, baby.”

Ten minutes later, Ilya was fucking Shane with his fingers while they made out.

“Say it again,” Ilya said between a kiss. The angle was probably a little awkward and his wrist was definitely cramping a little, but Ilya pushed through any discomfort while Shane moaned.

“Fuck! Right there baby, right fucking there, oh god—” Shane squeezed his eyes shut tightly. “Hurry up and fuck me or I’ll come on your fingers.”

And Ilya giggled and then had pulled his fingers out.

Ilya went to press his cock in and Shane held up his hand.

“Wait—condom, please. I can’t be bothered with the mess.”

So Ilya grabbed a condom, rolled it on and quickly climbed between Shane’s legs and pushed in. “Fuck, so tight—”

“God,” Shane moaned as he threw his head back, “fuck yes, oh—”

Ilya yanked Shane’s thighs up a little higher and went straight to fucking into Shane hard. They really didn’t have long to get this done, what with Mr and Mrs Hollander coming over so soon.

They’d already had a good slow fuck that morning, Ilya had even put on a cock ring so he could fuck Shane for longer and make him come hands free and nearly screaming. Shane had also blown Ilya in the shower after, just for funsies.

But with less than half an hour to go before guests, Ilya fucked Shane with urgency. “I’m getting close,” he managed as he thrust faster. “You want me to touch?”

“Fuck, yes, touch me touch me—” Shane begged and Ilya leant down to kiss him as he kept fucking him and squeezed his hand between their bodies to play with Shane’s cock.

“Nearly—” Shane gasped, and he thrust up a little into Ilya’s fist. “Fuck come for me Ilya, come for me baby.”

Well, and that had worked immediately. Ilya had groaned as he moved his hand faster over Shane’s cock while he came, moaning “Yes, fuck—” with Shane following very quickly after him.

After a quick cuddle and tidy up, they’d had to rush through the cleanup of the house they had accidentally distracted themselves from.

By some miracle, they had about five minutes to spare in the end after speed cleaning Shane’s apartment.

“They’re going to love you, don’t worry,” Shane had said with a kiss on Ilya’s neck when the knock on the door finally came.

Meeting Yuna and David had gone really, *really* well. David had immediately clicked with Ilya about liking some dark Russian literature, and Yuna had marveled at how polite Ilya was. “Please, call me Yuna,” she’d said after the third ‘Mrs Hollander’ from extra-polite Ilya.

Ilya had smashed out some homemade pasta with a salad for the occasion, and that had really impressed David and Yuna.

“Did Shane tell you about his chicken food poisoning?” Ilya teased gently and then Shane groaned and rolled his eyes while Ilya told the story. Yuna and David had been in fits of giggles.

“Oh Shane! Did you tell Ilya about how you swam naked in the fountain at the mall? Eight was far too old to be doing that!” Yuna laughed. And no, of course Shane hadn’t, so then everyone took turns telling funny stories about Shane. It was deeply embarrassing but a small price to pay for Ilya getting along so well with his parents so quickly.

Only after Yuna and David had left did Shane realise that they’d neglected one important piece of tidy-up: the trashcan in the bathroom that didn’t have a lid, and quite clearly it had at least three, clearly used, condoms in it.

“Ilya! Fuck!” Shane had moaned, and Ilya had then scrubbed his face with his hands when he saw. “Oh my god,” Ilya had groaned back, “I thought we did so well! Now they know we fuck!”

“They know we fuck,” Shane had groaned back. “Remember my mum worked it out after I told them, the hat-trick night?”

“Yes, but now they have seen evidence!” Ilya groaned.

But then, uhoh, Ilya had glanced over and seen something far worse. To his shock and absolute horror, the cock ring from that morning had been left on the floor of the shower as well.

They both quickly agreed it was better for their mental health if they decided that there was no way either Yuna or David hadn’t noticed *that*. Surely not. Please, god, no.

“This is why I say we shouldn’t use condoms,” Ilya had teased when they went *another* round, late at night. Shane had just kissed him to shut him up. They hadn’t used a condom for that round.

After taking a few deep breaths, Shane calls Karen from the couch with Ilya nestled into his side and holding his other hand. She answers on the first ring.

“Finally! You guys! I just got off the phone with Glen. I’ve never been so pumped to do a press release!” she says grinning on FaceTime. “Release is locked and loaded. I’ll send it to every outlet the second you post. Double checking, do you want to go personal first or official first?”

“Personal,” Ilya says at the same time as Shane.

Karen laughs again. “Personal it is. Post whatever you want. Maybe use the hashtag the others are using.”

“Thanks Karen, we’ll post really soon,” Shane confirms.

“I have notifications on so I’ll see it as soon as you’re live.”

“Thank you Karen, and say hi to Mr Karen for us,” Shane beams.

“Oh, he’s so happy about Scott Hunter. I haven’t said anything about you two, of course, but he’s going to be over the moon for y’all!”

They sit cross-legged on the couch with one phone between them and type the caption together, passing the phone back and forth and re-reading it to make sure they’ve got it right and haven’t made any embarrassing typos. They decide to settle for something short and sweet.

Hard Launching: Montreal Metro Boyfriends 🌈

Proud to be part of this, we stand with Scott Hunter!

#QueerInHockey

They attach a photo from Shane’s cottage last month, it’s a silly self-timer one of both of them barefoot on the dock, Ilya’s arm around Shane’s waist, both of them laughing at something off-camera. The sun is setting and turning everything golden, all extremely picturesque.

Shane’s thumb hovers over ‘Post’.

Ilya covers Shane’s hand with his own. “Ready?”

“Ready.”

They click it together, and then both let out a big breath.

“I can’t believe we fucking did that,” Ilya says with a smile but his voice trembles slightly. “Fucking crazy.”

“But you’re okay?” Shane checks.

“Of course, very okay. We’ve got this.”

The likes start instantly, and Shane has to turn off his notifications because everyone in his whole contact list seems to text him at the same time. “Oh my god my phone is going to explode,” Shane mutters as Ilya helps him switch it onto ‘Sleep Mode’ to stop the onslaught.

But then, surprisingly, *Hayden* posts on Instagram, too.

It’s a photo of the three of them from last night, Shane, Ilya, and Hayden all grinning with arms around each other, beers raised with a longer caption:

Not everyone’s journey looks the same. Turns out I’m demisexual. Took me a long time to figure that out. Watching my teammates be brave this week made me want to be brave too. Love is love, no matter how you feel it. Standing with my boys and with #QueerInHockey

Shane blinks at the screen. “Holy shit. Hayden. What a guy.”

Ilya grins, “I think I like him now. Maybe ‘like’ is too strong of a word but he can be great, sometimes.”

All of a sudden, teammate after teammate start posting as well to show their support.

Marleau posts a beautiful (but blurry, freaking millennial) shot of the whole group from the party with Shane and Ilya in the middle, arms around each other, the rest of the boys crowded in close behind them like a wall. The caption reads: *These two are family. Proud as hell to stand with them. I stand with #QueerInHockey*

JJ is next and drops a photo of the three of them on the balcony from last night too, Shane tucked under Ilya’s arm, JJ giving them both a goofy thumbs-up.

Love you both! I stand with #QueerInHockey

Connors posts a photo of them all in the back of the bus from one of the road trips where all three of them had been goofing around and Shane is lying across his and Ilya’s lap.

i stand with #QueerInHockey and i love my pals

Patrice posts a picture of himself with Shane and Ilya on the ice during training, all three of them smiling and holding their sticks up above their heads like wookies.

I’m so happy I could scream. My teammates, my brothers. I stand with #QueerInHockey

Even Coach Glen and Karen post. Glen’s is a simple shot of the three of them on the bench from last season, Shane and Ilya flanking him, all of them grinning after a win.

These two make our team better. Full stop. #QueerInHockey

By evening the posts are now in the thousands from players from every team in the league, whether they’re coming out or just in support of queer players. AHL guys join in to support more AHL guys, European leagues put up official posts of support. A women’s pro player in Finland joins in on the posting with her girlfriend and the teammates post in support.

Shane and Ilya stay on the couch the whole day, phones on silent, passing a bag of chips back and forth, checking social media every once in a while, all while the world loses its mind in the best possible way. Every new notification is another teammate, another player, another tag in a post of support for them or Scott Hunter or others or the #QueerInHockey tag.

But because they’re both pretty hungover and the excitement of the morning has started to wear off, they end up watching old episodes of New Girl and falling asleep to the soothing sound of Schmitt’s voice.

Later on, they tentatively have a look at the reaction online to their coming out and relationship hard launch, outside of just the #QueerInHockey tag. There are some mean and distasteful comments, but they’re drowned out by the thousands of positive ones.

Twitter is, of course, the worst and Shane makes the executive decision to delete the cursed app off his phone after seeing one too many tweets about #PregnantHollander and jokes

about Ilya being confirmed as the real dad. He doesn't need that fuck-ass app anyways. Fuck Twitter.

Ilya leans his head on Shane's shoulder. "We fucking did it." He strokes the side of Shane's face and Shane turns to give him a kiss.

Shane reaches down and threads their fingers together. "Yeah. We did. We fucking did it." He turns to give Ilya another gentle kiss on the cheek. "Love you," he murmurs.

Ilya smiles and nuzzles into his neck. "Love you more, Shane."

Chapter End Notes

yeah yeah i know it's very "everyone cheered", stop booing! please! (no one is booing i am being dramatic!)

i like the idea that in this universe shane and ilya arent like, movers and shakers, but get to just be part of a movement that happens.

just as a little reminder, we have ONE FUCKIN CHAPTER TO GO! and then i am going to lock the fic down!

i dont know when the last chapter will come out, but the gremlins in my brain have decided that i should finish this fic by the end of may instead of letting it drrrrrrrrraaaag because im scared of what i will become when it's over.

gotta say; i absolutely love reading fanfic. i could spend (and have spent) an insane amount of time reading it. but nothing will beat the high of writing. holy shit, it is so good.

however i also want to say another thing: writing, especially in the context of a longer work like this, is actually labour. like it takes real time and planning and fuckin perseverance to not give up when you have a moment of weakness and think ugh no one wants this anyways. luckily for me im writing for myself and have also probably scared lots of people off with the Shayden tag LMFAO Shayden my beloved, you were so fun to write. anyways. it's hard work and takes literally a team of people to do. i have loved writing this fic, but also i think it'll be a nice break for my brain to go back to doing what is "easy" for me: writing ridiculous one shots as soon as they pop into my head and harassing whatever friend happens to be online to help me with the spelling and grammar. what the fuck is past perfect tense, Freckle? genuine question based on their comments in this document for this chapter. heehee i am illiterate but i am free!!!! (i am not illiterate, i just write exactly how i think and apparently i don't think in perfect grammar!)

so anyways. thanks for being my friends on here and reading my work. it's so so so so nice to have you guys.

i hope we can all stay friends after this story finishes. maybe you'll like my other works? maybe you won't! thats okay.

i need to stop writing long notes at the end. i just cannot stop.

OH LAST THING: im trying to public bookmark fics i enjoy as i go, just to shout-out other authors. so if you're like "what should i read tonight?" maybe check out my public bookmarks. man there are some talented authors out there!!!!

(ive just been told i accidentally posted this before my beta team were done looking.... oops. so all mistakes are my own)

please leave me a comment or I feel like I'm screaming into the void.

do not share on social media.

fic will be private when complete and I'll also delete all my author notes then too. those were just for the faithful WIP enjoyers.

Chapter 25: The End

Chapter Summary

Last time: Shane and Ilya get to come out on their own terms.

This time: It's the end, and it's also Christmas.

The fic is complete now. If you've been waiting to start it, this is your sign. Please comment as you go because it will make me very happy.

Chapter Notes

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

December 2025

Shane drives his new Range Rover (thanks, sponsorship) while Ilya looks through the Spotify playlist.

"I like Metric, you know them?"

"Iconic Canadian band," Shane smiles, pushing his glasses down from his head over his eyes as they drive into the bright afternoon light. "Wait, did my dad get you into them?"

"Yes," Ilya swipes away on his phone, adding a few more songs to the queue. "When you went to Japan for documentary, David showed me everything."

"At this rate, you're going to be the favorite son," Shane teases.

"Mm, I think I am already the favorite."

And it's true, because while Shane will always be David's only special son and golden boy, Ilya has quickly become one of his favorite people.

Earlier in the year, Shane had been shoulder-tapped for a documentary in Japan that followed successful athletes of Japanese heritage. The season hadn't started up yet, and Ilya wasn't really interested in rattling around their Montreal apartment by himself. So, when David had offered for Ilya to come and stay for a long weekend, Ilya had booked flights the same day, packed his things and flown to Vancouver.

Shane had been a little nervous at the idea of his parents basically babysitting Ilya for a few days, a little anxious that maybe Ilya would say something unhinged, or even just that maybe it would be awkward.

It turned out he had nothing to worry about.

Ilya had gone with three bottles of vodka in his bag—one for David, one for Yuna, one for actually sharing, “of course,” Ilya had apparently said—and then had spent his first night helping his dad grill steaks, then playing board games with the Hollanders and drinking vodka.

Far too late at night, Dad had decided to show Ilya his record collection, and then for the next *three hours*, had proceeded to play Ilya all of his favourite records, one by one. Ilya usually listened to a lot of Russian rap and mainstream club pop bangers, so sitting there with Shane’s dad had, reportedly, been “a real musical education”.

Also, Shane suspects, given his own and his mom’s general disinterest in music, his dad had never really gotten to just present a full-blown TED Talk (info-dump) about his musical taste (special interest) before. Ilya also had been genuinely interested and asked lots of questions.

“Then he explains to me about band called The Postal Service, which is same guy from other band Death Cab for Cutie. Then he makes me listen to song called ‘Such Great Heights’. Is good song. I will play for you.”

So Shane had come back from Japan to a boyfriend that not only was probably his dad’s new (maybe best) friend, but also now had elite dad-taste in alt rock and indie music. Figures. Of course Ilya would charm his way into David Hollander’s heart. Shane wouldn’t have it any other way.

Yuna calls as they hit the outskirts of town, and Shane answers on hands-free.

“Hi Mama! We’re about an hour away, you’re on speaker.”

“Hello, sweetie,” Yuna’s friendly voice fills the car. “Can you stop at the store your way and get some stuff for me? I’ll send you a list, okay?”

“Hello Yuna,” Ilya pipes up immediately. “I will also get some ice cream.”

“No need, darling,” Yuna sounds extra-excited to hear Ilya’s voice, Shane thinks. “We have ice cream already. Cookie dough. Your favourite.”

“Oh, I must buy more,” Ilya opens his phone to write a reminder. “Would be bad to eat it all again.”

“Oh, you are such a sweetheart,” Yuna’s voice comes over the speaker. “You could get some of that chocolate sauce we had last time?”

“Definitely,” Ilya promises.

Shane gives Ilya an amused glance.

Oh, yeah—last time, when Shane had had to fly to New York for a photoshoot, Ilya had immediately booked himself another last-minute flight to Vancouver to stay with the Hollanders.

Again.

By the time they make it to the grocery store, Yuna's list has come through, and Shane and Ilya find themselves adding item after item to the cart.

"I fucking love the cottage," Ilya looks practically giddy. "And I have found some new music for your dad. Do you think he knows about 'LCD Soundsystem'?"

"Without a doubt. He's heard of everything," Shane says, adding some ground beef to the cart. Then he looks up and sees a couple of teenagers peeping out around the end of the aisle. "We're being watched," Shane murmurs.

"Where?" Ilya says, spinning around with zero subtlety.

"Hi!" comes the voice of a teenage girl who steps forward, her cheeks flushed. "Oh my god, I can't believe it's you guys, oh my god. We're such big fans. Hi. Sorry, I'm like, freaking out. Uh—" One of the girls twirls her hair and holds out her phone, "Could I, uh, you know, maybe get a selfie? Is that okay? It's okay if it's not. Sorry."

Shane and Ilya exchange a wary look.

"Of course," Shane smiles and he holds his hand out so he can take the picture.

After a couple of photos and some gushing, Shane and Ilya are left to finish their shopping as the girls leave in a flurry of giggles.

"That was actually really nice," Shane says as they round the corner of the aisle to go to the checkout.

"Mm, nothing will ever be as funny as the first of our viral supermarket selfies," Ilya grins. Because, yeah—that one photo of them at the supermarket suddenly trending online had seemed a little weird at first—like, who cares? They go grocery shopping, like everyone else. Big whoop.

Turns out, they hadn't noticed the box of condoms in their cart, just visible in the corner of the picture. Those had rocketed that picture through the algorithm. Some pop culture account had written a whole article about it. A whole fucking *article*.

"Don't remind me. News flash: Hot Hockey Players Have Safe Sex Sometimes," Shane giggles, then rolls his eyes when Ilya wiggles his eyebrows and starts stacking their items on the conveyor belt.

"Speaking of sex," Shane says a couple of minutes later, as he closes the car door.

"Obviously we don't have the cottage to ourselves, so we have to—"

"Yes, yes, I know. Be quiet, don't leave mess, don't leave cock ring on shower floor, don't leave condoms in bathroom trash, don't yell 'oh fuck, Shane, your ass is *so* fucking tight for me'?"

“Yeah, basically that.” Shane snorts. They’ve actually never been at the cottage at the same time as Yuna and David before, but they have shared Shane’s family home.

Because Ilya had been a little bit nervous to do anything under the same roof as Shane’s parents, even when Shane insisted it would be fine, they’d gone the first two days without more than a chaste kiss or two and a cuddle. By the third night, though, Ilya had declared enough was enough. They would just have to manage to be quiet as they blew each other in the shower after they were sure Yuna and David had gone to bed.

And then the floodgates had opened, and they’d got more and more daring, until on the last night, Shane had ended up on all fours on the floor of his childhood bedroom, avoiding the squeaky bed, while Ilya fucked him as quietly as possible, biting his first to stay silent.

Maybe, *maybe* Yuna and David knew, but they didn’t say anything. Shane was eternally grateful.

Later on, at the cottage, Ilya shoos David and Yuna out of the kitchen so he and Shane can handle the cooking; Shane chops vegetables and browns meat for the bolognese, eager to show off the new cooking knowledge Ilya’s taught him over the past year of living together. It’s adorable.

“I am so excited for Canadian Christmas,” Ilya says as he rolls out homemade pasta.

“It’s not really that special, especially considering we’re adults now and don’t believe in Santa.”

“Even if I was a little Canadian boy, I never would have believed in Santa.” Ilya dusts the counter with more flour.

“Oh come on,” Shane scoffs. “I googled this! You guys have your own Santa in Russia.”

“Ded Moroz? No. That’s different. No red jacket. No ‘ho ho ho’. But I didn’t believe in him.”

“I googled him and he’s literally just Santa in a blue jacket. You *totally* believed.”

“Didn’t,” Ilya flicks some flour at Shane.

“Well, I fucking did believe in Santa,” Shane grumps and wipes flour off his face.

“You *look* like you believed in Santa,” Ilya chirps.

“Whatever, asshole,” Shane throws a carrot slice back at Ilya.

It’s all pretty typical banter for them. The constant teasing is kind of their brand, on and off the ice. It had taken a little bit of getting used to from their teammates, who’d been a little confused when they still cussed at each other during training, but eventually everyone had realised that this was just their dynamic.

Hayden's girlfriend (!) Jackie, the social media manager, had thought it would be a fun idea to mic up Shane and Ilya for a game, just to give the fans a little behind-the-scenes of their favourite Montreal Metro Boyfriends on Ice. #MontrealHollanov was always trending when they played.

Unfortunately, it had ended up not really that lovey-dovey.

"Line! Line! Yep, that's me, fuck! Over here, back door back door back door, fuck!" Shane would say as he tapped his stick after leaping over the boards.

"Man on! Man on!" Ilya would reply and they would skate down the ice. When a pass didn't connect, either Shane or Ilya would give each other a "Where the fuck were you?" Or a "Come on, Rozanov, switch on."

Even when Ilya scored, Shane would just give a "Woo! Killed it. Beauty! Let's go!"

When the other team had scored an annoying lucky shot, Ilya had just cursed in Russian and Shane had bellowed yet another "Man on, man on! Watch the back door! Roz, man fucking on, oi!"

Jackie had been mildly devastated. No viral clips of #MetroHollanov calling each other "babe." Unlucky.

They'd made a deliberate decision early on to keep things strictly professional on the ice: no kisses, no soft looks, no extra celebrations or whatever.

When they'd hard-launched their relationship on Instagram, they'd each gained over a million followers overnight. The new fans were rabid and obsessed with dissecting every detail of their lives.

An entire online ecosystem had sprung up dedicated to analysing their every public appearance. The infamous condoms-in-the-shopping-cart photo had only poured gasoline on the fire, sparking endless threads speculating about whether they were in an open relationship. Why else would they buy condoms?

Shane had literally dropped his head onto the dining table with a thud when he read that particular take.

"Do they not know how *anal* works?" he'd groaned. "Should we just post about it? Spell it all out for them? I'll Instagram-live douching."

Karen, who had come over specifically to help them navigate this spicy social media moment, had turned bright red and stammered through her notes on her iPad, clearly regretting every career choice that had led her to this particular conversation.

Other than the absolutely insane fans, the last year had been pretty smooth sailing.

They did have the odd big fight, usually when they were really overtired or had been winding each other up for too long. But even then, after taking some time to cool off, they'd apologise

and talk it over, and then Ilya would put Shane through the mattress after a rough and tumble wrestle in bed, and it would all be okay.

“Did someone say Santa?” Yuna rounds the corner and enters the kitchen holding two little Christmas stockings.

“Oh my god, mum, no, that’s embarrassing,” Shane buries his head in his hands.

“Shush, Shane, it’s Christmas. Here! Stockings!” Yuna holds them up.

Ilya—who, not even a minute ago, had been very much enjoying bashing Santa—finds himself beaming.

“Oh my god! That’s so cute! This has Shane’s name on it!”

Yuna turns the other stocking around. It has Ilya’s name embroidered on the top.

“Surprise!” she says. “I just didn’t know if you had done this before. I still put together a little stocking for Shane every year. Wouldn’t be fair to do one for just him, would it?”

Ilya’s jaw just hangs there.

“Oh.”

“Okay?” Yuna checks. Her smile drops just a little.

“Yes, it’s... it is. It is okay. Sorry.” Ilya tenses his jaw and forces a smile. “This is so beautiful. Thank you, Yuna, so thoughtful of you.”

Yuna comes in closer and Ilya wraps her in a hug.

“Thank you so much.”

Later in the evening, after Yuna has put the stockings up on the fireplace, and everyone has enjoyed the bolognese, Shane and Ilya go and sit outside on the balcony.

“Are we going to talk about the stocking?” Shane says gently and rests his head on Ilya’s shoulder.

Ilya’s smoking. Yuna fucking hates it when he smokes, but David is an enabler and gladly shares his cigars when Ilya comes to stay. Besides, it’s Christmas, and they’re fully grown adult men, so Ilya takes a drag and passes the cigarette to Shane as he exhales.

“I didn’t realise... I miss my mother, Shane. I miss her all the time, but tonight I think I miss her more than normal. But I think she would have been Yuna’s friend.” Ilya looks up at the clear, freezing sky.

“I’m so sorry.” Shane rubs Ilya’s back and smokes the shared cigarette. “I can talk to her—”

“No. No, it’s very nice. It can be nice and also make me a little sad.” Ilya reaches over, takes the cigarette off Shane and takes another drag.

“I’m really sorry you’re missing your mum, and I’m sorry it feels extra tough today.”

“Thanks,” Ilya replies, and he stubs out his cigarette butt. “I am still really glad to be here with you and your family.”

“Any news from home?” Shane asks carefully.

Ilya chuckles.

“No. But I am glad. I don’t care about my father or brother, and I don’t need them. David Hollander is like…” Ilya thinks for a second. “He is worth maybe three hundred of my father. So it is a good exchange.”

“I’m still sorry.” Shane sighs. Ilya turns his head and they share a little peck of a kiss.

Ilya looks back up at the sky. “I don’t know how all of the spiritual things work, but I think she watches out for me. Maybe she knew I would have you, and have your family, so I would be okay. But maybe sometimes good things just happen.”

“I don’t know the answer to that, but I’m thankful that she gave me you,” Shane wraps his arm around Ilya and gives him a squeeze. “Come on, let’s go inside. I think Dad wants to play you Arcade Fire, and I’m freezing my ass off.”

Ilya lets Shane yank him up, and then lightly swats him on the ass.

“Oi! The windows!” Shane squeaks.

“Relax, Hollander. I checked first.”

“Merry Christmas,” Shane says as he rolls to squish Ilya in his childhood bed. “Love you.”

Ilya’s eyes open slowly to find Shane on top of him; he buries his head in Shane’s thick black hair.

“Merry Christmas. You bought me nice present?”

Shane chuckles.

“I think presents are for good boys. Have you been good?”

Ilya scoffs.

“I have been on best behaviour. You were not complaining when I sucked your cock last night.”

“But does it cancel out if I sucked yours too? Plus, we already said small gifts only.” Shane teases.

Ilya yanks Shane in a little closer and reaches towards the waistband of his pyjama pants.

“Do you wanna? We could be fast. Really fast. I’ll be very good—”

They’re interrupted by a loud knock on the door. Nicely done, Yuna.

“Boys, it’s nearly 10am. Santa paid us a visit overnight, come see your presents!”

“I guess we’re not doing that,” Shane whispers to Ilya, and then says louder to Yuna, “We’re coming, be down in a minute.”

Ilya giggles.

“What?” Shane sits up and reaches to try and find his long sleeve top that’s somewhere in the tangle of duvet and sheets.

“You said we are coming. We are not coming.”

Shane groans.

“Ilya.”

“Oh my god!” David leaps off the couch to wrap his arms around Ilya and squeeze him hard.

The brand new record player and Wolf Parade vinyl were probably a little bit overkill for a first Christmas, but heck, he’s 22 years old and earning far too much money, why not do this kind of stuff? Shane had tried to talk him out of buying presents, but Ilya refused to be stopped.

“It is my love language, Shane,” Ilya had explained. “I did a quiz.”

“And Wolf Parade too!” David pulls back and pats Ilya on the shoulder.

“When you said you lost ‘Cry Cry Cry’, I knew I had to get it for you,” Ilya hugs him back.

“So generous,” Yuna says, leaning over David’s lap to give Ilya’s arm a brush.

“I thought it would be good to have a record player at the cottage,” Ilya says, blushing a little now from all the positive affirmation.

Shane had gotten Yuna and David a week-long all-inclusive stay at the Four Seasons in Koh Samui, Thailand, including flight, of course, but Yuna had nearly cried when she unwrapped a solid jade bracelet from Ilya.

To be honest, Shane didn’t seem to mind.

“Open mine,” Shane says, passing a little box to Ilya.

“Oh, so maybe I have been good this year?” Ilya teases as he fiddles with the tape.

Ilya unwraps a small box and opens it to find a bracelet, just like Shane has on. It’s identical to the one Yuna and David had brought back from Japan last year for Shane, and Ilya had mentioned a couple of times that he thought it was really cool.

“I love it,” Ilya leans in to give Shane a chaste peck on the lips. “Very beautiful.”

“I didn’t want you stealing mine. You’re always looking at it.”

Ilya passes a little envelope to Shane: a voucher for two for a private cooking class at a Japanese chef’s home in Montreal.

“So we can learn together,” Ilya explains.

“That’s so special. I can’t wait to go,” Shane says.

After lunch, and after Shane and Ilya are done eating too much chocolate out of their Santa stockings, David pops his head into the living room.

“So, we’re just going up the road to see some friends of your mum’s. We’ll be there for about two hours.”

Wow, way to be subtle, David.

“Okay, see ya, Dad!” Shane says, far too enthusiastically.

As soon as the front door closes and the car disappears down the snowy driveway, the tension snaps. Shane and Ilya lock eyes across the living room.

“Let’s go,” Shane says.

Ten seconds later, they’re both racing up the narrow wooded staircase to Shane’s room, pushing and shoving. Ilya scrapes in the win when he makes it to the top of the stairs, but then Shane gives him a shove and Ilya tackles him and picks him up, carries him into Shane’s room, and throws him down on the big bed. They wrestle, laughing, until Ilya manages to pin Shane’s body down with a triumphant smile.

The teasing and playfulness seems to ignite something, and then they’re kissing, and their hands are pushing up under each other’s sweatshirts, and Ilya’s hand slots between them to press against the outline of Shane’s hard cock before he grinds his own hard cock down to make Shane whimper just a little.

“Fuck, I want you. I want you in my mouth,” Shane manages to pant between kisses. “Been thinking about it since this morning.”

“Mm, same,” Ilya kisses Shane back and presses their hips together closer. “And now we have so much time, we do not have to rush. I want to make you feel so fucking good.”

Ilya's hand under Shane's sweatshirt squeezes his pec and then he uses his fingers to pinch a sensitive nipple until Shane gasps.

"Come on, let me suck your dick," Shane says, giving Ilya a shove so they can reposition. Ilya lets himself be rolled over and Shane pushes his sweatpants down, while Ilya lifts his hips so they can be unceremoniously yanked all the way off and tossed across the room. After giving Ilya's stomach a few wet kisses, Shane gets down between Ilya's legs and takes him in his mouth. He gets it all wet with his spit, then wraps his hand around the base and flicks his tongue across the head. Ilya's hips jerk in pleasure. Fuck, Shane knows him *so* well.

"So good, so fucking good," Ilya chants as he looks down at Shane, who looks right back up at Ilya through his lashes. "Your mouth, fuck, so fucking good."

Shane gets that distant look he has when he's concentrating, sucking and flicking his tongue and listening to Ilya moan and curse. He uses his other hand to play with Ilya's balls a little, which makes Ilya bow up off the bed and thrust deeper into Shane's mouth.

"Enough, enough," Ilya pats Shane on the back of the head. "My turn, or I will shoot early."

Shane rolls off to one side and Ilya sits up, grabs Shane by under his armpits, and hauls him up the bed.

"Off, off, off," Ilya urges as he pulls Shane's sweatshirt over his head. Shane complies eagerly, stripping off his pants and throwing them across the room to join Ilya's on the floor.

Ilya then lifts Shane by his thighs, drags him slightly further down the bed and pushes his legs up. "Hold for me."

Ilya settles himself between them and gets to work licking and pressing his tongue against Shane's hole. He uses his finger to push in just a little while he continues to devour Shane's ass. Shane whimpers and his hands fist the sheets.

"Oh fuck, baby, you're— it's so good, fuck, like that, yes, *there, there, there*— your fucking *tongue* oh my *god*—"

After a few minutes, Ilya pulls back and wipes his mouth on the back of his hand.

"Sex towel?" he asks.

"Uh, let me," Shane twists his body and pats his hand along the side of the bed to retrieve it. "Here. There we go."

Ilya spreads the slightly scratchy towel that Shane had managed to grab from the laundry the night before, just in case, on the bed, while Shane—still dangling over the side of the bed—ferrets through his duffel to pull out the lube.

Shane gets back into position with his legs open, and Ilya rests his head on Shane's belly, half draped over him as he pushes a slicked up finger in slowly.

"So tight. Relax," Ilya says, kissing Shane's stomach.

Shane takes a slow breath, and then eventually Ilya adds another finger in and curls it to find the spot inside Shane that always makes him whimper.

“There, fuck—” Shane says, closing his eyes.

Months ago, after a really long week of training, they’d both been desperate for each other, but when Ilya had felt down between Shane’s legs, he’d found him already slick and loosened up.

“Why are you open?” Ilya had asked, a little surprised when two fingers had slipped in quite easily.

Shane had just shrugged.

“I figured we’re both fucking horny, and it takes ages, so I was just trying to save us some time. I don’t know if it ever gets annoying for you when we just want a quick fuck.”

Ilya had practically growled as he rolled tighter into Shane’s side and started fucking him hard with his fingers.

“No, Shane, I fucking *love* doing this, not an inconvenience for me at all.”

Ilya had then proceeded to spend the next fifteen minutes fingering Shane until Shane had begged.

“Fuck, careful, you’ll make me come on your fingers, Ilya—”

“Then come,” Ilya had said roughly, “and then you will remember who fingers you best.”

After Shane is opened up, Ilya pulls back and climbs up the bed to give him a kiss.

“You want me to use a condom?” Ilya murmurs against Shane’s lips. “Your choice.”

“Nah, fuck it. Do it raw.”

Ilya grins like he’s won the jackpot, definitely not playing it cool as he does a tiny little fist pump. *Fuck yes.*

He lines his cock up and pushes in slowly.

“Jesus, Shane, so fucking tight and hot.”

It’s been several days since they’ve been able to actually fuck, and not just blow each other quickly, what with the big games straight before the Christmas break, and then also having to be subtle around David and Yuna.

When Ilya finally thrusts all the way in, he rests his forehead against Shane’s.

“Feel okay?”

Shane takes a deep breath and nods.

“So fucking full. Fuck me for a little bit, and then I really want to ride you. You got me so close with your fingers, so I might be able to come untouched like that.”

And so Ilya pulls back, gives Shane a few thrusts until Shane nods that he’s ready, and then holds Shane as he rolls them both over so that Shane can straddle him.

Shane starts with a few deep rolls of his hips and then adjusts the angle and starts shifting his weight up and down in little bounces. Ilya’s hands grip his waist to try and help him keep up the movement.

“Fuck,” Ilya groans, his eyes squeezing shut and his jaw going tight. “Ride me just like that, fuck, so good, so fucking tight.”

Shane braces his hands on Ilya’s chest to grind down a little faster. He leans down to kiss Ilya—a messy, sloppy kiss, both of them panting.

“You feeling good?” Ilya checks.

“Yeah, fuck, I’m pretty close, it’s feeling tingly. Hold it,” Shane pants.

Ilya’s already holding on for dear life not to accidentally blow his load before Shane, and Shane’s commanding tone is making the near-impossible task of lasting even harder.

“You want my hand?” Ilya offers, between more sloppy kisses. Ilya is really really close.

Shane nods, “Yeah, play with my cock. I’m so fucking close baby, seriously—hold it for me, I’m so close.”

Ilya’s hand finds Shane’s cock and he tugs him furiously, using his other hand to grip Shane’s ass.

“Keep going, keep going,” Shane begs against Ilya’s mouth.

“Come for me, come on my cock, Shane,” Ilya says, thrusting up to meet him. He’s trembling all over now, trying to hold his orgasm back. “Come on, use my cock, finish on me. I wanna see it. Come all over me.”

Their frantic rhythm is making the bed creak, their skin is slapping against each other and the sound of their ragged breaths fills the little room. Shane moans loudly.

“Fuck, there, yes—baby—I’m gonna—fuck—I’m coming—”

He clenches hard around Ilya and paints his chest as he comes first, and Ilya just manages to hold off, just. With one loud groan, Ilya quickly flips them back over, lifts Shane’s legs high and pounds into him hard and fast until he comes with a loud moan, fucking Shane through the aftershocks of his orgasm saying “Fuck, fuck, Shane, take it, oh my god fucking take it.”

Afterwards, they cuddle close together, both covered in come and lube, as they catch their breath and share a couple of lazy little kisses. Shane keeps his head buried in Ilya's armpit as Ilya plays with his hair.

"I think that's my favourite Christmas present," Shane says finally.

"Me too. Merry Christmas to us," Ilya chuckles.

It's freezing outside but Shane and Ilya sit out under the stars, basking in the warmth of the firepit. Ilya sets down two glasses.

Shane takes a sip of the straight vodka Ilya has poured him and splutters.

"Nope, no. I can't do this. Yuck. I'm sorry, it's just so... vodka."

Ilya rolls his eyes. This is nice vodka, from Russia, but his boyfriend has never really been one for straight spirits. He'll finish Shane's if he won't drink it.

"Go get ginger ale out of the fridge, then."

Shane leaves, coming back quickly with a beer instead, and sits down next to him.

"Look, you have yours on too," Ilya says, and reaches over Shane and clinks their matching bracelets together. "I love that we have the same. It is a very special present."

"I kind of panicked afterwards," Shane giggles and leans into Ilya. "I was worried it seemed a little bit too serious."

"Ah," Ilya pauses and thinks. "Like very big matching rings. For our wrists."

"Stop," Shane groans and pushes his face into Ilya's chest. "But yeah. I was worried—"

"Don't be worried," Ilya reaches to hold Shane's chin and tilt it up towards him. "You know I am very serious about us. I think it's so nice."

"Let me be clear," Shane says quickly, "that wasn't me like, *proposing* or whatever. Not in front of my parents with a Christmas present."

Ilya can't help but giggle at Shane's little clarification.

"Hopefully, when you propose to me—"

"When?" Shane squeaks.

"Yeah. Or when I do it first," Ilya supplies, "hopefully it will not be a situation where you aren't sure if I have proposed or not."

Ilya smiles to himself at the thought.

“No rush though, right?” Shane says, looping an arm around the back of Ilya to give him a squeeze.

“No rush.” Ilya pulls cigarettes out of his pocket. “You want to share one?”

“Mum’s gonna bitch at us again, but yeah,” Shane says as he holds his palm out.

Ilya shrugs and looks back into the cottage through the glass sliding doors.

“I think she is too busy dancing with David.”

Sure enough, Yuna and David are hand in hand boogying to some alt-rock Canadian indie track in the living room. David twirls Yuna around and it looks like they’re singing along.

“Sometimes I can’t believe it all worked out,” Shane says as he lights the cigarette. “When I think back to when we met, I can’t believe where we ended up.”

“Mm,” Ilya nods. “A year and a half has gone very quickly.”

Shane takes a drag and then passes the cigarette to Ilya who takes a drag. “When I first met you, I couldn’t believe you smoked. Now look at us.”

Ilya exhales a cloud of smoke through his nose and tries to not cough as he laughs.

“I am a terrible influence? Is that what you are saying?”

Shane shakes his head.

“No, no. Opposite. I think you might be the best thing that’s ever happened to me.”

Ilya turns and kisses Shane. It’s a deeper kiss than he’d intended, but Shane’s mouth opens and lets him in, and muscle memory means his free hand comes up to hold the back of Shane’s head.

Ilya finally pulls back.

“You are the best thing to happen to me too, Shane. Ya tebya lyublyu.”

“Aishiteru,” Shane replies.

Some people go their whole lives

And never see totality

But I believe I got the gambit

When you wake up next to me

Everyone before you crossed me

Don't you want me to feel free?

Sometimes

As an exercise, I think

"Everything is gonna be alright"

(Disbelief, by Tommy Lefroy)

Chapter End Notes

Wow, I cannot believe we are here. Thank you so much for reading. Whether you have been following along since the beginning, joined halfway, or binged this over one or two days, please leave me a comment.

I started this off in January with an idea and an iPad. Writing a long story is a real labour of love. I rang Freckle (weapon of a beta reader, you have no fucking idea how patient they are) having a full on mental breakdown about my Heated Rivalry obsession on the 12th of January.

We decided over the call that writing a long fic would actually be a really good way to cope with my obsession, you know, channel my insanity into something productive. I've been writing for a few years now and have done a few longer stories, but it had been a little while since I had stretched that part of my brain. Anyways, off we went.

I wrote on the train, I wrote at home into the night, I wrote on my lunch break. Do you know what's crazy? It worked. My Heated Rivalry obsession didn't kill me! Guys, I'm still here! And doing better than I was then.

When people say "I write for me", I really feel that. I love to read fan fiction (and other books too, I am loving Project Hail Mary), but nothing scratches that itch and gives me dopamine like lying awake at night imagining scene after scene and then looking forward to finally getting a moment to write down my ideas. I have weaponised my maladaptive daydreaming, what a time! Reading is amazing, but writing is next level. Writing this story got me through a hard time.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not done writing. There is no final bow here. If I get an idea, the iPad comes out and bang, a one shot is posted! (You can subscribe to me as a user to get an email when some freak shit comes into my brain). I do think I will take a little break from doing a big long fic though, unless some other idea grips me and won't let me sleep unless I write it.

I want to shoutout:

My Dream Team Beta Crew:

- [chocolatefreckle](#)
- [Pikelet](#)

You guys have been the best beta team in the whole world. I genuinely couldn't have done this without you. Thanks for helping me cull ideas and re write things and fix my fucking grammar. Baby, I have no idea about some of this stuff and I blame the education system.

(I'm good at maths, that's gotta count for something)

Secondly: My friends, across various social media platforms. You guys know who you are. Thank you for championing me and telling me you like my stories. Sometimes when I had a bad day, a nice message made all the difference.

Lastly: The readers! You guys! Oh my god, I actually have the best readers. You have all been so kind and so gracious, even when my posting schedule was like... not a schedule. You hung out through the Shayden Disaster (thank you for believing in me, I know this turned a lot of people off the fic). You held on through the extremely brief angst. You left me lovely comments and thoughts and even shared your own stories with me. Thank you.

The snippet at the end of this fic comes from one of my favourite songs by Tommy Lefroy. Sometimes, as an exercise I think "everything is gonna be alright." Check out Tommy Lefroy, they're super talented (and quite underground so you'll score kudos points with the wanky music fans in your life. *Tommy Lefroy? Oh you don't know them? Huh.*)

Life is full of rubbish, but writing this story was like escaping to another universe where things turn out fine in the end. Maybe one day that will be the world we all get to live in. Just maybe. I like to hold onto that.

End Notes

[find me on tumblr, ask me a question, be my friend.](#)

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