

doting on

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/81860626) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/81860626>.

Rating:	Explicit
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 , Original Children of Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov
Additional Tags:	Married Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov , Retired Hockey Player Ilya Rozanov , Parents Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov , Kid Fic , Future Fic , One Shot , Slice of Life , POV Shane Hollander , shane hollander...i must love ur mind bc i am always writing in your pov , Mpreg , Male Pregnancy , Pregnant Shane Hollander , Bottom Shane Hollander , Top Ilya Rozanov , Barebacking , Anal Sex , Fertility Issues , 5+1 Things , Shane Hollander Needs a Hug , Stubborn Shane Hollander , shane hollander getting pampered by his husband and kids who adore him :)) , Not Beta Read , i dont really know how to tag this bc it starts with shane getting folded in half and then its kinda sad and then its fluff , Ilya Rozanov Loves Shane Hollander , also ilya is shane's weighted blanket :))) , Protective Ilya Rozanov , Post-Book 6: The Long Game (Game Changers) , Domestic , Vomiting , Retired Hockey Player Shane Hollander
Language:	English
Series:	Part 13 of Our House
Stats:	Published: 2026-03-26 Words: 9,416 Chapters: 1/1

doting on

by [hollanov_1410](#)

Summary

"Aren't I so lucky," he said, tilting his head back to look up at Shane. "I have very sexy cougar as my husband."

"We're the same age," Shane reminded him, thumb tracing Ilya's jaw.

"Not true." Ilya shifted forward on his knees until he was settled between Shane's legs, his hands coming up to cup Shane's stomach. "For the next month, I have a sugar daddy."

Shane laughed. "So now I'm some old man buying you gifts?"

"Well," Ilya said, pressing a kiss to the curve of Shane's stomach through his shirt. Then another. "You *are* old man. And you *are* giving me the most precious gift of all. So yes. Is accurate, I would say."

5 times Ilya and their kids took care of Shane throughout his pregnancy, and 1 time they were reminded just how stubborn Shane Hollander can be.

Notes

general disclaimer: this follows the same Hollanov dads universe from my other fics in [Our House](#), but they're all standalones so you definitely don't need to read any of them to read this one!! some general background that might add a little context:

- this specific fic in the series takes place about 11 years post-TLG
- their kids are niko (8/9), max (5/6), and shane is pregnant with their third, mila, here
- they're both retired, but shane works as a skill development coach for the centaurs

thank you for reading!!!

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

1.

November 2031

"Harder," Shane choked out, which wasn't really a demand so much as a barely coherent request.

Ilya was moving with a frantic, rhythmic intensity, his skin slick with sweat. He shifted his grip, hooked Shane's ankles up over his shoulders, and drove forward until Shane was practically folded in half—which punched a moan out of Shane that he had absolutely no control over.

"Is okay?" Ilya gasped, his pace stuttering for a second as he searched Shane's face.

"Yes," Shane managed, hands shooting up to anchor on the headboard. "Faster. *Please*."

Ilya looked down between them, at his length entering Shane's with obscene squelching, his jaw loose and eyes glassy.

"*Fuck*," he breathed, barely audible.

"What—" Shane started, then cut himself off with a broken sound when Ilya's hips angled just right, hitting his prostate dead-on. "What d'you see?"

He felt Ilya pulse inside him. "So wrecked," Ilya managed, his voice blown out. "So good for me. You take me so well. Always so—" his hips stuttered— "*fuck*, Shane—"

His rhythm was faltering now and Shane clenched around him deliberately, chasing the drag of it.

That angle always completely undid Shane. This deep, it always felt like Ilya had to carve space in his guts to make room. And there was something about knowing he could take it, that his body had learned to open around Ilya like it was made to do it, that got Shane every single time. And with how much they'd been fucking lately—this was their second round of the morning—even this felt easier now. Less like being split open, more like coming home.

Ilya planted his hands on either side of Shane's shoulders, leaning his weight forward as he drove in faster, making Shane's vision go white at the edges.

Shane cried out, loud enough that Ilya clapped a hand over Shane's mouth. "*Shh*," he breathed. "Don't wake the boys."

But the pressure of Ilya's palm against his lips only made it worse. Shane let his mouth go slack against it, drool slicking Ilya's hand. His eyes were rolling back.

When Ilya finally pulled his hand away, Shane's breathing came out in small, broken sounds, perfectly timed to each thrust, like Ilya was pushing them out of him one by one.

"Need—" he started, and lost the rest of it completely.

"Need what," Ilya rasped out, not slowing. "Tell me."

Shane's head tipped back into the pillow, hands dropping from the headboard and fisting in the sheets. He could feel Ilya twitch inside him, getting close, and it pulled another broken sound from his throat. "Need you to—*fuck*—" he moaned. "Fill me up. *Fill me up.*"

Ilya was losing it. He cursed under his breath in Russian and kept jackhammering into Shane, his rhythm erratic and desperate. "*You'd like that,*" he slurred in Russian, his voice rough and wrecked. "Going to give you everything. Everything you want."

Shane clamped down around him and Ilya was gone, burying himself deep with a choked groan, hips stuttering forward as he spilled into Shane. Shane felt every pulse of it, deep and spreading warm all the way through him.

"Yes," Shane sputtered, his body tightening involuntarily with each wave. "God, Ilya, fuck, *yes.*"

Ilya leaned over him, still buried deep, panting hard against Shane's shoulder. His hands were gripping Shane's thighs now, holding him open.

"Don't pull out," Shane panted, his voice wrecked and breathless. "Keep everything—keep it all in me."

Ilya groaned low in his throat, his hips giving a small, helpless thrust like his body had answered before his brain could catch up. He wrapped his hand around Shane's aching cock and started pumping. "*Of course,*" he breathed in Russian, his voice barely there. "Come for me. Come for me, Shane."

It didn't take long. A few firm strokes and Shane was gone, his whole body seizing up as he spilled over Ilya's fist and his own stomach, Ilya's name breaking apart in his throat on the way out.

They stayed like that for a while afterward, breathing hard. Ilya with his face pressed into Shane's neck, still seated deep inside him even as he softened. Shane could feel all the warmth of Ilya's cum in him, could feel it every time he shifted even slightly. His mind kept circling back to the same thought on repeat: *Maybe this was it. Maybe this time it worked.*

MaybeMaybeMaybeMaybe.

After a few minutes, Shane shifted restlessly beneath him. Ilya pressed some slow, exhausted kisses to his neck before pulling back to look at him. His face was flushed, hair darker now from the sweat, and he wearing that big, stupid grin of his.

Shane wanted another baby with that stupid grin.

He pulled Ilya into a kiss before he could fully catch his breath, and his hand dropped between them, already reaching for Ilya's soft cock. "Again," he said urgently against Ilya's mouth. "Let's go again."

"Shane—" Ilya started, but Shane was already shifting.

Shane sat up and straddled Ilya's lap before he could finish his sentence, feeling some of Ilya's cum already starting to slip out of him. His mind was racing, already doing the math. If they went again right now, that would be the last window before tonight when the boys were in bed—hours from now, hours wasted—*maybe maybe maybe*—

"Shane." Ilya's hands came up to Shane's hips, not pulling him closer, just holding him in place. His voice was different this time—careful and measured. He was scanning Shane's face.

Shane met his eyes. "I'm fine."

"I do not think you are right now," Ilya said carefully.

"I *am*," Shane said, sharper than he meant to. He pulled in a breath and rocked his hips a little on Ilya. "I am."

Ilya studied him for a long moment, his thumbs rubbing small circles on Shane's hips. Then he said, very carefully, "Well I don't...I don't think I am right now. I think I would like to get us some water. Maybe take a breather. Is that okay?"

Shane looked at Ilya. At his worried eyes, at the way he was watching Shane like he was trying not to startle a spooked animal or something. He worked his jaw and climbed off Ilya's lap. "Fine," he said shortly, reaching for his discarded shirt.

Ilya sat up slowly, still watching him. "Shane..."

Shane pulled it over his head, which was stupid because he was going to shower anyway this morning, but he needed something to do with his hands. Something to focus on that wasn't the tightness climbing up his throat.

"Shane." Ilya's voice said again, careful.

Shane smoothed the hem of his shirt down. Said nothing.

"Shane." Ilya moved closer to him, the bed shifting behind him. "Talk to me. Where are you hiding."

Shane's felt his ears starting to ring. They had time this morning, another twenty minutes at least. If they just tried again right now, one more time, maybe this time would be different, why didn't Ilya want to keep trying, they *have* to keep trying if they want to—

"It's been seven months."

It came out sharper than he meant it to. He covered his face with both hands immediately after. His breathing was already starting to feel wrong, jagged, like it always did when he said the number out loud. Saying it out loud gave it more weight than it already had.

He felt Ilya's arms come around him from behind, pulling him back against his chest without a word.

"I know," Ilya murmured quietly into his hair. "I know, *moya lyubov*."

Shane sat there and let himself be held and felt completely hollowed out.

They had been trying for a baby nonstop ever since Shane finished his last season in April. And ever since they failed to conceive after those first few months, they've been having this circular conversation.

With Niko and Max, it had been so quick—Max happened from *one* night without a condom. And they had known going into this that Shane was older now, that it might take longer, that it just might not happen at all and that would be okay and they'd be okay and everything would be *okay*—

But now it really wasn't happening.

And nothing was feeling very okay at all.

He closed his eyes, trying to force his thoughts to slow down. He needed to stop thinking this hard about it. In fact, he was the one who'd been pretty dead set on being done after two kids for all these years. And when they did ultimately decide on trying for one more, Shane had told Ilya he was okay with whatever outcome they got, and *not getting pregnant* was an outcome he knew could very well be their reality. Which he could make peace with, he told himself.

He had told himself that so many times he'd almost believed it.

"This has not been easy for you," Ilya whispered against his ear.

Shane shook his head. "Or for you." He took a breath, and it came out wrong. "I'm sorry—"

His breathing was hitching and uneven, his chest felt too tight.

Ilya shifted without a word, guiding Shane down onto his back on the bed. Then he carefully settled his weight across Shane's legs and leaned forward, both hands wrapping firmly around Shane's upper arms and squeezing. Long, slow strokes from shoulder to elbow, adding pressure, releasing, adding it again.

"Shh," Ilya whispered, squeezing his arms all the way up and down, adding more pressure. "It's going to be okay, sweetheart. I promise. Even if it does not feel like it right now."

Shane focused on the pressure. The firm squeeze of Ilya's hands moving up and down his arms, in a predictable pace. Something his body could follow, even when his brain couldn't.

Ilya watched his face, patient and quiet, until he saw something start to give—the faintest release in the muscles around Shane's eyes, his jaw unclenching by degrees. Then, slowly, Ilya lowered himself down and draped his full weight over Shane.

It was more pressure, more weight pressing down on Shane's lungs, but somehow, Shane could breathe better. It shouldn't make sense, but it did. It always did when Ilya did this.

Shane wrapped his arms around Ilya's broad back and held on tight. He felt his breathing begin to find a rhythm against the steady rise and fall of Ilya's chest.

"We will keep trying," Ilya said after a while, his lips brushing Shane's neck. "For as long as you want. And if it doesn't happen." He pressed a kiss to Shane's jaw. "We still have two perfect boys. That is already more than I ever thought I would have."

Shane nodded against the pillow, his throat too tight to speak.

"And you are everything I could need, Shane," Ilya murmured. "Do not forget that. You are everything. You have given me everything. I cannot even put it into words," he said. "Unless you want me as a blubbering mess."

Shane couldn't quite laugh, but he did smile a little. Or he thought, at least.

They stayed like that until Shane's breathing evened out. Until the desperation loosened its grip on his ribs, one exhale at a time.

"Okay?" Ilya asked eventually, pulling back just enough to look into Shane's teary eyes.

Shane swallowed.

"Okay."

2.

December 2031

It was a frigid afternoon as Shane drove Niko and Max home from school. The snow had stopped falling an hour ago, but it was packed thick in the streets, making everything slower.

He had the window cracked, the cold air coming in just enough to keep him alert on the slick roads. The boys were still in their winter gear in the backseat, cheeks pink from the cold.

"I got to be line leader today," Niko said from his seat behind Shane.

Shane smiled as he rolled carefully to the stop sign. "Oh yeah? I bet you were great at it. You love being line leader."

Niko nodded, grinning big. "I was really good. Mrs. Patterson said I walked at the perfect pace and didn't let anyone cut in line."

"That's my guy," Shane said, checking both ways before pulling through the intersection.

"I wanna be line leader soon," Max piped up from beside Niko, kicking his feet against the back of Shane's seat.

"You will be, Maxie," Niko said. "You just have to focus on kindergarten stuff first. Like learning all your letters and numbers."

"I *know* my letters and numbers," Max protested.

"Most of them," Niko corrected diplomatically.

Max, as if to prove the point, began reciting the alphabet from the top. As he did, he reached into his bag and pulled out the snack he hadn't finished at lunch. Almond butter and crackers. He loved them. Shane did too, usually.

The only times he couldn't stomach almond butter was when...

His stomach lurched. Hard. He swallowed thickly, grip tightening on the wheel, eyes fixed on the road. It was just the car, he thought. The motion, maybe.

"Hey, honey," he managed after he realized the queasiness was not going anywhere, catching Max's eyes briefly in the rearview mirror. His voice came out steadier than he felt. "Can you put that away until we're home?"

Max paused mid-chew, nose scrunching. "Why?"

Another sharp wave rolled through him. Shane's jaw tightened.

"Just—please, Max."

Max looked a little worried now, but he wrapped the crackers back up and put them in his lunchbox. But the smell was still there, lingering in the warm car of the car, so pungent and cloying. And Shane could hear Max's tongue working against his teeth, the small wet sounds as he tried to get the last of the almond butter unstuck from his molars—

Shane pulled the car sharply to the side of the road and threw it into park. He barely got his seatbelt off and the door open before he was violently retching onto the pavement, one hand braced against the side of the car.

He could hear Max and Niko behind him, their voices overlapping, but couldn't make out the words. He squeezed his eyes shut and tried to breathe through his nose, tried to will his body through it, but then another wave hit and he had nothing left to do but let it.

He caught the smell of the almond butter again somehow—wafting out through the open car door—and immediately heaved again. Bile this time. It burned on the way up.

He heard the back door open. Then felt small hands gather his hair back from his face, carefully, fingers pulling it away from his forehead and holding it at the nape of his neck.

He didn't have time to say anything before his stomach turned over again.

"It's okay, Dad," Niko said quietly from behind him, standing on the running board of the car. His voice was steady in a way that caught Shane off guard. "Let it out."

Shane heard the other door open.

"Daddy?" Max called weakly.

"Go back in the car, Max," Niko said firmly, still holding Shane's hair. "Dad's okay."

"Daddy's *sick*," Shane heard Max say, his voice unsteady.

"He'll be okay," Niko said with a certainty Shane didn't feel. "Get back in. Close the door so you stay warm."

Shane wanted to reassure them both, wanted to turn around and tell Max he was fine and tell Niko he didn't need to be doing this, but his stomach heaved again and all that came out was a groan.

Niko's small hand kept patting his back in slow, steady circles, the same rhythm Shane had used on him countless times when he'd been sick. "You're okay, Dad," Niko said quietly, his voice remarkably calm for a kid his age. "Just breathe. I got you."

Shane squeezed his eyes shut as he tried to push down the next wave of queasiness. He breathed through his nose deeply, trying to focus on Niko's little hands grabbing his hair and patting his back.

When it finally seemed to be over, Shane straightened slowly, one hand still braced against the car. Niko let go of his hair carefully, stepping back to give him space.

"Thanks, bud," Shane managed, his voice rough and scraped raw. He wiped his mouth with the back of his hand, avoiding looking at the mess on the pavement. "You didn't have to help me, honey. I'm okay. Sorry if I scared you."

"Are you okay now?" Niko asked, looking up at him with those intense eyes of his.

"Yeah," Shane said, though he wasn't entirely sure, and there were now a million thoughts running through his mind. "Yeah, I think so."

Niko studied him for another second, then nodded and climbed back into the car.

Shane stood there for another moment, breathing in the cold air, willing his stomach to settle for the rest of the drive. Then he straightened up and got back in the car.

Max was still watching him anxiously from the backseat, his eyes wide.

"I'm okay, Maxie," Shane said, meeting his eyes in the mirror and trying for a reassuring smile. "Just my stomach being weird. I'm fine now."

Max nodded but didn't look entirely convinced.

Shane closed his door, buckled his seatbelt, and pulled his phone out. His hands were shaking slightly as he typed the address for the nearest pharmacy.

"I just have to make a quick stop to pick something up."

3.

February 2032

Ilya and Shane had spent the entire drive home from the doctor's office trying to figure out how to tell the boys.

They'd both cried in the office when they found out the gender. Sat in the small room with the results in front of them and burst into tears, and then looked at each other, and then cried harder. The technician had been very kind about it. Ilya had used up most of the tissue box she offered them.

A girl. After everything—after so many months of trying—they were getting a daughter.

Cupcakes with pink frosting, Shane had said, once they were in the car and mostly composed. Or balloons—fill the whole living room so the boys knew the second they walked through the door. Ilya had briefly considered a full gender reveal before remembering they already knew the gender, which made the whole thing less of a reveal and more just a party with a specific color scheme.

They'd finally decided to just sit the boys down after school. Simple and direct. It wouldn't be long before one of them figured it out anyway. Shane could only keep hiding behind oversized hoodies and baggy sweaters for so much longer before the curve of his stomach became too obvious to explain away.

So they were in the living room now. And Shane was more nervous than he'd expected to be, which was apparently visible.

"You're acting weird," Max said bluntly.

"No I'm not," Shane said. He took a breath. "Your Papa and I just have some big news."

Both boys went still at exactly the same moment. Niko straightened in his seat. Max's eyes moved between them, quick and assessing.

Ilya and Shane looked at each other. Shane felt Ilya's hand find his and squeeze. He fought back the wave already rising in his throat, smiled at his boys, and said, "You guys are going to be getting a baby sister."

For a second, nothing happened.

Then—

"You're *pregnant*?" Niko said, smiling big and his voice cracking slightly with surprise. His eyes had gone huge.

Shane nodded, his smile getting wider. "I am."

Ilya leaned in and pressed a kiss to the side of Shane's head, his grin so big it looked like it physically hurt. His hand moved to Shane's stomach, landing there with a kind of relief—something he'd been stopping himself from doing for twelve weeks straight, every time the boys were in the room.

"A girl?" Max had shot to his feet, hopping. "Like an actual girl?"

"An actual girl," Ilya confirmed. "We just found out this morning."

"Thank God," Niko said immediately. "I can't do another Max."

Max's head whipped around. "Hey!"

"She could still be like another Max," Shane said, fighting back a laugh. "You don't know yet."

"And our family would be very lucky," Ilya told Niko seriously, "to have another Max."

Max turned back to Shane and stepped between his knees, tipping his face up. Shane's hands went to his sides automatically, steadying him.

"She's actually in there?"

"She is."

"You *ate* her?"

"Well, no—"

"Can I say hi?"

Shane smiled softly. "Of course you can, baby."

Max leaned in and pressed his ear carefully against Shane's stomach, both arms wrapping around him as best they could. "Hi, baby sister," he whispered. "I'm your favorite brother, Maxim. That's my full name." A pause. "But you'll probably just call me Max. Or Maxie, maybe." Another pause, longer this time. "Papa calls me Mad Max sometimes. When I'm being crazy."

Niko stood up immediately, brow furrowing. "Don't tell her you're the favorite," he said, already nudging Max aside with his shoulder.

Max made an indignant sound, despite having plenty of room.

Niko leaned in and pressed his ear carefully to Shane's stomach. "Hi, baby," he said, quieter than he probably meant to. "I'm your biggest brother, Niko."

Shane watched them both, his throat working. Three months ago he had been lying in their bed at night convincing himself to let it go. That it wasn't going to happen. That he needed to be okay with that and mean it. And now here were his boys, crowded around him, already talking to her like she was already theirs.

Max looked up at him, tugging at his pants leg. "Daddy, you're sad?"

Shane laughed wetly. He brushed Max's hair out of his eyes. "No. Not even a little. I'm so happy."

Max reached up with his small hand and wiped carefully at Shane's cheek, his little face very serious about it. "But you're crying, Daddy."

"These are happy tears, baby." Shane took Max's hand and kissed it, then pulled Niko in with his other arm and pressed a kiss to his cheek. "I love you both so much."

Ilya's hand was rubbing slow circles on Shane's back from beside him, not even attempting to hide his own wet eyes.

They stayed like that for a moment, all four of them tangled together on the couch, nobody in any rush to move.

"Boys," Ilya said after a few minutes had passed, reaching out to rest a hand on each of their heads. "I need you to listen for a minute, okay?"

Max and Niko immediately looked up at him.

"Your father is going to be working very hard over the next few months," Ilya said, seriously, brushing back some of Niko's dark hair. "Growing your sister from the little plum she is right now into a big, *big* watermelon."

Shane groaned a little. "Please don't remind me."

Ilya rubbed his stomach anyway, then turned back to the boys. "So even if he doesn't look like it—because he is your big, strong daddy, after all—he is going to be tired sometimes. His body is doing a lot of work. And I need you both to be extra helpful and kind. Like I know you already are." He looked between them. "Okay?"

Both boys nodded eagerly.

"But I'm not going to be made of glass," Shane said, sitting up slightly. "You don't need to coddle me, I just might not always have the energy for—"

"Don't get up too fast!" Max yelped.

Shane stopped. Stared at him.

"You should go to bed," Niko said, matter-of-factly.

"Okay, see, no," Shane said, settling back with a small laugh. "You guys don't need to do this. I feel completely fine right now."

"I'll get you water," Max said, scampering off the couch.

"Max, I don't need—"

Max reappeared from the kitchen with a full glass a few seconds later, walking very carefully. He presented it to Shane with both hands like it was something ceremonial. Shane smiled and took it. "Thank you. You don't need to keep doing this, though."

"Do you want a snack?" Niko asked. "Don't you have to eat a lot now? I can make toast."

"I don't want toast, bud."

"I'm pretty good at toast."

"Niko."

"I'll just make one piece. She told me she's hungry." He was already turning towards the kitchen.

Shane watched him go. Then he turned to Ilya, who was sitting there looking all too pleased with himself.

"What have you unleashed on me for the next six months."

Ilya smiled, slow and unrepentant. He leaned in and kissed Shane softly, one hand coming up to cup the side of his face. When he pulled back he was still smiling.

"Shane Hollander-Rozanov. We are at your service."

4.

March 2032

This was Shane's third pregnancy. He knew, more or less, what to expect.

And that meant he knew when he felt he could get on skates.

Ilya and Shane were at Max's practice this afternoon. A full sheet of five and six-year-olds in various states of competence, wobbling around cones and running into each other with

cheerful indifference. Ilya and Shane would help volunteer to run some of these sessions since the season started, and today was no different. Or so he'd thought.

Shane was just at fourteen weeks. His stomach had started to round out in the past couple of weeks, taking on a shape that was no longer just bloating but wasn't yet anything that affected his balance or his stride. He was showing earlier than he had with either of the boys, which made sense. Third rodeo, his body had already done this twice and apparently remembered. But it was nowhere close to being an obstacle.

He laced up his skates on the bench, took his time with it the way he always did, and stepped onto the ice.

"Dad!"

Shane skidded to a stop, nearly running into a small child in the process. "What?"

Max was already skating toward him at full tilt, his helmet tipped forward over his eyes, his stick dragging behind him like he'd forgotten it was there. He stopped in front of Shane—wobbled—and Shane reached out automatically to steady him by the shoulders.

Max shoved his helmet up with one glove and looked up at Shane with his big brown eyes. Then, with great care and great seriousness, he placed both hands flat against Shane's stomach.

"The *baby*, Daddy."

Shane looked down at him. "Yeah?"

"You can't be on the ice."

"Max, we talked about this. Me and Papa are both helping with practice today."

Max's expression didn't waver. He kept his hands right where they were, as if he was personally responsible for keeping the baby in place. "But what if you *fall*."

"I'm not going to fall."

"But what if."

Shane opened his mouth. Closed it. Because the look on Max's face wasn't dramatics. It was dead serious. That particular five-year-old logic that was completely immune to reason and couldn't be argued with because it wasn't operating on logic in the first place.

"Bud," Shane said, crouching down carefully to get level with him, which immediately made Max spread his hands wider across his middle like Shane descending six inches had put the baby at risk. "You know I've been skating my whole life, right?"

Max wrinkled his nose. "How long?"

"Since I was about your age," he said. "So, long time. Over 30 years now."

Max's eyes went wide. "You're so old."

Shane laughed a little. "Watch it," Shane said affectionately, cupping his chin and wiggling it. "Point is, I know what I'm doing. Okay?"

Max did not at all look convinced. "But what if she gets hurt?"

"She's the size of a lemon right now," Shane said patiently. "Very tiny. And very protected in there." He patted his stomach through his puffer jacket. "And I'm not going to fall."

"You don't know that," Max said, his voice climbing.

"Max—"

One of Max's teammates, Wyatt, came wobbling over to them, barely managing to stop before crashing into Shane's legs. His edges were still very much a work in progress. Shane steadied him by the shoulders on instinct.

Wyatt looked up at him, completely delighted. "Shane! Are you gonna show us a hat trick today?"

Max's immediately scowled, which was genuinely adorable in the way that most things Max did were adorable even when he was trying to be serious. "No. He can't," Max said firmly, stepping slightly in front of Shane. "My sister's in there."

Wyatt's eyes widened. "Oh yeah!"

"Max," Shane said. "I'm fine."

"You don't know that, Daddy." His chin had started doing the wobble. "You can't know that."

Shane exhaled slowly through his nose, crouching down to Max's level a little more. "Max, sweetheart, you really do not need to worry about me. Or the baby. Your job is to skate around and have fun. And you do a very good job at that."

Max's bottom lip was fully trembling now, his eyes getting wet behind his cage.

Ilya skated over then, reading the situation immediately. He leaned down and tugged Max's helmet up slightly so he could see his face better. "What's going on over here?" he asked softly, catching the distress in Max's expression.

"Daddy's trying to fall on the baby," Max said, his voice wobbling.

"*What?*" Shane choked out.

Ilya looked between them. If Ilya was being honest, he would have had Shane in bubble wrap from the moment they got the positive test. He had been very restrained about it. He thought he deserved some credit for that. And if using their five-year-old as backup got Shane off the ice, then so be it.

"Shane," Ilya said carefully. "Maybe you are better suited at calling drills from the bench today."

"I'm not going to fall—"

"Probably not," Ilya agreed smoothly. "But why take the risk when you can be just as helpful from over there?" He gestured toward the bench like it was the most logical solution in the world.

Shane looked at Ilya. Then at Max, who was staring up at him wearing the exact same expression as his father—arms crossed and eyebrows slightly raised

"I'm perfectly capable of—"

"Of course you are," Ilya said, already steering him gently toward the boards. "You are a very, very capable man. From over there."

Shane rolled his eyes but went, resigning himself to his fate. His fate being one extremely suffocating husband and one equally suffocating five-year-old who had apparently formed an alliance.

He sat on the bench for the entire practice.

Throughout it, he watched Max skate over to no fewer than six of his teammates, point back at Shane, and explain—at considerable length and volume—that he was going to have a baby sister, and that he personally had saved her from getting hit by a puck today.

Shane put his face in his hands.

5.

May 2032

Shane was never big on celebrating birthdays.

Well, he was never big on celebrating *his* birthday.

But he had a husband who, without fail, treated it like a national holiday. Which meant it was going to be a production no matter what Shane had to say about it.

This year was different for Shane, though. The boys had both been born in April, which meant this was his first birthday pregnant. Six months along now, a little over a year since they'd started trying for one more. The year had been long in ways Shane hadn't found the right words for, and mostly hadn't tried to.

He woke up that morning to a familiar flutter under his ribs. He lay there with his hand pressed flat against his stomach, smiling before he was fully awake.

It was the best present he could've asked for.

He yawned and rolled over, only to find Ilya's side of the bed empty. Ilya up before Shane was always intentional on the days it happened.

He sat up slowly, the familiar process of negotiating his center of gravity now. Mila kicked his right side, hard, before he'd even finished moving. He rubbed the spot and smiled sleepily. "Good morning to you too."

He got his robe on and was mid-stretch when he heard voices down the hall. Then footsteps, more than one set, not particularly quiet about it. Then the bedroom door swung open.

Ilya was in the doorway holding a platter of food and a vase of lilies. Niko was beside him, carefully balancing a mug of tea with both hands like he was carrying something explosive. Max was bringing up the rear with what appeared to be an enormous handmade card, glitter already shedding off it onto the hallway floor.

"HAPPY—" Max stopped short. His face fell. "Daddy, you have to be in bed. It's breakfast in *bed*."

Shane was already grinning like an idiot. "Sorry, sorry." He turned and sat back against the headboard, adjusting his robe over his stomach. "Better?"

"You have to actually lie down, Dad," Niko stated.

"I just maneuvered myself into a sitting position, bud."

"It's the rules."

Shane looked at Ilya, who was standing there with the platter and absolutely no intention of intervening. Shane lay down.

"Better?" he asked.

Both boys broke into matching grins.

"HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DAD!"

Shane laughed as they piled toward the bed, Max already trying to climb up with the card still in his hands, Niko moving the tea with great caution to the nightstand. Shane got his arms around Max before he could knee him in the stomach and pulled him in.

"Thank you, my sweet babies," he said over the noise of all of them, pressing a kiss to Max's cheek and pulling Niko in with his other arm. Niko climbed up beside him and let Shane kiss the top of his head.

Ilya leaned in and kissed him properly. "Happy birthday, *moya lyubov*." He set the tray down carefully in front of Shane. "Boys, do you want to tell Daddy what you made him?"

"Yes!" they both exclaimed.

"Okay, so," Max said, sitting up on his knees and pointing at the french toast like he was presenting a business proposal. It had chocolate syrup squiggled across it in what was almost certainly meant to be letters—Shane could make out something resembling an H, a B, and possibly a...Z? "Papa helped us make french toast. Because you've been eating a lot of french toast lately. I did the egg batter."

"We tried to write happy birthday," Niko added. "But it got a little messed up."

Shane chuckled. "It looks perfect."

Niko pointed to the next item. "Toast with the blackberry jam you like. And Papa cut up the peaches, but I put them in the bowl."

"And I ate one," Max piped up.

Shane had been consuming almost exclusively carbs and sugar for the better part of this pregnancy, and apparently his children had been paying attention.

"What else did you two make for Daddy?" Ilya prompted, settling onto the edge of the bed beside Shane, his hand finding Shane's knee.

Both boys lit up. Max grabbed the card from where he'd set it on the nightstand and thrust it forward with both hands. It was enormous, covered edge to edge in marker drawings and glitter that was already transferring onto everything it touched. Across the top, in uneven kid letters: HAPPY BIRTHDAY DAD.

Below it was a drawing. Two small stick figures with scribbly mops of dark and blond hair. Two taller ones beside them, holding their hands. One of the taller figures had a very large circle where its stomach should be, with a tiny stick figure drawn inside it, arms and legs extended.

"That's you," Max said helpfully, pointing at the large circle. "And that's Mila. In your tummy."

"I gathered that," Shane said. "Thank you, bud." He looked at both of them. "This is beautiful. I love it."

"I did the drawing," Max explained. "Niko did the letters."

"I did most of the letters," Niko corrected. "You did the H and the P."

"I'm good at H's and P's," Max said proudly.

"H and the P are very important letters," Ilya said seriously.

Shane smiled and traced his fingers carefully over the drawing. "You guys did such a good job," he said softly. "Can you put it on the nightstand for me? I don't want to get syrup on it."

Niko took it carefully and set it down.

Shane looked at both of them. "Did you guys eat yet?"

They shook their heads.

"Go get your plates and bring them up here, then. I can't eat breakfast without my favorite company."

Both of them grinned at that. Max threw his arms around Shane in a squeeze, then they were both off the bed and thundering down the hallway, the noise of them rattling through the whole upstairs.

Shane listened until it faded, then breathed out slowly, his hands settling on his stomach. He turned to Ilya.

"Thank you," he said. "You're too good to me."

Ilya reached over and tucked a piece of hair back from Shane's face, his hand staying against his cheek. "I don't think that is possible," he said.

Shane leaned into his hand for a moment.

Down the hall, something clattered. Then Max's voice, immediate and defensive, insisting it wasn't his fault.

Shane smiled. "Better go referee."

"They will survive," Ilya said, not moving his hand.



The rest of the morning was spent with Shane being completely, unabashedly pampered.

By the time the boys had migrated outside to play, the living room looked like a wrapping paper explosion, which Ilya had dealt with cleaning up without complaint. Shane was on the couch with his feet up, a can of cold ginger ale on the side table, watching the boys through the window.

Ilya settled in beside him and started rubbing his back, slow and easy, without being asked. After a few minutes he glanced over at Shane. "I have one more gift."

Shane looked at him. "Ilya. You gave me enough presents to fill two trash bags worth of wrapping paper."

"This is the last one," Ilya said. "I promise."

Shane held his gaze for a moment, trying to read him. Ilya's expression gave nothing away, which meant he was very pleased with himself about something.

"Okay," Shane sighed with a grin.

Ilya reached into his pocket and pulled out a small box, simply wrapped. Shane took it and peeled back the paper carefully.

Inside was a ring. A simple silver band. Shane turned it over, and when he tilted it toward the light he saw the engraving on the inside.

N. M. M.

His throat went tight immediately. He turned it over again, like he needed to look at it twice to make sure he was seeing it right.

"Ilya."

"I hope you do not suddenly decide on a different name for the baby," Ilya said, his mouth curving. "Or if you do, hopefully it still starts with M."

Shane laughed and shook his head. "No," he said softly. "She's Mila." He looked up at Ilya for a moment, then grabbed him by the collar and pulled him in for a kiss. Ilya's hand came up to the back of his head, deepening it before Shane could pull away. When they finally broke apart, Shane was properly teary. "I love it."

Ilya's hands came up to cup his face, thumbs tracing his freckles. "Happy birthday, my Shane."

Shane was about to put it on, but Ilya stopped him before he did. He smiled and gingerly took it from his hand. "Allow me."

"Don't tell me you think I can't even put on jewelry by myself now."

Ilya smiled. "Is not that." He took the ring carefully from Shane's hand, then slid off the couch and dropped to one knee.

"Shane Hollander-Rozanov," Ilya said, grinning up at him. "Will you make me the happiest man alive and remain my very perfect husband for the rest of my life?"

Shane looked at him, at how he was completely serious and completely ridiculous all at once, and shook his head slowly. Shane was smiling so hard his cheeks hurt.

"Yes," he said. "I would want nothing more."

Ilya took Shane's hand and slid the ring carefully onto his finger. His slightly swollen finger, so it caught a little on the knuckle, but it made it on. Ilya pressed a long kiss to his hand once it was in place, his lips warm against Shane's skin.

"Aren't I so lucky," he said, tilting his head back to look up at Shane. "I have very sexy cougar as my husband."

"We're the same age," Shane reminded him, thumb tracing Ilya's jaw.

"Not true." Ilya shifted forward on his knees until he was settled between Shane's legs, his hands coming up to cup Shane's stomach. "For the next month, I have a sugar daddy."

Shane laughed. "So now I'm some old man buying you gifts?"

"Well," Ilya said, pressing a kiss to the curve of Shane's stomach through his shirt. Then another. "You *are* old man. And you *are* giving me the most precious gift of all. So yes. Is accurate, I would say."

Shane put his hand on the side of Ilya's head as he kept going, pressing slow kisses across the swell of his stomach, unhurried and soft. Shane watched him, felt the warmth of the ring on his finger, the weight of Ilya's hands, Mila shifting slowly underneath Ilya's hands.

It was a good birthday.

+1

August 2032

Throughout the whole pregnancy, Shane had been pretty calm. More than he'd been with the boys. Partly because he'd already done this twice and knew what to expect—and Shane *loved* knowing what to expect—but mostly because he'd spent so many months thinking it just wasn't going to happen. That they'd tried, and it hadn't worked, and that was the outcome.

So when he woke up at forty weeks to a dull, familiar tightening low in his stomach, he didn't panic. He just lay there for a moment in the dark, one hand pressed flat against his stomach. He knew exactly what it was.

Ilya was still asleep beside him, one arm thrown over Shane's swollen stomach, face slack against the pillow. Shane lifted his arm off carefully and did the production of getting himself out of bed—rolling to his side, pushing up on both arms, legs swinging over the edge in stages. He sat there for a second to catch his breath. Then he got up.

He carried on with the morning as he normally would. Making scrambled eggs and toast for the boys, fruit salad because Niko had been on a strawberry kick for three weeks running. He made Ilya's coffee the way he liked it and set it on the counter where he'd find it.

Another contraction rolled through while he was slicing strawberries. Not bad, but uncomfortable enough to make him brace his free hand flat on the counter and breathe slowly through it. Twenty-five minutes since the last one, maybe. Still early. Plenty of time.

He finished the strawberries.

"Morning, Daddy," Max said a few minutes later, shuffling into the kitchen in his pajamas. He made a beeline for Shane and wrapped his arms around him the way he did every single morning, which was logistically more complicated now but Max had adapted without complaint. Just pressed his cheek against the side of Shane's stomach and held on. Then he tipped his head down and kissed the bump. "Morning, baby Millie."

Mila responded with a slow, full-body roll that made Shane wince and made Max's whole face light up.

"She's saying hi back," Shane said, running his fingers through Max's messy curls.

"Hi, hi, hi," Max said into his bump, voice muffled. He tilted his head back and grinned up at Shane, wide and gap-toothed. "Is she cooked yet?"

The daily question. Shane couldn't answer it as confidently today as he usually did. He just cupped Max's soft cheek and brushed his thumb across it. "Guess we'll have to wait and find out, hm?"

Max's grin stretched wider. He turned back to the bump and cupped his hands around his mouth like he was telling a secret. "You should come soon, Mila," he whispered. "Daddy looks like he's gonna explode."

Shane smiled, even as his back ached. "You hungry, baby?"

Max nodded, still loosely hugging Shane's middle. Then he stepped back with a certain air of dignity. "I can get my own water."

Shane smiled as he watched him go grab his water bottle from the counter. "My big kid."

Max filled his water bottle at the fridge dispenser and, as always, added an unreasonable amount of ice. Shane steadied the bottle for him without comment.

During breakfast, Shane had kept the contraction timer open on his phone, screen angled away from Ilya. Only one passed in the thirty minutes they sat at the table, mild enough that he talked through it without anyone noticing. Or if the off chance Ilya had noticed, he'd let it go, which amounted to the same thing for now.

The boys needed to burn energy. On a Saturday, that wasn't negotiable—not if Shane and Ilya wanted any semblance of a functional afternoon. Usually it was the rink, or running around in the yard if the weather held. Today they wanted to bike down to the ice cream place on the main street.

Ilya watched Shane get dressed from the doorway, arms crossed, doing a poor job of looking nonchalant.

Shane was working one of Ilya's oversized t-shirts over his head, wrestling it down over his stomach with a muffled huff. He had a habit of migrating into Ilya's clothes during pregnancy—which made no practical sense, given they were essentially the same size, but Shane had

never offered an explanation and Ilya had never asked for one. Ilya just kept buying new shirts without comment.

"You sure you are feeling up for this?" Ilya asked.

Shane got the shirt down and looked at him. "Ilya."

"What? I'm asking. Is normal question to ask someone who is 40 weeks pregnant."

"I can walk five blocks," Shane said. "I'm not bed-bound."

Ilya nodded. Then he crossed the room anyway, because he couldn't not, and settled his hands over Shane's bump. He crouched down slightly and pressed a kiss to the top of it.

"You be nice to Daddy today, *malyshka*," he murmured against the fabric. "We are going on a nice little waddle around the neighborhood. Please do not jump on his bladder until we are home."

Shane's hand found his hair, fingers threading through his curls. "I think that ship sailed somewhere around month six."

Ilya pressed one more kiss to his stomach and straightened up. His hands stayed where they were a moment longer. "How are you feeling? Really."

Shane held his gaze. "About as good as someone carrying a bowling ball in their pelvis can feel," he said. "Ready to go?"

Ilya studied him.

Shane raised his eyebrows. "I'm fine, Ilya."

"Okay," Ilya said. He dropped his hands. "Okay."

He wasn't entirely convinced. But he knew Shane well enough to know that pushing would get him nowhere. Shane would say something when he was ready to say it, and not a moment before. Ilya had made his peace with this over the years. Mostly.



It was a warm August morning, already too humid. Shane could feel it settling in before they'd made it half a block.

They watched as Niko and Max rode their bikes ahead, racing each other to the stop sign.

Ilya had his arm looped around Shane's waist as they walked. Shane had stopped being able to call it walking a while ago now—it was more of a controlled waddle.

He stopped when the dull ache in his lower back sharpened into something more deliberate, one hand pressing into the curve of his spine, breathing slowly through it.

Ilya stopped the moment he did, his body going tense. "Everything okay?"

"Yes," Shane said, eyes closed, working through it. "Just back pain."

Ilya's eyes moved over him. "We can head back. I can call the boys—" He was already half-turning.

"Ilya," Shane said, without opening his eyes. "I love you. But please stop hovering."

Ilya pressed his lips together but didn't argue. He just moved his hand to Shane's belly instead, rubbing slow circles right where his shirt was riding up slightly, exposing a sliver of skin.

"You know," Ilya said, his voice tipping into something lighter, "most people would be very grateful to have such an adoring husband. I am very under-appreciated in this family."

Shane opened his eyes. "Mhmm. Right."

"Maybe I should bring my skillset elsewhere."

"Wow. Didn't take you for a deadbeat dad," Shane said dryly. "Especially after I've been carrying your *third* child for nine months."

Ilya's whole face changed when Shane said things like that. *Your child*. Their child. Something in him still couldn't process it fully. Not after all those months of trying, of watching Shane's hope drain a little more each time the test came back negative.

He rubbed a slow circle low on Shane's stomach where Mila was moving. He pressed lightly against the spot and grinned when she kicked back, sharp and immediate.

"You have convinced me," he said quietly, his thumb tracing patterns on Shane's taut skin. "Maybe I will stick around after all. But I will be keeping my resume updated. You know, to keep my options open."

Shane huffed out a laugh. "Good plan."



Multiple breather breaks later, covered in sweat and considerably slower than when they'd started, Shane made it. He dropped into a chair at a table in the shade outside while Ilya wrangled the boys through the door of the ice cream shop.

Shane was quietly timing another contraction. The last one had been about twenty-five minutes ago. Still early labor. Textbook. He'd gone back and read through his contraction logs from his pregnancies with Niko and Max more than once over the past few months—he knew the data, he knew his body—and he was almost certain this was it. Today was the day.

Or, more realistically, tomorrow. His body didn't seem to get the memo about speedy deliveries. He'd gotten his hopes up too much with Max, listening to Jackie and everyone else

insist that second babies were always quicker. Thirty-three hours had strongly suggested otherwise.

Which was exactly why he wasn't saying anything yet. No point getting everyone worked up and anxious for what could easily stretch into another full day or more. Let them enjoy their ice cream. Let the boys have a normal Saturday for as long as it lasted. There'd be plenty of time for hospital rooms and worry later.

Besides, Shane kind of liked this. Just him and Mila, sitting in the sun, sharing a secret. Their last quiet moment together before everything changed and she stopped being just his.

He felt another small shift, then a sharper jab against his ribs.

"Okay," he murmured, pressing his hand to his side, rubbing slow circles against the spot. She'd dropped weeks ago, settled low in his pelvis, but she still found his ribs when she wanted to make a point. There wasn't a single part of him that wasn't completely overtaken by baby at this point. "I hear you, baby girl."

Five minutes later, Ilya and the boys came outside with their orders. Ilya handed Shane his cup of strawberry ice cream and dropped into the seat beside him.

"You didn't need to get me two scoops," Shane said, taking it anyway.

"Oops, how did that happen," Ilya said, sitting down across from him. "The cashier must have made a mistake."

Max dropped into the other chair beside Shane, practically glued to his side, raising his cone of chocolate chip cookie dough up to Shane's face. "Daddy, I got cookie dough," he announced, like Shane couldn't see it six inches from his nose.

Shane smiled. "Very yummy. Good choice, bud."

Shane took a bite of his ice cream and tried to focus on the sweetness instead of the building pressure in his lower back. Trying to soak in the last afternoon as a family of four.



They headed back home a few hours later, after watching the boys bike around.

Shane made it half a block before he stopped.

He squeezed his eyes shut and pressed one hand hard into his lower back and the other under his stomach, breathing out slow through pursed lips. This one was strong enough that he couldn't have kept walking through it if he'd tried.

"Shane?" Ilya's voice was sharp with concern.

"Give me a sec," Shane managed, keeping his eyes shut, focusing on breathing through it.

The boys had been biking ahead and rolled to a stop when they noticed the gap.

"Come on!" Max called out impatiently. "We're almost home."

"Time this," Shane said to Ilya, his voice tight, handing Ilya his phone.

Ilya's eyes went wide. He fumbled opening Shane's phone. When he pulled up the contraction timer and the screen loaded, he went very still.

"Shane." His voice had changed completely. "There are entries from this morning. From six AM."

"Mhm."

"It is almost noon." Ilya looked up, his eyes wide. "You have been having contractions since *six in the morning*?"

"Just time it," Shane gritted out.

Ilya did. His other hand found Shane's shoulder and stayed there, steady, while his eyes stayed fixed on the screen.

When it passed, Shane straightened slowly and exhaled through his nose.

"Forty-seven seconds," Ilya said. His voice was controlled in the way it only got when he was actively working to keep it that way. "Nineteen minutes from the last entry."

Shane nodded and started walking again. "Still got time."

Ilya stared at him for a moment. Then he fell into step beside him, his hand moving toward Shane's lower back before he caught himself. He remembered what Shane's previous labors had been like—one moment wanting Ilya's hands pressing hard into his hips, the next snapping at him for breathing too loud. His hand hovered an inch from Shane's back, not quite landing.

Shane glanced at him sideways. "You can touch me, Ilya."

Ilya set his hand down gently against his lower back.

When they got home, Ilya sent the boys upstairs to shower and turned to Shane the moment their footsteps hit the stairs.

"We need to get the bags," Ilya said frantically.

"They're already packed by the door," Shane said. "Remember? You and the boys double-checked after our last appointment."

Ilya frowned. "Well, what if the car needs gas—"

"The hospital is 5 minutes away, Ilya."

"We could be running really low. I did not check last time we drove—"

"Ilya." Shane couldn't quite hold back the smile despite the contraction already building at the edges. "She's not going to fall out on the way there. The boys each took nearly two days."

"She *could*!" Ilya insisted, his voice pitching slightly higher. "You do not give her enough credit. Especially with a father as stubborn as you—she probably would just to spite me. Just to give me heart attack."

"Pretty sure babies don't operate out of spite."

"You did not see how Niko came out looking at me," Ilya muttered. "Very judgmental. Like he knew I was panicking."

"You *were* panicking."

"Because you had been in labor for two days!" Ilya threw his hands up. "Forgive me for having normal human reaction—"

Shane caught his hand and squeezed it firmly. "Hey." He held Ilya's gaze. "I'm okay. We have time. Deep breath."

Ilya took one. Then another. His thumb started moving in slow circles against the back of Shane's hand.

"I'm the one supposed to be telling you that," Ilya said with a shaky little laugh.

Shane smiled. "Yeah, well, you'll have plenty of time to remind me of that today."

Ilya looked at him for a moment. Then, quieter: "I can't believe you didn't tell me. This whole morning."

There was a beat of silence.

"Actually...I can."

End Notes

shane just let ilya just wrap you in bubble wrap and carry you around in his pocket please
shane we're begging you

thank you so much for reading!! if you want to check out my other hollanov dad fics, you can
read them [here](#)! :)

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