Have Fun and Come Back Safe

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at https://archiveofourown.org/works/81199996.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Heated Rivalry (TV), Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid
Relationship:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Shane Hollander, Ilya Rozanov, Rose Landry
Additional Tags:	Hurt Shane Hollander, or at least people think shane is hurt, Miscommunication, major character death implied, He's fine I promise, rose landry and shane hollander friendship, Married Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov, Worried Ilya Rozanov, Ilya Rozanov Loves Shane Hollander, Angst and Hurt/Comfort, Shane visits tokyo and does not have a good time, Model Shane Hollander, yes I know there are some more logical things the characters could have done but just suspend your disbelief and play toys with me
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2026-03-14 Completed: 2026-03-17 Words: 6,139 Chapters: 2/2

Have Fun and Come Back Safe

by Rainbow_Femme

Summary

"Can I borrow your phone?"
The man handed it over eagerly and Shane took a deep breath, praying that this actually worked. The phone rang and rang before going to voicemail, but Shane relaxed when the familiar old voice confirmed it still belonged to the man he'd known as a kid. And Shane, eternal hater of asking for help, did his best to complete one of the most awkward tasks of his life.
"Hi Mr. Chabaud, this is Shane, David and Yuna's boy. Um, this is going to sound strange, and trust me it's a long story, but when you get this could you go across the street to my parents house and tell them the news is wrong and I'm not actually dead?"
Or
One earthquake, two lost phones, and many articles citing a mistranslated headline later and Shane needs to get a message home that he and Rose are alive. But he and Rose are millennials and whoops, they haven't had to memorize a phone number since they were kids.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Chapter 1

Shane was never leaving Canada again. Yes, they had cold and snow, and god knew there were days he imagined going to a team in Los Angeles or Florida and never again having to scrape ice or shovel snow. But at least in Ottawa the *land* and *sea* didn't try to kill him.

He was maybe being dramatic. But he'd not been enjoying his trip to Tokyo before the earthquake hit, and it had not made the day any more enjoyable. If he were there with Ilya and his parents then sure, he'd probably be having a nice time. But that was because his mother ran family trips like it was the navy, and his dad and Ilya would happily be along for the ride without much expectations, and they would all know that no he did not want to spend his time in the busiest tourist trap areas, being photographed, for hours on end, for four days straight.

But Rolex wanted to take more of the watch market from Casio, and they had a half Japanese spokesperson at their disposal, and *no, Shane, the fact that you don't speak the language will just come off as endearing, it doesn't matter that the idea of needing other people to accommodate around you is your literal nightmare. It's just one week, it'll be fun, we promise.*

They had all been really nice about it, and his stylist said of the North American celebrities they brought over for these kinds of things he was one of the most polite which felt a little better, but still. He was the guy who would spend an hour trying to open a stuck jar before asking someone for help, needing help to order breakfast had him googling how long a person could go without eating before they starved.

The one good thing is they had wanted a woman to be in the ad campaign with him and jumped when he'd off-handedly suggested Rose, who was happy to spend a week in Japan with Shane and away from the stand-still her current movie was at while they were stuck in rewrites.

It was the most complex campaign Shane had been involved in, both photography shoots and filming so they could have commercials and print and digital ads. The "story" of the ad was it was a glamorous day in the life of two celebrities wearing matching His and Hers watches.

The first day was the two of them having coffee on a hotel balcony overlooking the city in fancy silk pajamas. Then it was them buying breakfast from a street vendor, even though they weren't even allowed to eat the food because it might muss their makeup, meaning Shane just had to stare at and smell delicious food for hours before letting people on the crew eat it.

Then it was them looking like they were being fitted for a tux and ball gown. Then standing on a rooftop in the outfits overlooking the city at night, their hands on the railing to show off the watches.

This was their final shoot day, and it was the most elaborate. The director had described it as a final sort of fantasy sequence. In practical terms, they'd been taken out on a boat to what had been called an island, but was mostly just flat rocks sticking out of the water. They were

in their fancy outfits again, but Rose's hair was down rather than the fancy updo, and Shane was carrying his tuxedo jacket over one arm with his shirt halfway unbuttoned. They were also barefoot, which was cold for Shane but Rose said it was better than trying to stand on the slippery rocks in the heels they'd given her, which Shane couldn't argue.

Earlier, the assistant director had come over and shown a picture she had taken while the director and photographer were chatting. It had been of Rose and Shane huddled together against the wind, matching pink towels around their shoulders to keep them somewhat warm and dry between takes, holding paper cups of warm tea they were drinking through straws to preserve their makeup, both faces intent and concentrated as they tried to drink as carefully as possible. Shane had to admit it was cute and kind of funny and said he was ok with her posting it to the Rolex instagram with a caption of "COMING SOON…" as a promo for the upcoming campaign. She'd even managed to get an angle where their matching watches were showing.

No doubt Harris would be sharing the picture to the Centaurs social media. Shane had also noticed his wedding ring was visible in the photo, so he would likely tag Ilya with some couples joke. He loved playing up the fact that two members of the team were married.

God, Shane missed home. He was so ready to go back. The time difference had made talking to Ilya difficult, and at any time one was usually at the end of an exhausting day while the other was just getting up. Shane just wanted to be home, in bed, with his husband and their dog, letting Ilya play with his hair while Shane happily complained about the trip, feeling Ilya's deep rumbling chuckle against his cheek where it rested over Ilya's heart.

The last thing he'd texted Ilya was a picture of the boat that would take them out to the island with the caption "Final day, wish me luck." Ilya had responded with a heart and kissing emoji.

Shane and Rose were standing out on the rocks, staring dramatically over the water with the horizon behind them, Shane feeling ridiculous even though the director assured him he looked very James Bond, when it hit. The ground beneath their feet suddenly began shaking violently, Shane immediately slipping on the wet rocks and falling onto his tailbone, Rose landing on top of him a second later.

The crew scrambled to secure the equipment, but even still there were sounds of objects splashing into the water and swearing in various languages. When Shane looked up he could see waves sloshing onto the rocks and sweeping away bags that had been set on what they thought was a safe enough distance in. The boat they came over on was rocking alarmingly back and forth. Shane spotted a lone high heel carried away with the tide.

After about a minute the shaking subsided and a few crew members let out nervous laughter. And then, more swearing as everyone began looking around and realizing what all had been swept away.

"Oh shit," Rose groaned, looking over Shane's shoulder. He turned to follow her gaze. "My purse."

Shane was going to reassure her that she could get a new one when they got back to land, and then remembered they had both put their phones in it while the shoot was going. It also had their wallets and hotel keys.

“That’s… Fuck.”

The rest of the shoot was called off, no one wanting to stay out on the tiny rock away from shore in case aftershocks hit, the director saying they had gotten enough pictures that they at least would have something to work with, and they all piled onto the boat to head back.

Rose disappeared for a few minutes, and when she plopped back down beside Shane, she was looking particularly triumphant.

“No worries on tonight, I talked with the Rolex rep, they’re extending the boat rental through tomorrow so we can stay here. I’ve never actually slept on a yacht before.”

Shane blinked. She was right, it was one of those fancy yachts rich people rented, Shane had kept forgetting since they had only spent a few minutes on the deck and most of the interior had just been used as a place to keep the equipment and crew who weren’t needed during the photos.

Rose’s ability to solve problems never failed to amaze Shane. It hadn't occurred to him that they could just walk up to someone there and ask for help with the problem; he’d been ready to fend for themselves. This was why he needed people like Rose and Ilya around, Shane’s instinct to problem solve often gave less convenient solutions than their instinct to just ask someone for help when they needed it.

“What about all our stuff at the hotel?”

“She said not to worry about it, she’ll handle everything, we can just hang out on the boat and relax and we should have everything we need for our flight out tomorrow.”

“That’s nice of her.”

Rose rolled her eyes, stretching out next to him. “She probably just wants to keep us from suing them for almost dying in an earthquake, or getting thousands of dollars of our stuff swept out to sea.”

“Well, so long as she makes sure people back home know why we- Wait, thousands? How expensive was that purse?”

“... Don’t be mad.”

“You knew you had to bring something to sit on rocks and get covered in ocean water and you brought something worth *thousands* of dollars?”

“I don’t think you understand how cute it looked with the pink sweatpants I brought to wear after the shoot.”

“I do not.”

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Shane groaned at a knock at the door. He and Rose were in the master bedroom of the yacht, technically sharing the king sized bed even though, really, it was so big they could have both stretched out like star fish and still not touched each other. Which was good, because when she slept, all four of Rose's limbs became compelled to stretch as far away from each other as possible. In their brief time dating, Shane had woken up multiple times with her forearm flung across his face.

"Mmyeah?" Rose sat up first, rubbing at her eyes. Sleeping on the water had been odd, especially after the earthquake. All of Shane's dreams had been him trying to run towards something while the ground beneath his feet swayed and tilted with each step.

A nervous young man entered the room with a laptop. Shane vaguely recognized him and was pretty sure he was the assistant of someone important they'd met on their first day in Tokyo. Maybe he was a big Rose Landry fan and that was why he looked ready to throw up. Or maybe he just wasn't a fan of boats.

"Good morning. Um, there has been some… Developments overnight."

Shane scootched himself into a sitting position by the headboard.

"Like what?" Had there been an issue with the pictures? Did Rolex want them to extend their stay to do more? Or maybe the hotel was giving them a hard time about giving back their stuff without talking to Shane and Rose personally.

"Yes, um…"

The terrified man looked around awkwardly until Rose patted the bed, inviting him to sit down. He sat as lightly on the edge as he could, showing them the laptop screen. It was an article, written in Japanese.

"So, some items lost during the photo shoot washed up in Tokyo bay a few hours after the earthquake." He scrolled to show them pictures people had taken of camera lenses and battery packs floating in the water, Rose's one shoe, as well as a few pictures of Rose's purse and its contents emptied out onto the ground and spread out so the items could be seen. Including Shane's wallet, open to show his ID, and his waterlogged phone, complete with the Centaurs #24 phone case.

"Since your last known picture was out on the little island, and then your things were in the water, and people called your hotel and were told you never returned last night, people were talking online and this article was posted." He scrolled back up to the title. "It says 'Rumours Claim Rose Landry and Shane Hollander May Be Dead After Earthquake.'"

Shane stared at the assistant, the words not fully sinking in. "I…"

The assistant continued looking down at the screen and not at Shane or Rose. "And we think someone in the US tried to use something like Google translate to read the article and it didn't get the tone across properly, because within an hour this article was written."

It was similar, having the same pictures, but the implication of the slight wording change in the headline made Shane's stomach drop. Instead of rumours claiming they might be dead, this headline read "Sources Say Rose Landry and Shane Hollander Killed In Earthquake."

Shane's breath began coming faster. Fuck. His parents. *Ilya.* They each had news alerts for each other's name, the second this was posted Ilya would have gotten the notification.

"What time is it in Ottawa right now?"

"7 pm."

Rose hugged herself. "And when were these posted?"

"7 am Ottawa time."

Twelve hours. Shane's depressed husband who loved him more than anything in this world had spent the last twelve hours thinking that Shane was dead.

His instinct was to reach for his phone to call Ilya, explain what happened and talk him down. But his phone was dead in some tourist's pocket by now, and after spending the last decade with a cell phone, Shane hadn't needed to memorize phone numbers since he was a kid, and his panicked brain was of no help trying desperately to conjure it, or those of his parents, or Hayden, or anyone at all helpful. And since they all were who they were, they kept their numbers unlisted.

And, of course, he was sitting in front of a laptop with the entire internet at his fingertips, but he always clicked the computer generated "secure" password that was a bunch of random numbers and letters, so he couldn't remember the logins to any email or social media. And even if he did, with stupid fucking multifactor authentication it would probably not let him in without texting him a code…

"Shit," Shane finally said. "Fucking holy shit."

Rose got up and started pacing, hands in her hair. "Oh my god, oh my god, oh my *god*! People can't think I'm dead, holy shit, this is… This can't… My parents… My brothers…"

Shane closed his eyes, trying to think, trying to focus. He needed to get in contact with someone back home, anyone who could get a message across that he was alright. He could imagine Ilya looking down at his phone, still rumpled and out of sorts from sleep, and seeing the headline that his husband was likely dead. Calling the hotel, begging to speak to Shane, only to be told Shane had left the previous morning and never returned, that a representative from the photo shoot had called and told them to pack up Shane's things because he wouldn't be coming back for them.

God, he had to know *some* useful phone number, *something!* The last time he'd had to memorize a phone number was back when he was a kid and his parents had him recite the number of the neighbor across the street in case of an emergency and he ever needed help.

Wait.

“Can I borrow your phone?”

The man handed it over eagerly and Shane took a deep breath, praying that this actually worked. The phone rang and rang before going to voicemail, but Shane relaxed when the familiar old voice confirmed it still belonged to the man he’d known as a kid. And Shane, eternal hater of asking for help, did his best to complete one of the most awkward tasks of his life.

“Hi Mr. Chabaud, this is Shane, David and Yuna’s boy. Um, this is going to sound strange, and trust me it’s a long story, but when you get this could you go across the street to my parents house and tell them the news is wrong and I’m not actually dead?”

Chapter 2

Ilya flopped back onto the bed, towel loose around his hips, hair still slightly damp from the shower. It took very little time for Shane to be away before Ilya started reverting back to his unkempt bachelor habits. Shane was not a fan of damp towels on the bed.

Ilya checked his phone. 5:59 pm, hell yeah. He'd scrambled but he'd managed to get in the door and showered on time. He still needed to make dinner, walk Anya, and do laundry, but he wasn't missing their call.

At 6:01, the video call request from Shane came through and Ilya hit accept. His husband's sleepy face filled the screen, looking so adorable it made Ilya's chest ache.

"Good morning, sleepyhead."

Shane smiled at him, hair falling a little in his face.

"And good evening to you. How was your day?"

Ilya shrugged. "Was ok. Watched the Pike children so Hayden and Jackie could run errands."

"You watched them, or Anya watched them?"

Ilya grinned. He'd made up the game Lost Sheep, which was basically the kids all getting one minute to run and hide in the yard before he let Anya loose to find them and herd them back to the house. The kids and the dog could go all afternoon and then slept like rocks at night.

"Was joint effort."

"I'm sure."

Shane stretched and Ilya tried not to groan at how good his husband looked spread out shirtless on the sheets.

"I miss you."

Shane propped himself up on one elbow. "I miss you, too. I can't believe we used to go weeks without seeing each other, one week feels like an eternity."

Ilya swallowed hard. It really did feel like it had been far more than a few days. He didn't sleep well without Shane curled up beside him, the bed felt cold and too big without him. Ilya ate quick, uninteresting meals alone and had no one to talk to about whatever game was on, or someone to bother by putting on a stupid movie.

It wasn't until he and Shane began their relationship that he realized just how much of love was in casual shared time. Sex with Shane was great, but in that moment he wanted nothing more than to just curl up under the covers together and talk about nothing.

“We got spoiled.” He tried to make his voice light and relaxed. “Last day of pictures today, yeah?”

Shane nodded, yawning. “Thank god. One day of photos, then tomorrow one full day in the air, and then finally back home.”

“Uck, I do not miss that flight,” Ilya said, wrinkling his nose at the memory of the agonizingly long hours he’d spend on the plane to and from Russia.

Shane’s alarm went off and he groaned, hiding his face in the pillow.

“I don’t want to sit and have strangers smear stuff on my face so I can stand on a cold rock all day.” Even after over a decade of ads and interviews, Shane still hated getting makeup applied for the shoots, scrubbing at his face for ten minutes after getting home to get the tacky feeling off.

Ilya tried to smile. “The sooner you go the sooner it will be over.”

“I don’t think that’s how time works.” Shane heaved a sigh. “I should get going, though. I’ll let you know when I’m finally free. Sleep well, I love you. More than anything.” He blinked rapidly a couple times.

Ilya felt another pang in his chest. None of this was Shane’s “thing.” He didn’t like being off routine, he didn’t like not having control of his food or his schedule, he didn’t like being surrounded by bright lights and talking people for hours on end, he didn’t like being the center of attention when he wasn’t playing hockey, and he especially did not like all of those things happening every day in a row for a week. He looked miserable and exhausted. Ilya wanted to reach through the screen and pull him into a fierce hug. He wanted to curl around his husband and protect him from everyone and everything in the world, even just for a little while.

“I love you too, *luchik.* With all my life.”

And then Shane was gone and the world was quiet. At least, until Anya started whining for dinner and Ilya grabbed some loose shorts to go feed them both.

He could tell she missed Shane, too. Ilya was her “person”, but she’d been mopey since Shane left, sniffing at his usual spot on the couch like she was trying to see if he had been there recently and she’d just missed him.

The internet said that dogs liked having structure and routine, and that was Shane in her life. He fed her at the same time every day, made sure she got walked at the same times, practiced her tricks with her, and was generally in the same places at the same times each day. Sometimes if Ilya was held up doing something, he could swear she rolled her eyes at Shane in shared annoyance before huffing and getting up to herd Ilya to his spot with them.

Ilya put her food in her bowl, ruffling her ears as she ate.

“Life will be normal again soon, I promise.”

He ate leftover grilled chicken with mixed veggies, walked Anya, and was hanging up his shirts fresh from the laundry when he got a ping on his phone. Swiping in, he felt a jolt of affection when he saw what Harris had tagged him in.

It was a picture he'd shared from the official Rolex account. Shane had a bright pink blanket or towel around his shoulders, his shirt was sexily unbuttoned, and he was looking deadly serious in complete concentration as he carefully drank something through a straw.

Also Rose Landry was there.

But Ilya was already zooming in on Shane's face, on the pinkness of his cheeks, nose, and tips of his ears in the cold, how long his eyelashes looked, his windswept hair. And best of all, the way the sun glinted off his wedding ring.

Harris had captioned it with, "For all those who ask if Ottawa's golden boy ShaneHollander24 is as serious in everything he does as he is with hockey. All requests to have him join your professional tea sipping team must go through captain IlyaRozanov81."

Ilya smiled and replied. "Only the best hockey players can drink through a straw without smudging lipstick. ShaneHollander24, you look very pretty."

A minute later, Svetlana replied with, "Don't listen to him ShaneHollander24, he's just jealous you don't have to get touched up every five minutes like him. But you do look very pretty."

Ilya cropped the photo so it was a closeup on Shane and saved it as his new phone background. Then, he burrowed under the covers, closed his eyes, and drifted to sleep thinking of how close he was to Shane coming home and everything going back to how it should be.

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Ping!

…

Ping!

…

Ping! Ping! Ping!

Ilya groaned and groped for his phone, cursing whatever app was blowing him up with notifications. It sounded like his news alert, which was odd. He had it set to tell him anytime he, Shane, or the Centaurs appeared in the news, but it rarely went off like this unless it was playoffs or AllStar week. Or that time they'd been outed to the entire world.

Every thought left his head as he swiped to see what the fuss was about.

"Sources Say Rose Landry and Shane Hollander Killed In Earthquake."

That… That was… No, he'd just seen Shane, talked to him, that couldn't be right. It just couldn't. The world didn't *exist* without Shane Hollander in it.

Ilya scanned through the article, heart hammering so hard he was sure it would leave a bruise. Four people confirmed so far killed after being in the wrong place at the wrong time… Photo shoot took place on a popular spot rumored to be dangerous under the wrong conditions… People had died there previously when weather suddenly changed…

There were pictures as well, things found floating in the bay. Shane's wallet, with his drivers license picture from years ago making him look so young. His phone with the phone case Ilya had gotten him. That picture that had been posted less than an hour before the earthquake hit, suddenly turning Ilya's stomach at the precarious rocks only a foot or two out of the water, with nothing but endless ocean behind them.

A statement from the hotel saying the two hadn't returned.

There were no sightings of them on the street afterwards either, no paparazzi had seen them.

And no text goodnight from Shane for Ilya to wake up to as he had every other day of the trip. Because his phone was being fished out of Tokyo bay when he should have been curled up in bed after a long day.

No, no no no no…

Ilya didn't recognize the noise that came from his throat. It was raw, strangled, more wounded animal than man.

He kept searching article after article for any more information, anything that could bring him some sense of relief. But with the time difference, it seemed there weren't many people who knew anything that were still awake or checking messages.

Finally, Ilya was left staring numbly down at his phone, at that picture of Shane with his wedding ring and pink ears. Then, Ilya Rozanov grabbed his pillow, pressed his face into it, and screamed. It might have been wordless agony, it might have been his husband's name.

He screamed and he screamed until the rest of his body caught up and he was hit with a sob that made him realize why in English they called them "gut wrenching" or "heart rending." He certainly felt as if everything inside of him was being torn to shreds, half of his self ripped away and leaving nothing behind but bloody edges.

Don't you dare tell me he's dead. Ilya wanted to scream at everyone who had written the articles like it was nothing, like Shane meant nothing. *Don't you dare fucking tell me my husband is dead. My* ***husband.***

Not everyone had a single person who was the love of their life, but Ilya did. Shane was his center, his gravity, his home. When Ilya found himself at the bottom of a hole he couldn't climb out of, it was Shane who carried him back to the surface. And when not even Shane could get him out, Shane would climb down and sit with Ilya at the bottom, making sure he knew he was never, ever alone.

Ilya had no idea how long he stayed like that, lost to a pain that couldn't have been worse if it was a knife plunged to the hilt into his heart. It wasn't until his phone rang that he lifted his face, his throat feeling as if he had swallowed razor wire. The caller ID came up as a sports reporter who worked out of Montreal, and if Ilya had it in him he would have cursed the man to hell and back for thinking he could call and get a fucking comment out of Ilya for this.

Instead, he hit decline and arranged for a car to pick him up and take him to David and Yuna's. He didn't know how he would stomach being around someone he didn't know right now, feeling like an open wound, but there was no way he would be able to drive.

Ilya dressed as best he could, got Anya's leash, and, before walking out the door, grabbed one of Shane's flannels from the closet. He pressed it to his face the whole ride over, not caring if the driver thought he was crazy.

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Ilya spent an unknown amount of time sitting on the floor of the Hollander living room, shaking hand stroking Anya as she whined at the distress around her. Galina had reached out as well as Svetlana, but Ilya thanked them and told them he didn't really have the ability to put any of this into words yet. To be honest, the only person he could imagine talking to about potentially losing Shane was Shane.

David sat at the kitchen table, peeling the label off a half full water bottle, seeming to be just as lost for words as Ilya. Yuna was in her office, head bowed low, hands folded so tightly in front of her the knuckles were stark white. Her phone calls had simply been met with "We won't have information until their office opens for the business day."

If Shane had died, they'd have said something, right? But on the other hand, if he was fine, wouldn't they have also said something? Ilya didn't know how any of this worked, who spoke with who in the complicated international business world.

Very little new information came out. More people tried reaching out for a quote. Everyone on the team sent kind messages and reassurance that everything would be ok. Time moved.

Ilya couldn't look at his surroundings, everywhere covered with pictures and reminders of the son David and Yuna loved with everything they had. Including, of course, pictures over the mantle from Shane and Ilya's wedding. They'd fought so hard to get to each other, it couldn't just *end* before their first anniversary.

And then, a knock at the door. Anya's head lifted at the sound, ears perking up, but she stayed at Ilya's side. The office door creaked open and light, slow steps made their way to the front door. Ilya didn't recognize the low, indistinct voice. But he, David, and Anya all jumped at the high pitched sound Yuna Hollander made in response.

Running to the entryway, Ilya came to a screeching halt at a familiar voice, if a bit tinny and distant as the older man in front of him played a voicemail recording.

"… news is wrong and I'm not actually dead?"

Shane. Holy fuck, *Shane.* Ilya's knees gave out as the man explained he'd come back from a walk to find the message, having not even heard what was happening before then. Yuna had her hands over her mouth and was nodding silently, David holding her shoulders and looking as if it was the only thing keeping him from sinking down beside Ilya.

Ilya wrapped his arms around Anya and pressed his face to her fur, the relief like a blow to the stomach, knocking the air from his lungs. He was somewhere between laughing, crying, and hyperventilating.

The man sent them all the message, and it played over and over throughout the house for hours after, Shane's worried and frantic voice the most beautiful sound Ilya had ever heard.

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Shane thanked the flight attendant profusely as she let him off the plane first, needing little inducement beyond "I need to get home because my family thinks I died."

Once it became clear just how bad the misreporting had been, things had moved quickly. New flights were booked for Shane and Rose getting them to the US as fast as they could, as well as replacement phones they could set up once they landed. Shane and Rose had hugged goodbye in the airport, Rose getting onto a flight to LA while Shane was going to Vancouver, then getting on another flight from Vancouver to Ottawa.

A security guard met him as soon as he was off the plane and, a bit confusingly, did not lead him to the main terminal towards his Ottawa flight. Shane assumed it was to avoid reporters and fans looking to get pictures and video of him after everything that happened, but he froze when he realized what they were walking towards.

A plane, though not the one on his ticket. It was smaller, and it had the ridiculous Ottawa Centaurs logo.

And on the tarmac by the stairs was a nervous Russian man who almost certainly had not slept in the last 24 hours.

Shane was running before he realized it. He was halfway there when Ilya caught sight of him, and then he was running, too. They crashed into each other as they had so often before on the ice, this time their arms wrapping in vie grips around each other, Ilya burying his face in Shane's neck as he sank to his knees, Shane going down with him.

Shane was sure to have bruises of Ilya's fingertips as they dug into his shoulder and hip, clinging like, well, like he had feared he'd never get the chance to hold his husband again. English and Russian swirled around them, interspersed by Ilya kissing every inch of Shane he could reach.

Love, sweetheart, my darling, my life, my Shane, my Shane, my Shane…

"I'm so sorry…" Shane croaked out, desperate to soothe what he knew would have been an unimaginable hurt.

But Ilya shook his head and pulled back enough to look at Shane, reaching up to stroke his cheek reverently, eyes glassy and shining.

“No, do not apologize. I prayed for a miracle that you would come back to me, and you did.”

When they were able to stand they made their way to the plane, Ilya clutching Shane’s hand like a lifeline. But he only made it a few steps inside before another body slammed into him. And then another, and another. It seemed Ilya was not the only member of the team who wanted to see Shane as soon as he was back on the continent. In fact, Shane was pretty sure every Centaur plus Hayden were packed in with them, everyone talking at once.

“Holy shit holy *shit* Hollander what the fuck-“

“What in the hell even happened!?”

“They were literally saying you got lost at sea or something!”

Wiebe finally shooed everyone to their seats like they were a pack of high schoolers on a bus, taking a second to hug Shane fiercely before sending him off with the others.

Once they were in the air the questions came and Shane did his best to explain, Ilya unabashedly sitting with his cheek resting on Shane’s head, holding Shane’s left hand in both of his own, fiddling with Shane’s wedding ring.

“-so yeah, apparently there was a mixed language game of telephone and no one realized that ‘take care of everything’ should probably mean letting anyone else know what had happened during the shoot since Rose and I couldn’t. Then 90 seconds after I wake up I find out a different mixed language game of telephone has everyone thinking I’m dead. So I’m panicking, Rose is panicking, all I could think is I needed to get in contact with someone as fast as possible, and the only number I could come up with is my old neighbor who I was supposed to call if I had a problem when I was home alone after school.”

Troy shook his head. “Honestly, I have no idea what I would have done if I was in a different country and had a broken phone. That was pretty good for being half awake and shot full of adrenaline.”

“Got the job done, at least,” Haas agreed. He was smiling now but Shane could see his eyes were a bit bloodshot. It touched him how worried the Centaurs had been.

Hayden was a wreck, of course, but he’d been like a brother to Shane for years now, and with every kid he had he became more of a marshmallow.

“I must have driven Rose crazy on the flight back, coming up with a million different things I could have maybe also done to be more helpful. But once I started saying I should have had the guy DM my mom on Twitter she told me to go to sleep.”

Shane could feel Ilya’s soft smile against his hair. “Was non-stop calls and messages from random people all day, nice old man across the street worked well.”

Shane yawned. Now that he was back in Canada, surrounded by his team, and next to his husband, he felt exhausted. Shane looked sleepily down at their joined hands, stroking one of Ilya's fingers.

"Are you wearing my flannel?"

"I needed something that smelled like you until I got the real thing back." He took in a deep breath and Shane did the same. God, he'd missed everything about Ilya, including the way he smelled; the unique combination of his favorite soap, cologne, deodorant, fabric softener, dog hair, sweaty locker room, and something else that was just uniquely him.

There would be more questions, reporters, requests for statements, and god knew what else for god knew how long. But there, with the cabin lights dim, in a stiff plane seat, head on Ilya's shoulder, he fell into a sleep better than any he'd had alone in a week of luxury hotels.

End Notes

Next we get poor Ilya's POV

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