Trading Up

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Trading Up

by PeaceLilies

Summary

Veteran player Ilya Rozanov knows that Shane Hollander is into him. They're both out and the spark is undeniable but Ilya isn't sure he's the best choice for his much younger Captain...

Notes

Thank you to dntat for entrusting me with this idea! I don't normally go for age gaps but this was fun and has me noodling on some other ideas 🤔
Shout out to bubbleomatic for the title! You're a lifesaver!
Enjoy! 💖

See the end of the work for more notes

All-Star Weekend 2027

Ilya waited at the bar of the very nice hotel that was part of the very nice resort that had been rented out for the NHL All-Star weekend.

He was dressed in a cabana polo, cream colored slacks, and a pair of comfortable loafers to match.

He looked around at the array of people filling the room, fellow hockey players and their partners in various states of drunkenness.

Ilya smiled a little to himself, feeling every bit his age. He was probably the oldest person in the room by the looks of it.

While thirty-six wasn't old for your average person, for hockey, he was ancient.

He was doing well given his advanced age in the sport, not as hot on the ice as he used to be when he was younger, but a solid goal scorer, and still relatively quick on his feet.

He'd been traded at the end of last season, which hadn't surprised him, but had been devastating nonetheless.

He'd spent his whole career in Boston but he understood why they'd traded him, at least from a business perspective.

The fans had been crushed, as had the team, but Ilya was trying to take things in stride, even if leaving Boston had been difficult.

He'd been traded to Montreal of all places, though he also understood why. Montreal was dangerous and they had been for the last few years. Ilya was pretty sure they'd win the Cup this year. So that was nice for him.

His wandering eyes settled on his team's captain, sitting by himself at a table in a far corner of the room, nursing a beer.

Ilya smiled a little to himself.

Shane Hollander. Youngest Captain in Montreal Voyageurs' history. This generation's Ilya Rozanov.

Hockey media and fandom weren't wrong in calling him that, at least from a statistical perspective.

Hollander was putting up enormous numbers. His hockey IQ was insane. He was quick on his feet, with the softest hands. A beautiful skater with an incredible backhand.

If you were to compare Hollander's stats with Ilya's from when Ilya had been in his twenties, they would look nearly identical.

But Hollander was the exact opposite of Ilya in personality. He was serious, focused, and disciplined.

Ilya had never been lazy but he had also never shied away from a good time.

Hollander could be a bit of a wet blanket at times, hard to coax out of his shell, or to come out for drinks after a game.

He was a good captain though. Young and still gaining experience in the League, but he was funny, extremely talented, and got along well with all the guys.

He was also coming into a more accepting League. Things weren't perfect but after Scott Hunter had come out in 2017, things had started to shift and change.

Ilya had come out as bisexual. Troy Barrett and Luca Haas had come out as gay. All of them active players in the NHL.

Hollander had come out before he'd even been drafted because of everyone who had come out in the League.

He was the first openly gay man to be drafted as a first round, number one pick in the NHL.

And Ilya was very aware that Hollander was into him. He remembered meeting the team for the first time and everyone ribbing Hollander about how he was going to finally get to play with his hero, on the same team, possibly even the same line.

Hollander had been embarrassed and self-conscious, though he'd made a valiant effort to welcome Ilya to the team and be a good Captain and teammate.

It was sweet in a lot of ways, Hollander acting like Ilya's shadow but getting flustered when Ilya tried to talk to him. All nerves and kind of awkward.

Cute.

There was a fourteen year age difference between them and while Ilya wasn't one to judge, the years gave him pause.

He wasn't having a mid-life crisis. Sleeping with and dating people younger than him wasn't something he needed to do to feel virile and masculine or like he needed to fight off the fear of his own mortality. He didn't need to feel young or more alive.

Ilya was actually enjoying aging. It wasn't easy, especially playing a high intensity contact sport. He'd had surgery on both hips already. He needed more time to warm up and he needed more maintenance than ever. But he had learned to embrace the wisdom that came with experience.

Therapy had helped with that, too.

It was just that that was a lot of years.

It was hard to deny that Hollander was extremely attractive though. He was talented and smart and funny. He was a good person; considerate and kind and good with people, if anxious at times.

Occasionally, Ilya felt protective of him.

His interest was certainly piqued.

"What can I get you?"

Ilya turned back to the bar and smiled at the harried looking bartender.

"A Corona with lime please and two shots of the Russian Standard," Ilya told her.

Hollander had beaten Ilya's rookie season fastest shot record, so it seemed only fair to reward him.

The bartender nodded, grabbing a Corona from the cooler under the bar. She expertly removed the top, plucked a lime wedge from her display, and placed it in the bottle, before reaching back under the bar and pulled out a bottle of chilled premium Russian vodka.

Hard to find in the States.

She poured the shots and slid the glasses toward Ilya, who thanked her, and tipped extra for her efforts.

Ilya picked up his beer, taking a sip, then grabbed the shots, and made his way over to Hollander.

When Ilya arrived at the table, Hollander looked up at him, surprised, his freckled cheeks staining pink.

Fucking adorable.

"Hi," Ilya said.

"Hi," Hollander replied, swallowing.

"May I sit?" Ilya asked.

"Yeah, yes. Of course," Hollander said, nodding his head, his hands wrapped around his beer glass for dear life. "Please."

Ilya smiled, placing his beer and the shots on the table, and sat down.

"I thought you could use some company."

Hollander looked at him, smiling, all shy, brown eyes wide, like a deer in headlights.

"Thanks. That's nice of you."

"I am very nice person," Ilya said firmly and that got a laugh from Hollander, which was good. "I brought you something."

Hollander looked at him quizzically, dark brows furrowing. "Oh?"

Ilya looked at him, eyes narrowing. "Are you legal in the US?"

"Oh fuck off, Rozanov," Hollander huffed, which made Ilya smile. "I'm twenty-two."

"Yes. Right. Of course." Ilya passed him one of the vodka shots and Hollander looked at it curiously.

"What's this for?"

"For breaking my record," Ilya said.

Hollander blinked at it, then looked at Ilya, smiling. "I've broken a lot of those."

Ilya rolled his eyes and shook his head. "Yes. I am aware. Now fucking drink."

Hollander laughed and picked up the shot.

They clinked glasses.

"Za zdorov'ye," Ilya said before taking the shot, and setting his glass on the table.

Ilya laughed as he watched Hollander shiver and grimace once he'd put his own glass down.

"Not a fan?"

"It's fine, I guess," Hollander wheezed and then coughed, sipping his beer.

Ilya chuckled, greatly amused. Fuck. Hollander was *really* fucking cute.

"What did you say? Before the shot?"

"Oh. Like cheers, in Russian. To health, it means."

Hollander nodded. "Interesting. Cool."

Ilya smiled and took a sip from his beer bottle. "Having a good night?"

Hollander shrugged. "It's okay, I guess."

"Just okay? You are the fan favorite!"

Hollander shrugged again, tapping his thumb against the glass in his hand. "You're pretty popular, too."

"I am old news. You are exciting. You have been breaking my records and all."

Hollander looked at Ilya, smiling, his cheeks still pink, though he looked like maybe he knew what Ilya was trying to do.

"You know, I used to have a poster of you on my wall," he said. "I used to obsessively watch your highlight reels."

"Oh yes? Is the poster still there? Above your bed? I can sign it for you. Though, that must be weird for the people you are having sex with…"

Hollander laughed. "Fuck you. It's back at my parents' house in Ottawa."

"You would leave me behind?!" Ilya objected, feigning horror, which only made Hollander laugh more.

He had a nice laugh, boyish and happy, his face all crinkling up.

"I don't think I need to worry about a poster when the real thing is right here," Hollander said, looking at Ilya meaningfully as he took a sip of his beer.

Ilya looked back at him, eyes sliding up and down his frame, back to Hollander's eyes. He was being braver than Ilya had expected. Bold. Maybe he'd had more to drink than Ilya had thought…

He looked fucking good though, even if his outfit lacked style; a dark blue polo, khakis, boat shoes. It oddly suited him.

Ilya had felt Hollander's lingering looks, he'd seen that kind of pleading, puppy dog expression, the way he brightened when Ilya gave him any attention.

It wasn't really like Ilya to have a kind of crisis of conscience. Hollander was an adult. He could certainly make his own decisions, though Ilya remembered himself at twenty-two and he had been a giant idiot.

But Hollander had a much better head on his shoulders, which was why Ilya was kind of confused as to his interest.

Ilya knew he was attractive. Even at thirty-six, he was in great shape. He had deeper smile lines and crows feet, he had a streak of silver in his golden-brown curls now, which some said made him look more dashing.

But Shane Hollander was… perfect.

He was young and in incredible shape. He had the most beautiful face on any man that Ilya had ever seen. Big brown eyes, perfectly sloped, adorable nose, pink lips that were just slightly pouty, a sharp jaw, and those stunning freckles across his nose and cheeks.

He could have anyone he wanted… why choose Ilya?

Ilya licked his lips and leaned a little closer.

"Listen, Hollander…" he said softly. "You do not want to be with me. I am too old for you."

Hollander looked at Ilya, surprised for a moment, before his brows furrowed, and he shook his head a little.

"So? Age is just a number. And obviously you know I'm interested in you."

Ilya was surprised that Hollander was actually pursuing this but there didn't seem to be a reason to deny it. They both knew what was going on here.

"Yes. I know. But you are a baby."

Ilya watched as Hollander sat up straight in his chair, all puffed up, face scrunched like an angry kitten. It was adorable but also Ilya could tell that Hollander was getting serious now.

"I'm not a baby. Or a kid. I'm a full grown adult and I can make my own decisions." Hollander sighed, shaking his head. He leaned in, too, meeting Ilya's eyes.

"I really do like you, Ilya. I admire you. You were…" He blushed then, only glancing away for a second. "It was because of you that I realized that I was gay and then you came out as being bi and… I don't know."

Hollander sighed again, leaning back in his seat. Ilya had to hand it to him, he was being incredibly brave. And damn if that wasn't even more of a turn on.

"You coming to the team felt like fate. I think I just needed to shoot my shot. If you really aren't interested because you think I'm too young or naive or whatever then that's fine. I'm not going to force you. But, I'm interested. I have been for a long time."

Ilya looked at Shane for a long moment, considering his words. He really was impressed. Ilya nodded, took a long pull off the Corona, before turning back to Shane.

"1221," he said, tapping his knuckles against the table, and stood up. He took his beer bottle and the shot glasses with him, walking back to the bar.

Either he'd just made the best decision ever or the worst.

Only time would tell.

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Shane took the stairs.

He'd waited at the table after Ilya had left for about thirty minutes.

He'd been shocked and pleased and a little nauseous, unsure if he'd totally just blown it with the man who had occupied almost all of Shane's sexual fantasy from ages fifteen on.

Shane had jerked off to that poster of Ilya, to his highlight reels, to his Calvin Klein ads. Fuck. Those photos haunted Shane's dreams.

For a while, Shane had been caught between wanting to *be* Ilya and wanting to be *with* by him.

And it was one thing to be playing in the same League as Ilya Rozanov at the same time and something all together insane to be on the same team as him.

Shane knew he hadn't done a good job of hiding his feelings for Ilya. It was like he was drawn to Ilya like a magnet. Like Ilya was the sun and Shane was pulled into his orbit.

He was so charismatic and handsome and so fucking good at hockey.

Shane couldn't even shower at the same time as him and he was so grateful that Ilya wasn't a guy who walked around the locker room naked because that seemed like an Ilya thing to do and if he did do that, Shane would simply expire.

He remembered thinking about Ilya's dating history, the many women he had been seen with, and thinking that he would never, ever have a chance, because Ilya was straight.

He'd been so jealous of those women, wishing that he could be one of them.

And then Ilya had come out and it was like Shane had been handed a gift.

In some parallel universe, he might have a chance to be with Ilya Rozanov.

Now here he was, on his way to Ilya's room for a potential clandestine hookup and Shane couldn't believe that this was happening.

He wasn't super surprised Ilya had called him out about it or that he had tried to talk Shane out of his interest, but that had only felt more like a challenge to Shane.

And he loved a challenge.

He'd prove himself and Ilya would see that he was serious. He wasn't going to give up that easy.

He got to Ilya's floor and found room 1221.

He double checked the number before knocking on the door.

His throat felt like sandpaper and his heart was pounding.

The door opened and Ilya stood there, wearing what he had been wearing in the bar, only now he was barefoot.

He stepped back, holding an arm out for Shane, and Shane stepped into the room. Ilya closed and locked it behind him.

Shane had his hands in his pockets, unsure what else to do with them, and turned to Ilya. He licked his lips.

"You are sure you want this?" Ilya asked, moving closer. He smelled sweet and a little spicy. Shane had no idea how someone could always smell so good… even during practice…

Shane nodded, looking up at Ilya. He could feel his warmth he was so close.

"Yeah. I do."

Ilya nodded, his hazel eyes almost golden in the low light, scanning Shane's face.

He reached up a careful hand, holding Shane's chin between his thumb and index finger, and Shane felt a buzz of electricity run down his spine at that touch. His fingers were warm, a little rough.

Shane stayed very still. It was like he'd walked into one of his fantasies. It was unbelievable to think that Ilya was this close, touching him.

Ilya kissed him. It was soft, just a press of lips. Ilya's were plush and warm and softer than Shane expected, his stubble a pleasant roughness against Shane's skin.

They parted for a moment, eyes meeting, before kissing again. Shane's hand rested on Ilya's chest, feeling the firm muscle under his palm, a brief brush of the chain he always wore.

Ilya's tongue brushed against his lips and Shane opened easily for him, sliding his hand into Ilya's thick curls, resting on the back of Ilya's neck, and then his cheek, wanting to touch all of him at once.

Ilya pressed him against the wall, his thigh sliding between Shane's legs, and Shane ground against the muscle, both hands in Ilya's hair as Ilya held his face with one hand, thumb pressing into Shane's jaw, the other planted beside Shane's head on the wall.

They kissed for a long time, hands roaming, before they finally pulled apart. Lips sore and oxygen necessary, both of them breathing hard.

Shane slid his hands to Ilya's pecs squeezing them, as the back of Ilya's hand caressed his cheek, and he murmured something in Russian.

"Have you ever been with a man?" he asked and Shane nodded.

"Yeah."

"Oh?" One of Ilya's dark brows raised slightly, a little smile on his face. "Secret boyfriend?"

"For a little while."

"Mm," Ilya hummed, running his thumb over Shane's lips. Shane let his tongue dart out and watched Ilya's eyes go darker, before he slid his thumb into Shane's mouth.

Shane sighed and sucked, wrapping his tongue around Ilya's finger, teasing a little. He might not have as much experience as Ilya but he wasn't a virgin.

He'd show him.

"Fuck, Shane."

Shane opened his eyes to meet Ilya's as Ilya pulled his thumb from Shane's mouth. Shane watched as he stuck his thumb into his own mouth, as if he was sucking honey from it.

"Take off your clothes," Shane said, already pulling his polo off, and Ilya chuckled.

"Yes, Captain," he joked and Shane couldn't help but huff a laugh.

"Shut up, Rozanov."

Shane let his polo drop to the floor and watched Ilya pull off his own shirt.

Shane had seen him shirtless plenty of times. He'd seen Ilya down to his underwear, even in a towel that hung dangerously low on his hips.

And he looked so fucking good.

Strong and built, maybe not as lean as he was in the beginning of his career but fucking solid as hell. His muscular pecs were dusted in dark hair, his left pec showcasing his infamous snarling bear tattoo, and a neat trail of hair ran from under his perfect bellybutton into his briefs.

Shane wanted to take in every inch.

Ilya held out his arms. "Do you want me to pose for you, too?"

Shane laughed, shaking his head. "You're… spectacular."

"Yes. Tell me more."

Shane smiled, his cheeks heating, but he could see Ilya's hazel eyes dancing with mischievous delight. He liked this and Shane liked it, too. He liked the banter. The back and forth.

"I mean, what's there to say that hasn't been said. You're so fucking sexy. Like, all of you. You're so fucking big, everywhere. I want to know what it's like to be swallowed up by you."

"Jesus, Hollander."

Shane felt exposed. It was a lot to be doing this but he wanted it. He'd wanted it for a long time, even before Ilya had ever joined the team.

And even though it was scary, being this kind of honest and vulnerable, he knew that Ilya wouldn't hurt him, because that wasn't the kind of guy he was.

Shane moved closer and went to his knees. "Fuck I've wanted this..."

His hands gripped the back of Ilya's ridiculous thighs as he rubbed his face against the bulge in Ilya's briefs.

Ilya hissed something in Russian, his hand sliding into Shane's longer hair, not holding him, just touching.

"So beautiful, Shane," Ilya murmured and Shane practically preened.

Shane slid his hands around, fingers sliding into the waistband of Ilya's briefs. He pulled them down as much as he could so Ilya's dick popped out, bobbing in his face, and Shane's face was hot. He was practically salivating.

He'd never blown anyone who was uncut before but no time like the present.

He kissed and kitten licked at Ilya's cock, so fucking hard in his pants just from this alone. He'd wanted to know what it was like to have Ilya's dick in his mouth, his ass.

Shane was so turned on he was almost dizzy. He couldn't believe he was doing this, couldn't believe Ilya was allowing it.

He sighed softly, licking at the head of his cock as it poked out of the foreskin, before taking Ilya's dick into his mouth, as far as he could.

Ilya was not small by any means but Shane was determined. And he'd given his ex plenty of blowjobs to know what he was about.

"Shane," Ilya breathed above him and Shane hummed around him, bobbing his head, eyes closed. He wondered if it was possible to come just from this…

Ilya let him suck for a few more blissful moments before he tugged on Shane's hair.

"Stop, stop, stop."

Shane stopped, pulling off of Ilya, and looked up at him.

"Was that—?"

Ilya was shaking his head, pulling Shane to his feet, and Shane's hands rested back on Ilya's pecs.

"Too much, too good," Ilya assured, wiping his knuckles gently down Shane's mouth. "Do you want me to fuck you?"

"Yeah. Fuck. Please."

Ilya smiled and hummed. "I like when you ask nice…"

Shane sighed, letting his eyes flutter closed. "Please, fuck me, Ilya. *Please."*

Ilya growled and kissed Shane again, commanding and filthy and surprisingly tender.

They pulled off the rest of their clothes and Ilya steered them to the bed, pushing Shane onto it.

He grabbed lube and a condom from his bag, tossing them onto the bed, and it was totally unfair how elegantly he was, even naked.

"Have you ever?" Ilya asked, pushing Shane's legs apart, hands sliding down the inside of Shane's thighs. The touch made Shane shiver and his cock twitch. Ilya noticed and smiled.

"Yes," Shane breathed. "But it's been maybe a year… I have a, um, dildo but…"

Ilya smiled. "A dildo? Is big?"

Shane rolled his eyes. "Shut up."

"What color?"

"Fuck you."

Ilya laughed, kissing Shane briefly on the mouth, and then working his way down his body, pressing ticklish, open-mouthed kisses as he went, before he got to Shane's cock.

Shane watched as his idol licked him from base to tip, sucking under the head of Shane's cock, wrapping his tongue around it, licking the slit. His arms wrapped around Shane's thighs, hands on his quads.

Shane gripped the sheets, biting his lip, overwhelmed by sensation, and worrying (a little) about coming too quickly.

Ilya peeked up at him for a moment, before taking Shane all the way down, and swallowing around him.

"Holy fucking shit," Shane gasped as Ilya deep throated him in the most casual way possible. "Oh my god, Ilya, holy fuck, ah—!"

Ilya hummed, obviously amused, sucking Shane's dick like he was going to get scored on performance, before pulling very slowly off of Shane, letting him slide from his mouth with a little pop.

Shane was panting, staring up at the ceiling, wishing that this could last for hours and also wishing Ilya would make him come right now.

"Too much?" Ilya asked, pressing a kiss to the inside of Shane's right thigh.

"I'm just overwhelmed," Shane replied honestly. "This is like… a dream come true."

"Wow," Ilya replied, a teasing smile tugging at his lips. "I am honored."

"I'm being serious," Shane huffed, knocking his knee against Ilya's head.

"Ow," Ilya laughed.

Shane laughed, too, and they smiled at each other. Ilya grabbed the lube, readjusting between Shane's legs, and slid a hand up Shane's body to squeeze his pec. Shane rested his hand over Ilya's, fingers loosely tangled.

"Relax, yeah? We will go slow."

Shane nodded. "Thank you."

Ilya slicked his fingers and wrapped his mouth back around Shane's dick, a slick finger gently rubbing circles against his rim.

Shane took a breath, exhaling, allowing himself to relax, to float on the pleasure of this moment; enjoying every touch.

Ilya's mouth was wet and warm and expert. His finger was slow and careful, teasing Shane until he could slip inside with little resistance.

He waited, not rushing, and Shane relaxed again, before Ilya started a careful rhythm.

He searched around, finding Shane's prostate, and Shane jolted, his whole body flooded with warmth at that touch.

"Jesus Christ…"

Ilya hummed and kept going.

It didn't take long for Shane to be ready. Ilya was three fingers deep, fingering Shane in time with his mouth on his cock, and Shane could come just from this.

"Ilya, shit. You gotta stop or…"

Ilya stopped, careful extracting his fingers, and pulling slowly off of Shane once more.

"Already?" Ilya asked. "We barely started."

Shane groaned. "Well…"

Ilya laughed and Shane covered his face, laughing, too.

He peeked out from behind his fingers, Ilya kissing the inside of his left thigh, to his groin.

"We can stop," Ilya murmured. "Or just keep doing this?"

Shane shook his head, reaching for him. "No. I want you inside me."

"So brave," Ilya cooed, leaning over Shane, and dropped a kiss to his mouth.

"Come on," Shane sighed. "I'm ready."

Ilya kissed his mouth, then the corner of it, then his jaw, and neck, before pulling away, grabbing the condom.

Shane licked his lips, biting his bottom lip as he watched Ilya slide the condom on, and slick himself, before he rolled onto his hands and knees.

"Okay?" Ilya asked, one hand resting on Shane's hip, the other gently caressing down his back.

"Yeah," Shane replied, his chest lowered to the mattress, ass up in offering. Fuck, he'd dreamt about this. He couldn't quite believe that it was happening.

Shane felt the blunt head of Ilya's dick press up against him. Ilya's hands wrapped around his hips and Shane felt him press in. He groaned, a little caught off guard by the pressure of being filled.

Ilya paused, giving him a moment. "Is okay?"

Shane nodded. "Keep going."

Ilya pulled out just a little, pressing back in again and Shane moaned. God. Ilya was fucking huge, which was not a surprise, but *fuck.* Shane needed a sec and Ilya waited. His hand smoothed over Shane's back in a soothing caress.

"Good boy," he hummed.

He didn't move until Shane gave the okay, finding a smooth, easy rhythm. He adjusted his hips and Shane moaned as he hit just the right spot.

"Fuck, Ilya. Yes."

"Good?"

"Yeah," Shane hummed. "You don't have to be gentle. I can take it."

Ilya grinned.

"Don't worry. I won't," Ilya replied.

And Ilya was true to his word. He fucked Shane in long, firm strokes, hitting his prostate almost every time.

This was better than any of Shane's fantasies. He knew that Ilya was experienced but Christ, the guy was like a literal sex god.

Shane loved the way it felt to have Ilya filling him up, fucking him, and checking in, making sure that it was just as good for Shane as it was for him.

Ilya's hands held his hips, slid over his back, gripped his shoulder as he fucked him harder, faster.

And Shane was trying to be quiet, whining and moaning and panting into the pillow under him, hands fisted into the sheets.

"Turn over," Ilya breathed at some point, patting Shane's hip. He pulled out and Shane rolled onto his back, pulling his knees in as Ilya pressed back into him.

Shane looked up into his face, his cheeks flushed, lips red and parted, eyes dark with desire. The crucifix pendant he always wore around his neck swung between them rhythmically as Ilya fucked him. He was the most stunning thing Shane had ever seen and he reached for him, cupping his face to kiss him.

"So good, Ilya. Fuck."

"Are you going to come for me?"

"Yes. Fuck. I'm so close. Want you to make me come."

"Stroke yourself."

Shane slid his hand between them, jerking himself off, Ilya's eyes leaving Shane's face to watch Shane's hand as it flew over his dick.

"Fuck, fuck, fuck. Ilya. Oh shit, I'm coming, I'm—!" Shane gasped, coming hard all over his hand, come splashing up onto his chest, and Ilya fucked him through it.

Shane watched his face, head tilted back just a bit, until he stilled and came, too. Shane had never seen anything so beautiful in his entire life.

So much for being quiet.

They were both frozen for a moment before Ilya dropped to his elbows and kissed Shane breathlessly.

He tucked his face against Shane's neck and Shane wrapped an arm around him, humming happily as he enjoyed the post-coital bliss that washed over him.

Ilya didn't linger long, pulling off and away from Shane. Shane watched him walk to the bathroom and close the door and dread sank into him, heavy and uncomfortable.

Had this been a mistake? Did Ilya regret it?

They'd known one another for five months at least, both of them circling one another, growing closer and closer.

Shane didn't think he'd been wrong that Ilya had felt a spark, too, but…

Shane heard water running and then Ilya came out of the bathroom, a wet cloth in hand.

He came back to bed, sitting beside Shane, and handed him the cloth.

"Oh. Thanks."

Ilya smiled and nodded and Shane cleaned himself up.

Ilya was watching him, lounging on his side beside Shane, and Shane faced him.

"I like you," he said.

Ilya smiled. "I know."

"I'd like to see you again."

Ilya huffed, smiling softly, closing his eyes. "I'm too old for you, Shane. You should be seeing men your own age."

"Please don't tell me what I should or shouldn't be doing. I can make my own decisions."

Ilya opened his eyes. "Fair enough."

Shane pressed his lips together. "I want this. I want to date you. Be with you. I know you think that my age matters but it doesn't. I want something stable and real. And I want that with you."

Ilya's brows furrowed together. "Why me?"

Shane reached out, tangling his fingers loosely with Ilya's. "Because I admire you. I always have and because I've gotten to know you. You're hot as hell, obviously. But you're also supportive and kind and understanding. You're incredible at hockey but you take time for your teammates, your fans, your charity. You're… kind of everything, honestly."

"You are very sweet and very Canadian," Ilya replied. "But… I have a lot of baggage. History. Is not—"

"I don't care. " Shane was firm, curling his fingers around Ilya's. "You can't scare me away. I'm not scared. I want to be in this with you. I want to know you. And I want you to know me, too."

Ilya looked at him, his face soft but serious, searching Shane's face as if looking for any doubt. He wouldn't find any.

"You are very stubborn."

"I am."

Ilya smiled. "Okay. So. You want to date."

"Yes."

"Even though we are teammates and you are my Captain."

Shane took a deep breath. "Yeah. I do."

Ilya nodded. "Okay."

"Okay?"

"Okay."

Shane smiled and shifted closer, wrapping his arms around Ilya, hugging him.

Ilya laughed, hugging Shane back.

"This may be very foolish."

"I don't care."

Shane leaned away and looked at Ilya's face. He cupped one cheek in his hand and kissed him, deep and sweet.

"You are very brave," Ilya sighed.

Shane rubbed their noses together.

"You make me feel brave."

Ilya smiled, kissing Shane once more.

"Stay."

Shane hummed, rolling Ilya onto his back, and climbed on top of him.

"You don't have to tell me twice."

FIN

End Notes

Thank you so much for reading!
You can follow me on Tumblr, Bluesky, or Instagram to get updates on what I'm working on!
Every kudo and comment is so greatly appreciated and treasured! Thank you for your support! 💖

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