

i wonder if it ever will change, i'm living for that day, someday

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i wonder if it ever will change, i'm living for that day, someday

by [stardustvx](#)

Summary

“Ah, good,” Svetlana says after Rozanov scores his second goal of the night. “Now we don’t have to fight.”

“About what?” Shane asks.

“One goal for you, one goal for me. But it will get tricky again if he does a hat trick.”

or

injured Shane Hollander goes to watch Boston's game and meets Svetlana who is very nice. there is a lipstick mark on Rozanov's visor and it's fine. Shane does not overthink any of this and most definitely does not hope it was his lipmark there instead. he breaks his own heart a little bit before everything turns out alright. he goes home, though perhaps not the one you are thinking about.

Notes

this one is for me♡

I spent two nights in the hospital and even barely conscious I was talking about Hollanov, never forgetting that so if you see any typos, no you didn't (¬_¬)

there is some Russian in the text, the translations are in the end notes but if you don't speak Russian, I think it works better if you read them only after finishing the fic so you are with Shane not knowing what is being said

takes place post Shane's injury but before Skip happens. this was supposed to be funny but then it got a bit sad and I just had to write it a soft ending, hope y'all like this as much as I loved writing this~~

title is from Little Mix's Secret Love Song, Pt. II which I listened on repeat while writing this

Shane sits down on his seat, at the far back of the arena, and pulls anxiously his cap a bit lower. It was a stupid idea, he doesn't know why he came. He doesn't know what it would do to their rivalry, their— whatever they are, if someone spots and recognizes him here.

Yet, here he is. At the arena where the Boston Raiders are about to face the New York Admirals.

He hasn't seen Rozanov since the other had visited him in the hospital. And the thing is, he wants to see the other man, probably more than he should.

The thought had just come to him in the middle of the night. What if he went to see the game? It's not like he is going to be playing this season anymore. His broken collarbone has barely even started to heal, his hand still in a cast. No one is expecting him to be anywhere. For the first time in a long time, he is free to do whatever he wants to.

Or free might be a bit of a stretch. His mother wouldn't let him out of her sight for days on end after his concussion. And then there is the public with their cameras and questions. But there are no games or practices to go to.

Free in deed he thinks as he tugs at his cap once more. If someone recognizes him, he will blame the concussion.

He almost gets up from his seat and leaves but he can't help but worry that would only attract more attention; him coming and then immediately leaving.

Instead, he chews anxiously on the string of his hoodie. It's a plain black one, he didn't dare to wear Boston merch in fear of being recognized. Even though a part of him likes the idea of having Rozanov's name on his back.

The media would have a field day with that, so he settled on the next best thing. Black. It's safe. It will help him blend in the sea of black jerseys.

That's when the Boston players shoot to the ice, Rozanov on the lead, and the audience goes crazy cheering from them. Even Shane might have found himself cheering aloud. Just for a moment, until he realizes what he is doing and immediately shuts his mouth.

Despite that there is the same thrill running in his veins as when he is the one on the ice. His heart that was beating anxiously in his chest just a moment ago suddenly calms down as he watches Rozanov skate around the ice.

He yearns to be back there, on the ice. It's the only place in the entire world where his mind is perfectly calm and quiet. All his worries and fears disappearing for a moment as there is no space for them on the ice.

And that is exactly what he needs in this moment when he sees red – literally.

It was easy to miss earlier with him being nothing but a blur as he practically flew through the ice. But now that he has slowed to stop and even though Shane is way too far to see

clearly, there is undoubtedly something red on the corner of Rozanov's visor.

The rest of audience starts to take a notice of it too, pointing at him on the ice. Soon enough the camera spans onto him and Rozanov is on the big screen, laughing at something one of his teammates must have said.

Shane's heart sinks.

The red on the visor is a very distinct red lipstick mark. Rozanov notices the camera pointed at him and winks. Then he spins around, spraying ice every where as he does and skates out of the frame.

The crowd goes wild.

Shane on the other hand sinks lower on his seat and pulls his hood on top of the cap, hoping to disappear. He wonders why he came at all.

The other man must have someone, a girl, in every city he plays. Someone to kiss him for a good luck before going on the ice and waiting for him when he comes back. Someone he can be seen with in public; Shane has seen the pictures online too.

And time after time he tells himself it doesn't matter, he doesn't care. Whatever they have is just sex and they keep doing it because it's easy, it's convenient.

Even though he knows that literally nothing about them is easy or convenient. It's a secret they have to carefully guard because if it comes out it could ruin their careers, everything they have ever worked for.

The truth could destroy Ilya Rozanov's whole life. The other man doesn't speak much of his family but Shane isn't stupid. He probably could never go back home again. More than that, he probably could never go back to Russia.

Perhaps that is why Shane feels the silly need to cling onto the hope that he isn't the only one feeling this way. That perhaps one day they could be something.

Why else would the other risk it all for him, *boring Shane Hollander?*

But of course, Rozanov's dreams aren't plagued with images of the two of them together like his are. He is probably not even thinking about him at all, too busy to entertain the women lining up and waiting to get even just a second of his time.

They haven't talked since the other visited him in the hospital. There has not been a single text exchanged either.

He shouldn't have come, he decides. His concussion must have been a lot worse than anyone realized. That is the only logical explanation on why he is here.

All of a sudden, he feels like crying which is stupid. What does he have to cry about? Nothing. He and Rozanov are nothing. He wants to call Rose who would probably laugh at him but would ultimately know just the right thing to say to cheer him up. But she had texted

him long before the sun was up, cursing the long day she was going to have. He doesn't want to bother her.

Who else he could call? Hayden? He loves Hayden, his best friend, but this isn't something he can talk to him about. He would rather get hit to the face with a high stick.

Part of him wants to call his mother, to have her come pick him up and hug this all better like she would do when he was still a little kid.

But that would mean having to confess to her that he is hours away from home at Boston's game of all places. Doing that right after getting injured, when she has only recently let him out of her sight for longer than few minutes? No. He would rather get hit to the face with a high stick *repeatedly*.

The worst thing is, she would do it. She would drive hours to get to him and hug him and try everything in her power to make this all better.

Shane fears the only one who could make this better is currently skating around the ice with someone else's lipstick on his helmet. And he doesn't even know it's killing him.

No, what he actually needs is for someone to violently tackle him into the boards so that he gets another, even worse, concussion and forgets all about Ilya Rozanov and how his lips feel against his. He needs to forget the way the other man fills him up as he fucks him into the mattress and how he is the only one who does it for him.

They are nothing and he thinks that's no longer enough for him. Even little *something* wouldn't do any more when he fears he wants everything.

Shane wishes it was his lip print on Rozanov's visor instead. Which is a completely ridiculous thought to have. He doesn't even wear lipstick.

Suddenly his hood is pulled down and Shane startles so badly that he nearly falls from his seat. The scream that manages to escape him thankfully drowns into the excitement of the audience around him.

"You look suspicious. Attracts more attention," Svetlana says as she sinks into the empty seat next to him.

He looks at her, surprised, as she stretches her legs over the back of the seat in front of her. The soles of her black heels are red. Red that seems to be the exact same shade as her lipstick. The same red that is on Rozanov's visor.

He tries to be very normal, very adult, about all of this. Something he immediately fails at because he can't quite meet the other's eyes.

"Um, thanks? I guess? Hi?" He manages to say after a moment, awfully aware of the fact that everything that just came out of his mouth sounds like a question.

"You are funny, Hollander," she answers, shaking her head in amusement.

It feels wrong to hear that word, *funny*, in Russian accent when it's about him. He nearly corrects her, saying, no, I am actually boring, but manages to hold his tongue at the last minute.

He wants to leave even more than he did before but now his escape route has been blocked by a stunning Russian.

Oh, Svetlana is absolutely stunning. She looks classy and expensive in her white fur coat and black dress. Even Shane can't deny that fact even though he could never imagine himself with her. Nor any other woman for that matter.

But Rozanov could. He could be with any woman, marry her and have kids. He could have normal life, something that doesn't have be hidden behind closed doors. So, why would he ever choose Shane?

No, why would he choose anyone else when Svetlana is right here?

He turns to watch the ice so he doesn't have to look at her but it's no better. Rozanov is there. He is looking into the audience, skating around in slow circles. Looking for her in the crowd, no doubt.

"Does Ilya know you are here?" Svetlana asks and the casual use of first name makes Shane feel something that he fears might be jealousy.

He wonders if he could jump over the other's legs and make an escape. Perhaps, if it wasn't for his broken collarbone and arm still in cast.

"Uhh, no. I was just— in the area," he answers, aware that the both of them know he is hours away from home.

Svetlana laughs. "Sure."

Then the puck drops to the ice and the game starts. Rozanov wins the starting.

When the first period ends, the game is tied at 2-2. Rozanov scored the first one and assisted on the second goal of the Boston Raider's. Despite that his expression is stern as he makes his way to the locker room.

Though that's probably because he will spend the first 37 seconds of the second period sitting in the penalty box, serving his two minutes for tripping of all things. To Shane it had looked completely accidental but the referee had called it. In very uncharacteristic manner, Rozanov didn't even try to fight the penalty. There wasn't even a single word of complaint from him.

But that doesn't really mean all that much because he does try to fight Scott Hunter just a moment later. Rozanov is on his way to the locker room but drops his glove after whatever the older man said to him as he skated past him.

The fight is short lived, both of them giving up before anyone else has time to intervene.

Svetlana next to him crosses her arms and somehow manages to sound both agitated and endeared as she says, “I keep telling him to not fight. It will not help him score more goals. But when does he ever listen to me?”

“Never,” Shane can’t help himself from answering with a small smile of his own.

“Never, yes! You understand me, Hollander,” she laughs.

The thought of Ilya Rozanov on ice who isn’t prepared to fight at any given moment is bizarre, to say the least. With the way he runs his mouth it would be almost scary if he wasn’t ready to throw a punch. That paired with how good of a player he is, yeah, it can easily piss off a lot of others.

And the thing is, Rozanov really is damn good at hockey. There is no actual need for him to do it. So, that’s how you know he does it simply because he enjoys being a pain in other players ass.

That immediately sours Shane’s mood again. The only ass he wants Rozanov to be pain in, is his own.

He coughs awkwardly, fidgeting with the string of his hoodie. He can feel his cheeks heating up. Why on earth would he be thinking about ass in public? Especially when Svetlana is right next to him? He wishes the ground could open up and swallow him whole.

Then he gets up to his feet, pulling his hood back over his cap.

“Where are you going handsome?” Svetlana asks him, effectively stopping him on his place.

“What?” He blinks at her confusedly. “Umm, I need a drink?”

Shane curses himself under his breath. Why does everything he says to Svetlana still come out of his mouth as a question. The woman seems unphased about it, instead just pointing at the seat Shane just got up from.

“Sit your ass back down. I will go,” she says as she gets up from her own seat. “What do you drink?”

Surprised, he does exactly as he is told and sits promptly back down. “Thanks? You don’t have to though; I can go myself.”

“No, is no problem. Someone is bound to recognize that face if you go wandering around here,” she waves her hand dismissively. And then motions towards her shoes. “Besides, I haven’t had much chance to show off these beauties yet.”

Shane looks at the shoes and thinks about red. The same red as Svetlana’s lipstick. The same red as on Rozanov’s visor. He wonders if the shoes were a gift from him.

Or maybe she bought them herself, what does he know? She carries herself in a way that suggest money. And he thinks Rozanov mentioned something about her business with cars. Or maybe he read that online when he was obsessively googling her after he had first learned her name.

“So, what do you drink?” She asks again, already pulling out her wallet. Her card is black.

“Uh, thanks. A ginger ale,” he says because her reasoning actually makes a whole lot of sense.

Of course, someone would sooner or later recognize him if he went wandering around. Sometimes he forgets that he is Shane Hollander.

“Ah, I should have known. Ilya mentioned that.”

And then she just leaves without another word and Shane is left there losing his goddamn mind. What is that supposed to mean? Svetlana should have known he drinks ginger ale because Rozanov had mentioned it to her? Because they have had a conversation where that would ever be relevant to bring up?

His treacherous little heart has the nerve to skip a beat at the thought of Rozanov speaking about him to others, to Svetlana.

Despite that, Shane can't help but eye the escape route out of audience. No one is blocking his path now – which means literally everyone is out and about. So, he stays seated.

And part of him thinks if he made his escape now, Svetlana would somehow be waiting for him. At his, ready to bring him back into this very seat he is currently sitting on. Why? He has absolutely no idea but he has, what he likes to consider to be completely normal amount of fear and respect towards the other woman. He will save her the trouble of having to walk all that way in those shoes of hers.

Then he freezes. Wait. What if *he* is the other woman in this situation? He and Rozanov might have known each other since before their rookie year but Svetlana and Rozanov? They certainly have known each other for much longer than that.

But that would obviously be Rozanov's fault for two timing, not his. Right? He didn't even know who Svetlana was until quite recently. Or maybe the two of them are into it? Or they have an open relationship? Shane is pretty sure that some people do that.

He wonders if he could do it, share Rozanov with someone else and the answer is no. He wants to keep the other man all to himself. Which is absolutely ridiculous thought to be having when they aren't even anything.

He really must have hit his head really badly. Why else would he be thinking about any of this?

When Svetlana returns Shane is most definitely still spiraling. Somehow, he manages to thank her for the drink without making a complete fool out of himself.

And then he does it again because she opens the can for him without ever needing to ask. This Shane is actually very grateful for because he has tried to open a can one handedly one too many times and none of those attempts at it have ever been successful. He may or may not have even ruined one of his mother's favorite throw pillows.

Svetlana sits down next to him, casual, like this is any regular day to her.

And maybe it is? Maybe she goes to Rozanov's games all the time and is used to sitting with the other woman in the audience. How would Shane ever know because this is his first time in the audience as he is usually on the ice as well.

He no longer feels like drinking his ginger ale but he was raised too well and is too polite not to.

Svetlana is typing on her phone, and well Shane is not very proud of it but yes, he tries sneaking a peek. Unfortunately for him though, it's all in Russian and he understands absolutely nothing. Though the fact that the little photo next to the contact is a woman, cheers him up a little.

As does the fact that when Rozanov skates back to the ice again and straight back into the penalty box, the red lipstick mark on his visor is gone.

The commentator jokes that maybe he broke up with his girlfriend between the first and second period. And even though that would make him even happier, for completely selfish reasons of wanting Rozanov to completely himself, Shane doubts that very much. He is sitting next to Svetlana who seems completely calm and collected.

Or maybe calm is the wrong word for it. She boos very enthusiastically when the New York Admirals skate back onto the ice, Scott Hunter on the lead.

About half way through the second period, Ilya Rozanov scores again. The Boston Raiders are now leading, 3-2, for the first time during the whole game.

Rozanov celebrates on the ice by jumping against the boards with a loud cheer. Then he promptly disappears from the view, surrounded by his teammates in a group hug.

Shane feels giddy too. This is the first time he has ever really had the chance to celebrate the other man's goals. If he is on the ice too, there is nothing he can do. It's one more goal that he has to score the win for his team. And when watching on tv, there is still the stress over statistics. Good game for Boston is usually only a reason for him to play harder.

But now? He is off the ice and Montreal is out of the play-offs. This goal doesn't affect him in a way. He can just be happy about it. His mother can say whatever she wants about this

being Scott Hunter's season. He hopes whole heartedly that it's the Boston Raiders season instead. Not so much for Boston, he doesn't really care for them. But for Rozanov.

Shane hopes that if he himself isn't the one holding the cup at the end of the season, it will be Rozanov instead.

"Ah, good," Svetlana says, clapping slowly in a way that would probably seem only sarcastic if it was anyone but her doing it. "Now we don't have to fight."

"About what?" Shane asks.

He can think about quite a few things they could fight about, all of them coming back to Ilya Rozanov. What would have changed for them to not need to fight anymore is beyond him.

"One goal for you, one goal for me. No need for us to fight about who that one goal was for."

Oh. That makes a lot more sense.

Or does it? The more Shane tries to wrap his head around the situation he is currently in, the less it somehow seems to make sense to him.

The big screen is currently showing a replay of Rozanov's goal. It's beautiful in the strange way some goals are. He basically flies past one of the Admirals, after all he has always been one of the strongest skaters Shane has ever seen. And then spins around another. And then he slams the puck so fast that the goalie has only time to blink as it flies over his shoulder into the net.

"It will get tricky again if he does a hat trick," Svetlana says, her tone very solemn. Then she leans in closer and adds, "Don't worry. I will go easy on you."

"Why?"

"You are injured."

Shane bursts out laughing. He finds that it's very difficult to not like Svetlana because she is not only extremely smart and surprisingly kind but also absolutely hilarious.

So much so that he almost feels guilty for daydreaming about a future for him and Rozanov when they are nothing. Not in the way he perhaps would like to. And most certainly not in the way Rozanov and Svetlana are.

Then Scott Hunter comes back with vengeance and scores less than minute later. The game is a tie once more.

The second period ends in the same numbers and both teams seem equally frustrated as they skate off the ice. Shane can hear Rozanov cursing his teammates up to the stands. Before

disappearing from the view, he yells something in Russian and it makes Svetlana laugh.

“Ah, that man. Should have become comedian instead of playing hockey if he can’t score,” she sighs.

“So, you want to fight me for that goal?” Shane can’t stop himself from asking.

Svetlana laughs again. “I think it would be very interesting. You never fight on ice. Maybe you don’t know how.”

He ends up laughing too – until he remembers the one time he did end up fighting on ice. It was supposed to be just a little chirp thrown at the ice. He had been very proud if it too. It’s not every day Shane Hollander runs his mouth to other players; it doesn’t come naturally to him at all.

And what did he get for his trouble? Scott Hunter nearly annihilated him on the ice. So, yeah. No thanks. He will leave the fighting for others.

“I think you would win,” he tells the other honestly.

“Yes, I think so too,” Svetlana agrees easily. Perhaps a little too easily for Shane’s ego but it was him who said it first. She then adds, sounding very serious, “I’m Russian. I could fight bear.”

The man sitting in front of them turns around and for a moment Shane worries this is the moment when he gets recognized. But no, the man doesn’t even glance in his direction. He just stares at Svetlana, open-mouthed and at least a bit horrified.

“What? Is true,” Svetlana says.

Then she turns to look at Shane and the two of them laugh about it like they have known each other their whole lives.

The third period is fast approaching and to Shane’s complete surprises, he has actually had quite a lot of fun. He only partly regrets making the long drive down here. And even that is mostly because he also has to do that drive back.

Immediately too, he didn’t book a hotel nor made any other kind of sleeping arrangements. He didn’t really expect to stay. The whole way here he was waiting for himself to realize how crazy idea it was and turn the car around.

He is even little glad that he came. Because even though it makes his own heart ache uncomfortably, it was nice to meet Svetlana. She is nice. Shane thinks she will make Rozanov very happy.

Of course, it would be easier for him if she was horrible and he could just hate her. But the thought of leaving Rozanov to someone like that makes him feel slightly ill. Rozanov deserves someone nice. And funny. Someone he can be seen in public without any need to hide. Someone like Svetlana.

He wonders if he should tell that to her.

Before he can make any decisions on that, Svetlana looks at him and asks, “Do you know what makes it obvious that bathroom was designed by man?”

“No, I actually don’t,” he answers, utterly confused.

“There is nowhere for you to put your purse,” she says as she gets up from her seat. “Be darling and hold this for me. I need to pee.”

Then she just hands her purse to Shane and walks away.

And you see, he has looked after purses before. His mother’s for instance, multiple times. Rose’s and few times Jackie’s and some of the wives and girlfriends of his other teammates. So, he knows how important job it is. He takes it very seriously. Shane Hollander would defend Svetlana’s purse with his life if it came to that.

He is not proud of it but he is also just a man.

As soon as the woman has disappeared out his sight, he opens the weird latch keeping the bag closed and takes a little peek. Okay, it might be a bit more of full-on snooping around than a glance.

He is little relieved when there are no signs of Rozanov in the purse. There is just Svetlana’s wallet, car keys, little packet of mints and her phone. Oh, and the red lipstick. It has been used almost up – her signature shade perhaps? Shane’s mother has one too. She has vanity full of makeup but she only ever really uses the one.

Shane, feeling little guilty about what he did but not guilty enough not to do it, closes the purse and pretends like it never happened.

Near the end of the third period, it’s not Ilya Rozanov who scores the hat trick. No. It’s Scott Hunter. And with 6-3 and only mere seconds left on the clock, it’s pretty obvious that the Boston Raiders are not going to win this game.

Rozanov nearly fights one of his own teammates who started yelling at their goalie. Shane can’t hear what is being said but he can guess.

The players skate after the puck the last seconds but no one’s heart seems to longer be in it. The Admirals already gearing up to celebrate a good game where the Boston team seems to just want to go home.

“Oh, Ilya is going to be miserable. He doesn’t like losing,” Svetlana sighs.

Shane wants to point out that *no one likes losing* but he knows what she means. Rozanov gets sad in a way that is very hard to explain. It’s almost like the light in his eyes goes out for a moment. And then he gets almost clingy in the way he fucks Shane into the mattress.

Or used to. He guesses it will be Svetlana he fucks tonight because Shane isn’t here. Rozanov didn’t know he was coming and there is no way he can have seen him in the audience. He can slip away like he wasn’t here at all. It’s better like that. He can’t bear the thought of having to see the light come back in the other man’s eyes when he sees Svetlana.

But before he can make his escape, Svetlana links their arms together. “Come on, we don’t need to see them shake hands. Let’s beat the rush.”

And Shane? Well, he is so surprised by that that he simply goes along with it.

Shane thinks he would have let Svetlana lead him to the ends of the world if it came to that. It didn’t, fortunately. Though he isn’t sure if the actual destination is any better. Because now they are standing by the Boston Raider’s locker room door.

And they have stood there quite a while already. So long in fact that the door swings open and the first defeated looking players start slowly coming out.

Shane looks down at the floor, hoping they don’t recognize him. Even though he seems to worry for nothing. The Boston Raider’s barely look in their direction, heading straight to the waiting arms of their loved ones.

Svetlana greets some of them, congratulating them on good goals or nice saves which seems to cheer up them momentarily.

When the goalie comes out, she leaves Shane, letting go of his arm, and goes to hug the man. He looks completely and utterly heartbroken.

After a while most of the team must have left as the door to the locker room stays closed, Shane didn’t really pay attention to them to be sure about it. Even the area around the locker room is now empty. It’s surprising how such a large amount of people can disappear so quickly and quietly that you barely even notice it happening.

There is no sign of Rozanov and he starts thinking they must have missed him. Perhaps he left before they even got there.

Svetlana doesn’t seem to think so as she sighs and walks up to the closed door. And she proceeds to quite literally kick the door open. Before marching right into the locker room, she beckons hesitant Shane to follow.

He does.

Rozanov is sitting on the bench, still wearing half of his gear. His shoulders are slumped and he stares at his phone. He doesn't even look up from his screen when they come in.

"Ilya, no need to cry over spilled milk," Svetlana says, her tone light, joking.

In very uncharacteristic manner to him, Rozanov doesn't immediately jump to defend himself saying he isn't crying. Despite very clearly doing so, his cheeks are wet and his eyes red. He doesn't even make fun of the stupid English saying Svetlana used.

Instead, he just sets his phone down, a look of relief washing over his face as he whispers, "Ты здесь."

"Конечно," Svetlana answers as she crosses the room and hugs him.

Shane stands back, unsure of why he even is here in the first place. He should have left long before the game even started.

Now it's too late. He has seen Rozanov looking very young and vulnerable, with actual tears in his eyes, and Shane is rooted on his place. He can't move. All he can do is watch as the other man clings onto Svetlana like she is his lifeline and hope it could be him keeping his world together instead.

Very briefly Shane wonders; is the other man usually alone after a bad game like this? That doesn't feel right at all. Everyone has bad games; you can't avoid them. No one is perfect. It's especially hard when that bad game means your season is now over. And it wasn't even bad game for Rozanov personally. No, he played damn good hockey, like his life depended on it. Scott Hunter and the Admirals just played better hockey. It happens.

It's still not nice and it's even worse to be alone afterward. Where is his team? Seemingly fled the locker room as soon as possible. Does that happen after every game?

Or when he goes home, back to the hotel, who does he have there waiting for him? Who does Rozanov have in his corner?

Because when Shane plays a bad game, he can always count on the fact that he has his team. And when he goes home, he has his parents who are his biggest fans and will never forget to tell him he worked hard, he played the best hockey he could.

Maybe the answer is obvious. Svetlana, Rozanov has Svetlana.

"I told you it's Hunter's season," she says and it gets a weak laugh out of the other man.

Shane wonders what kind of sixth sense do women have for this sport because his mother keeps saying the same. To be fair, for the first time in multiple seasons, Hunter has finally played game worth his last name. He is quite literally hunting the cup.

That could also be because Hunter is like million years old and this could very well be his last chance. Shane doesn't say it aloud but a part of him wishes he did. Rozanov would have found it funny.

“Next season will be yours, believe me,” Svetlana promises very gently.

“Okay,” Rozanov agrees.

Well, Shane thinks. Svetlana and his mom might agree on the fact that this is indeed Hunter’s season. It’s just that his mother said next season will be Shane’s. So, which one of these two incredibly smart and brilliant women is right about next season? He hopes it’s his mother.

But if he is completely honest, he can’t wait to find out when next season starts. There is no thrill quite like playing against Ilya Rozanov.

Even if whatever they are, which is nothing, is coming to an end now. He wants to run out of the room but before he has the chance, Svetlana puts a little space between herself and Rozanov.

“I found someone who I thought would cheer you up,” she says, her voice still so very gentle. It’s like she is speaking to a wild animal and is trying to not scare it.

Shane does not know is the wild animal in question him or Rozanov. He at least feels like a deer in headlights. He thinks he might throw up and he isn’t sure is it because he is still recovering from his concussion or because of the nerves.

Rozanov is only looking at Svetlana, confused. It takes until she literally points at Shane, at the door, for him to turn to look into that direction. To him, it feels like a forever.

Their eyes meet.

“Я тебя люблю,” Rozanov says, sounding a slightly out of breath all of a sudden. He never looks away from Shane.

Svetlana chuckles. “Тебе нужно ему это сказать.”

“Да. Когда-нибудь.”

“Хорошо,” she says and leans down to press a soft kiss on Rozanov’s cheek.

Then she straightens up, fixing her hair as she does so. Shane thinks he is genuinely going to be sick after witnessing that kiss. Yes, it was just to the cheek but that’s more than the two of them could ever share in public. The public currently being one single person, Svetlana.

He knows he is jealous and he hates it.

“Well, boys,” Svetlana says, first looking at Rozanov and then looking at Shane. “I think you have things to discuss. And I have business to attend to. I will leave you to it.”

Neither of them says anything. So, she just shakes her head, for some reason clearly amused and starts walking towards the door – and towards Shane.

Before she makes it there though, she stops right in front of him. She takes a hold of his uninjured arm and squeezes. She smiles the most dazzling smile he has ever seen in his

whole life and says, "It was nice to meet you, *Jane*."

Oh.

Oh.

She knows. It's the only thought in Shane's head. There is someone in the world who knows. The secret he has so carefully guarded all these years and someone else knows about it too. He thinks it should scare him. And it he is completely honest it does scare him, just a little bit. Mostly he is just so unbelievably relieved.

The weight on his shoulders feels a bit lighter than it did a moment ago. The sick feeling on the bottom of his stomach is gone. And his heart is fluttering in his chest like a butterfly, fragile little thing preparing to take a flight.

"Take care of him for me, yes?" She whispers to his ear as she leans close to gently kiss his cheek as well.

Shane can't find his voice so he just simply nods. And it might be for the better. He fears if he was to open his mouth he would go and say something stupid like *always*.

Svetlana smiles at him, somehow even brighter than before, and turns to wave at Rozanov. The other man blows her a kiss across the room. It makes her laugh and that makes her sound so much younger than her years. She pretends to catch the kiss from the air and then safely tucks it in her pocket.

Then she is gone, the door closing quietly behind her.

It's just him and Rozanov in the locker room now. For a long time, they just stare at each other in a complete silence.

Wordlessly Rozanov raises his hand as if an invitation and Shane follows it to the other side of the room, easily falling into the other's embrace. His arm in the cast feels awkward between their bodies as Rozanov pulls him to sit down in his lap, unable to raise it to his shoulder like his uninjured one.

He doesn't really mind it. Actually, he realizes that there is no other place in the world he would rather be at than here.

"You are here," Rozanov whispers, his fingers tracing the freckles on Shane's cheeks as if making sure he is real.

"I have a lot of free time lately," he answers.

It makes the other laugh, although weakly. The tears are still running down his cheeks and Shane can't help but gently wipe them away. And when that only seems to make Rozanov cry harder, he leans in and kisses him.

Rozanov kisses him back, holding onto him so tightly that it feels like he fears Shane will disappear if he was to let go.

He lets him do it, cling onto him, because it makes his silly heart beat faster with the hope that maybe he isn't the only one feeling this way. That maybe he isn't the only one wishing for nothing to become something. That maybe there is hope for them.

And when they part for air, Rozanov kisses Shane's neck, his cheek, his freckles. Then he just rests his head against his, shoulder slumping and sighing somewhat wearily.

"Should we leave before someone finds us here?" Shane asks but means more that, should they get out of there so that Rozanov can shower and have something to eat before going to sleep. He must be exhausted, both mentally and physically, from today's game.

"No, Svetlana would never leave like that. She will guard that door with her life," The other man answers, his tone very serious.

And now that Shane thinks about it, the footsteps had stopped immediately outside the door. He had thought he just didn't pay attention after that point but her heels were loud. Difficult to ignore. The only logical option really is that she just stopped there.

That is very kind of her.

If Shane thinks about it for a moment too long, he fears he might go insane. All this time, and he doesn't mean only today's game, he was walking on eggshells, fearing the worst.

"I thought you two are—"

"No, not like that," Rozanov stops, seeming to guess what he was going to say. Then almost shyly adds, "She is my Rose."

And it's all unbearably sweet. Shane is helpless to do anything but lean closer again and kiss Rozanov again. The other sighs into it, happily, like he too has been dreaming of moments like this ever since their last kiss weeks ago.

After a moment Shane pulls away, pushes the other's sweaty curls away from his face and very gently suggests, "I think we should go anyways. You are still wearing half of your gear. You must want a shower too."

"Are you leaving?"

Neither of them says a word about the way Rozanov's voice cracks on the last word. His hands on Shane's waist hold just a bit tighter, pull him just a bit closer. His eyes are shining with new unshed tears and the knowledge that they are because of him kills Shane a little bit.

"No," Shane says and watches how Rozanov's lips curl into the softest smile. "I think I can stay the night."

"Good."

Then Rozanov kisses him again, this time with a little more force as his hands start wandering and ultimately find their way under Shane's hoodie.

"Wait until we get home," Shane murmurs against the other's lips, the words just slipping out.

Rozanov just stares at him, dazed.

Shane has never seen such visible hope on someone's face as he does on this very moment. His heart beats easier in his chest with that knowledge, that it exists. There is hope and in lives in both of them. Maybe they are already more than nothing. Maybe they already are something. Neither of them just had the courage to put it into words before. And maybe not for quite some day.

But perhaps one day, Shane thinks. He has hope for that one day.

"Yes, home," Rozanov whispers, little breathless. Then he repeats the Russian words he had said earlier too, his voice impossibly soft. "Я тебя люблю."

"What does that mean?"

The other smiles. "Maybe you will learn. One day."

And then he kisses Shane like he is the most precious thing in the world.

They go to Rozanov's home. This time Shane doesn't run from the domesticity of it all. No, he clings to it almost desperately, filled with impossible grief for all the time they wasted. The time they could have completely lost on if his fall to the ice had been worse, if he hadn't survived with just concussion, broken collarbone and a fright.

When the other man is in the shower he pulls out his phone and scrolls past the twenty-seven messages his mother has sent him. He is sorry he made her worry but he will never regret coming here.

Mom, he texts her, don't worry. I am alright. I will explain more tomorrow when I get home. Love you, good night.

And when Rozanov comes into the room, wearing nothing but a towel around his hips and smiling like he won the cup he just lost a chance at, Shane sends her one more text message.

I am happy.

Then he lets his phone fall to the bed and from there to the floor, without a care in the world and just simply kisses Rozanov back. He wraps his arms around the other man, pulling him close to him and they stumble into bed together, wrapped into each other.

Shane doesn't know what tomorrow brings but for once, he doesn't care. He doesn't know what today changes for them but it must mean something. All this must mean something.

Until he finds out where this all leads to, he hopes.

End Notes

the russian, in order of appearance:

ты здесь = you are here

конечно = of course

я тебя люблю = I love you

тебе нужно ему это сказать = You should tell him that.

да. когда-нибудь = yes. one day.

хорошо = good

(and thank you for the translations for my most iconic ig story watcher, all credit to him<3)

kudos/comments keep the author going and all that, i love hearing about your thoughts or just tell me your favorite part <3

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