

he looks so cute wrapped round my finger

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he looks so cute wrapped round my finger

by [justhockey](#)

Summary

“We’re just, well-“ Choui hedges, then glances round as if he’s looking for back up.

“We’re worried that you’re a bit too controlling,” Hayes blurts out. “Of Rozanov.”

Shane opens his mouth to respond, but he closes it again when he realises he has no fucking idea what to say. He’s - *what?*

Notes

Title from *Espresso* by Sabrina Carpenter.

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

Shane arrives early to the arena for practice.

Usually he drives both of them, Ilya in the passenger seat, flicking through the radio stations as he holds Shane's hand and kisses his knuckles. Sometimes they stop for coffee on the way, sometimes Shane practices his clumsy Russian, and sometimes Ilya reads out the messages that Shane's parents are sending him in the group chat that Shane isn't allowed in.

It's basically a part of their routine by now, and Shane loves it.

He loves every part of this life with his husband, but especially the quiet moments where they're all alone. Peaceful drives to and from practice, lazy mornings in bed, taking Anya to the park together. Even grocery shopping, now, because Ilya tends to drown out the rest of the noise. They're the kinds of things that people take for granted, but that Shane and Ilya know to cherish because they know how hard they had to fight for them.

Today, he arrives alone.

Ilya has an appointment with Galina and had insisted on just meeting Shane at the rink, so. He drives without any music on, and there's no one beside him to hold his hand, and it's perfectly fine because he's an adult and he's not *obsessed* with his husband, despite what Hayden, and Rose, and - well - everyone, says.

Shane just loves Ilya a lot, and he misses him when he's not around - even if it's only a couple of hours - and he doesn't think there's anything weird about that. It's normal, even. Especially when they spent so long having to pretend they weren't everything to each other.

His husband is hot, and kind, and insanely talented, so sue him for wanting to be around him all the time.

It's not like it's just Shane, either.

In fact, Ilya is definitely the worst one out of the two. Galina had called them codependent once, and Ilya had grinned, and nodded, and said *yes* like it was a badge of honour. Like he was proud that they're attached at the hip. Shane is pretty sure that Ilya would live inside his skin if he could find a way.

"I want to you eat you," Ilya had said once - or twice, or three times - and Shane had simply laughed and kissed him breathless, because, well. Yeah. He gets it.

So fine, whatever, they're obsessed. They're allowed to be. They keep it - mostly - professional while they're at the rink, and during games or official team events, so that's really all that matters. And if Shane misses his husband after two hours apart, then that's his business and no one else's.

He meanders through the Sensplex - the Centaurs' practice facility - at a leisurely pace.

Practice doesn't begin for another hour or so, and Shane has plenty of time on his hands. He figures he'll change, then run some solo drills on the ice until Coach arrives. Then it'll be

Bood next, then Kally and Petey, and Barrett will arrive not long after that.

Everyone has their schedules, their routines, and it's pretty easy to learn them when they all spend so much time together.

The Cens are a family.

And it's not in the cheesy, for-show way that a lot of teams in the league are. It's not just talk. They really are family to each other. They know the birthdays of everyone's partners and kids, and they remember to ask about Haas' grandma's hip replacement, or Bood's son's swim meet.

They're the network of roots beneath a tree: all connected, all necessary.

The locker room is empty when he arrives, and Shane takes his time changing out of his clothes and into his gear. It's only as he's lacing up his left skate that the door swings open. He's expecting Bood, and he's right, but there's also Hayes, Barrett, Haas, Dykstra, Choui, and Dillon.

Shane's a little taken aback by the crowd, especially given the fact that Dillon usually rushes into the locker room seven minutes before practice starts.

"Oh, hey. You're all early," Shane greets them, then goes back to tying his skates.

He's get a chorus of mumbled replies as they all shuffle to their own stalls, but then the room falls painfully silent. Shane feels antsy for a reason he can't quite put his finger on - maybe like everyone knows what's going on except him.

It's Bood's voice that breaks the silence, low and steady, but more hesitant than Shane is used to it sounding.

"Hollander, can we talk?"

Shane's head shoots upwards, and finds not just Bood, but everyone else staring at him as well. It feels a little like one of those dreams where you show up at school with no pants on. Or, more fittingly for Shane, the dream where he's lifting the Stanley Cup only to realise he's naked.

Either way, he feels exposed. Watched.

"Uh, yeah. Sure. Of course," Shane stumbles over his words. "Is everything okay?"

They all share looks between each other, like this is something they definitely planned out.

For a moment, Shane is convinced it's going to be about him and Ilya. About how their relationship bothers the guys, how it makes them uncomfortable, how their affection isn't welcome around them. But then Shane checks himself, and reminds himself that this isn't Montreal - they love Ilya, and they love Shane, and they're both welcome here.

"We're just, well-" Choui hedges, then glances round as if he's looking for back up.

“We’re worried that you’re a bit too controlling,” Hayes blurts out. “Of Rozanov.”

Shane opens his mouth to respond, but he closes it again when he realises he has no fucking idea what to say. He’s - *what?* He doesn’t even know what they’re talking about, let alone how he’s supposed to address it.

He’s not a man of many words - he never has been, even as a kid - but he’s never felt more at a loss for them than he does right now.

“Um...” is honestly the only thing he can come up with before he falls silent again.

“Look, we get that it’s your marriage,” Troy says, “and maybe it’s not our place, but, well.”

“You need to loosen the leash a bit, man,” Dykstra says, shrugging his arms out wide before slapping them on his thighs.

Social interactions have always been a struggle for Shane, he knows that. Small talk seems entirely pointless - why would he remark on the weather if both parties are standing outside? And he knows he’s not always great at interpreting sarcasm, or knowing when someone is being passive aggressive or ironic.

But truly, never in his life has he felt more baffled than he does right now. He literally has no idea what is going on.

Controlling? *Shane?* What are they even talking about?

Sure, fine, he’ll admit that he’s obsessed with Ilya. He’d spend every second of every day with his husband if he could. But Ilya feels the exact same way. On more than one occasion Ilya has crawled onto Shane’s lap and literally hidden beneath his t-shirt. He even fell asleep there, once. No leash necessary.

“Guys, I’m gonna be real with you here,” Shane says, when he finally finds his voice. “I have no idea what you’re talking about.”

“We know that you love him, right? We get that. But he’s - Shane, bud. He’s allowed to, like, do things without you sometimes,” Bood says, almost wincing as the words leave his mouth.

Shane frowns, because - that doesn’t help at all, actually. Of course Ilya can do things without Shane? It isn’t Shane’s fault if he doesn’t want to.

“Or, y’know, you could come along too,” Luca says, but he refuses to make eye contact with Shane as he speaks.

“Okay? I mean, yes, obviously? Ilya can do whatever he wants,” Shane tells them. “I *don’t* control him.”

Sure, Ilya does what Shane tells him to more often than not. But that’s, like, about folding laundry, or loading the dishwasher correctly, or quitting smoking. It’s not like Shane tells him what he can and can’t do; he’s not fucking insane.

And Ilya *wants* to do those things - he wants to do what Shane tells him.

It's a rule, even, that Shane isn't allowed to get too bossy with Ilya when they're out in public or when they have company. It turns him on too much, and he all but jumps Shane's bones whenever he brings out his old captain voice that he used to use in Montreal. It's not like Ilya is - god - a *victim* here.

What the actual fuck is going on?

"I mean, not letting him out of the house is pretty controlling, Hollzy," Dillon says, sounding exasperated and a little concerned.

Shane chokes. "*What?* What are you even *talking* about?"

He feels like he's being pranked, except the expressions on everyone's faces as they look at him are pretty fucking serious.

"Just - constantly telling him he's not allowed to go places--"

"*What?* I've never - what are you even - what the fuck is going on?" Shane can barely even finish a single thought.

"Last night I text Roz to see if you guys wanted to bring Anya on a walk with me, Harris, and Chiron," Troy explains, "and you said he couldn't go."

"And last week when I asked if he wanted to come to that EDM club, you said he wasn't allowed," Dykstra says.

"And when we were talking about going to Mexico in the off season, Roz said--"

"Let me guess, he said I wouldn't let him?" Shane asks.

"Well...yeah," Luca admits.

Shane closes his eyes, pinches the bridge of his nose, and starts counting to ten. Very, very slowly. It's a great technique, he's found. His therapist, Sana, encourages him to use it when he's feeling stressed, or overwhelmed, or anxious.

Apparently, it also works for when he's experiencing murderous impulses towards his husband.

"I'm gonna kill him."

"Shane, listen bud. We get that--"

"I don't stop him from going anywhere, okay?" Shane blurts out, his eyes shooting open.

"That's - I need to make that clear right now. I *never* stop him from doing what he wants to do."

He watches as the guys glance nervously at each other, like they're trying to decide who they're sacrificing next. Choui eventually sighs, and begins rooting around in his gear bag. He eventually pulls out his phone, scrolls on it for a second, then hands it over to Shane.

Shane takes it, squinting slightly as he starts to read what's on the screen.

Choui: *Come to Afterlight tonight? Me, Hazy, Luca, and the rooks*

Choui: *Bring Hollzy if he wants*

Cap: *My husband said no((maybe next time*

Cap: *Do not let the babies get too drunk, call me if you need me))*

Oh, that absolute-

"I'm gonna actually murder him," Shane says.

He loves Ilya more than anyone in the world. Would probably kill for him, and definitely die for him, and has - on more than one occasion - taken on a defenseman almost double his weight, for trying to start something with Ilya on the ice.

But god, he's gonna kill him.

"I did *not* say that, the little fucker. I told him to go! He said he wanted to stay home and watch *Bake Off* with me!"

"He - what?"

They'd been curled up on the couch, Shane with a chamomile tea and Ilya with a hot chocolate, when the text had come through.

Ilya had groaned loudly, and when he showed Shane the text Shane had shrugged his shoulders and said, "*You can go if you want, baby. We can watch this tomorrow.*" Ilya had looked at Shane as if he'd insulted Anya in French, and said, "*We've been waiting to watch this all week. I'm not going.*"

Shane had assumed he'd made an appropriate excuse, not...not *that*.

Troy clears his throat, then says, "So - last night?"

"I was trying this new recipe in the slow cooker and didn't want to risk leaving it on for too long! I told Ilya to go, but he said we'd just do it another time," Shane explains, shaking his head in disbelief.

Troy snorts out a laugh, and then so does Bood, and suddenly the whole locker room is laughing. Good god. Shane digs his finger and thumb into his eyes as he shakes his head and tries to get his laughter under control.

"Jesus Christ, he's actually ridiculous," Dillon says, grinning.

"Worse," Hayes says with a dramatic sigh. "He's *boring*."

“Oh my god.”

“You tamed the Russian Beast, Hollzy!” Barrett teases, leaning over to ruffle Shane’s hair.

At that very moment the door swings open, and Ilya struts into the room like he the owns the joint. Which, as the captain, he kind of does. This room is his, unwaveringly.

“Speak of the devil,” Bood says.

Ilya glances up, startled by the roomful of eyes that are suddenly fixed on him. He’s carrying the usual tension that he bears after a therapy session, but it weighs him down less, now, after so many years. His smiles come easier, too, and he grins at everyone despite his obvious confusion.

“What’s going on?” He asks, assessing the way he’s being watched.

“We have a bone to pick with you, Captain,” Choui says, as he crosses his arms and leans back in his stall.

“It wasn’t me, it was Evan!” Ilya says, pointing his finger at Dykstra.

The room laughs, and Ilya grins with pride, immediately seeking out Shane for his approval. He starts to make his way over to him, no doubt to give Shane their obligatory hello kiss, but Shane raises a hand and stops him in his tracks.

“Not so fast, Rozanov,” Shane says, and Ilya instantly stills.

“What did I do?” Ilya asks. “I’m sorry, Shane. I’ll make it up to you.”

The guys laugh again, and someone mutters, “*Whipped*,” under their breath. Shane just rolls his eyes and doesn’t dignify the remark with a response because, well, it’s not like he can deny it, can he?

The guy has been lying to their team for months so he doesn’t have to go out without Shane. He’s a ridiculous, perfect men.

Shane loves him so much he feels like he might explode from it.

“What’s this about you telling the guys I said no, when they ask you to hang out?”

“Busted,” Luca sings.

Ilya’s mouth drops, and his eyes widen, and he glares at the guys in the room like each and every one of them have betrayed him.

“Sweetheart-“

“Don’t *sweetheart* me,” Shane warns, but it’s playful.

“I can explain.”

“We’re all ears, Cap,” Hayes says, grinning deviously.

Ilya huffs as he drops his gear bag into the stall beside Shane’s. He curls his hand around the back of Shane’s neck, and bends down to kiss him on the top of his head. The gesture is unbearably sweet, and Shane feels himself blushing as he looks up at his husband.

Ilya brushes his thumb across the freckles beneath Shane’s eyes, and says, “Would you want to leave this pretty face all alone?”

He’s met with a chorus of groans, and gags, threats to fine him. Ilya doesn’t seem to care in the slightest; he grins, but doesn’t take his eyes off Shane.

“Are you mad at me, sweetheart?” He asks, already knowing that Shane isn’t.

“They thought I was controlling you.”

“I’m sorry.”

“You can’t keep telling people *I* said no, Ilya. It makes me look bad.”

“Okay, I won’t anymore.”

“You promise?”

“Of course. I do whatever my husband tells me,” Ilya says with a teasing smirk.

Shane groans, shoving him lightly away. But everyone laughs, and no one complains when Ilya plants another kiss straight on Shane’s lips, and Shane feels so deliriously happy that it almost seems impossible.

He has a husband who loves him so much that he lies to get out of going anywhere without Shane. What could he possibly complain about?

The locker room slowly fills out as more of the guys start to arrive, and though Shane didn’t manage to do the extra drills he’d hoped to fit in, he finds he doesn’t mind all that much. He’s got a team that makes hanging around in the locker room fun, and a husband who looks at him like he hung the moon, and his life is maybe the best it’s ever been right now.

“Wait,” Dykstra says, as they’re stepping onto the ice. “My cousins birthday party while Shane was in New York for that brand shoot...?”

Shane grimaces. “Oh, no. That one *was* me.”

“*What?*”

“It was at a *gay bar*, Evan. What do you expect?” Shane retorts. “I wasn’t letting him go alone.”

“My husband is possessive,” Ilya says, skating up behind Shane and wrapping his arms around his waist. He rests his chin on Shane’s shoulder and grins widely. “Has me on a very tight leash.”

“And you look so pretty there,” Shane agrees.

The whole team groans in unison.

“Rozanov!” Wiebe calls from across the ice.

And it’s simply instinct, when Ilya and Shane both turn around together.

“God, I can’t believe there’s two of you now,” Wiebe sighs. “Let go of your husband and get to work. Both of you.”

“Yes, Coach!” Ilya yells back, then, whispering in Shane’s ear, “Love you.”

“Love you, baby,” Shane whispers back.

And then they get to work. They’ve got another cup to win, after all.

End Notes

this is so silly but i kept seeing tweets about it and simply had to write it!! i'm terrible at humour but i gave it a go 😂 love you

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