

this slope is treacherous (i like it)

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Summary

Ilya's conversation with Scott after his MVP speech! Featuring nervous Ilya Rozanov and supportive Scott Hunter (who puts some pieces together as information is revealed).

Notes

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

“Planning to throw me off the balcony?” Were the first words to escape Scott’s mouth, and he was only half joking. Surely Rozanov wasn’t enough of an asshole to make a scene at an event like this, even if he did move them away from the many watchful eyes of important people mingling inside. “Make next season a little easier?”

Rozanov gave a half smile. “You are old man. I do not need to remove you from ice to help next season.” He shook his head. “No, I want to talk.”

“So you’ve said.” Scott was wary. “Lots of people have wanted to talk tonight. Go ahead.”

“What you did, on the ice...”

“I don’t regret it, and I will not apologize if who I’m going home to tonight makes you uncomfortable.” He knew he was being defensive, but it had been a long evening of maintaining composure throughout multiple difficult conversations and several rude comments.

“No, Hunter. Was good thing.”

“Oh.” *Very eloquent, Scott.*

“You are surprised?”

Scott gave an awkward laugh. “I don’t know. A little, yes. Your image is very... particular.”

“Is Russia. I say wrong things in public, is dangerous. You understand?”

And... yeah that made a lot of sense. “Of course. I shouldn’t have assumed.”

Ilya waved a hand, dismissing the half apology. “What you did will change things, I think. Make it better.”

“Thank you.” Scott was genuinely shocked by Rozanov’s support. “I certainly hope so.”

“It already has.” Rozanov took a breath before adding, “For *me*, it has changed things.” It was said so softly Scott at first thought he had misheard.

Oh.

“Rozanov-”

“Ilya.” He interrupted. “For this, Ilya, I think.”

“I’m glad you told me, Ilya. Really. It’s not an easy secret to keep, but sharing is even harder.”

“I hope...” He hesitated, and Scott couldn’t believe the nervous boy in front of him was the same man who had been an absolute menace on and off the ice as long as he’d known

him. "What you did was very brave. I am not brave yet."

"That's okay." Scott suddenly felt an overwhelming urge to protect Ilya from the difficulties ahead, from the difficulties he was certainly already facing. "There's no set timeline for this."

"Is very complicated, my situation." He paused, as if contemplating how much to share. "Is Russia, yes? But it is more than that too." Ilya released a deep breath. "I hope one day I can maybe kiss the man I love on ice. Is too complicated right now, but maybe...maybe. You have given us hope." Scott felt his jaw drop as Ilya was talking. *Ilya Rozanov* was not only queer, but in a serious committed relationship with another man?

"What-" Ilya seemed to know what he was asking.

"Do not ask those questions." It was not rude, but firm.

Scott nodded and pulled himself together with a sheepish smile. "Okay. You're right, I'm sorry. You caught me off guard there."

"I know I have reputation. And is not all wrong, what media says. There have been lots of women, yes, but I am bisexual." Scott noticed the way Ilya's face changed slightly as he said the word, something he may have thought but likely had not spoken aloud many times before. "I have only loved one person. A man."

"You don't have to explain yourself, especially not to me." Scott said gently. "I hope you're able to have that freedom, someday. To kiss him, be with him, love him in public."

Ilya grinned, and Scott saw in his eyes the Rozanov he was familiar with on the ice. "One day, I will kiss my boyfriend on the ice and the moment will be even crazier than yours."

"Always a competition with you." Scott grumbled, but he was smiling.

"You are a good man, Scott Hunter." The faintest hint of a smile crossed Ilya's face. "Geriatric and incredibly mediocre at hockey, yes, but good man."

"Geriatric? That's a big word. Who taught you that one?"

Ilya gave a quiet laugh, his mind drifting to a warm smile and freckles. "I will go home now, I think. Long night." He placed a hand on Scott's shoulder, and the "Thank you" that followed was perhaps the most sincere Scott had ever heard him sound.

"Good luck, Ilya. You have my number, please use it if you need anything."

Ilya nodded. "I will, I am sure." He hesitated slightly before adding, "You can tell Kip, if you want. About me. I trust you can both keep it secret."

Scott was relieved. He definitely could-and would have- gladly kept the conversation to himself, but being able to share with Kip was certainly a weight lifted from his shoulders. "Have a good rest of your night, Ilya."

“See you next season. I will not be so nice then, I don’t think.” With a playful wink, he disappeared inside, phone already out and fingers typing out a text.

Scott remained on the balcony for a few minutes, giving himself a chance to properly take in everything Ilya had told him. He respected Ilya’s privacy, of course he did. And he would never go directly in search of information relating to the man’s relationship, yet he couldn’t stop the threads from connecting in his head.

A muttered string of numbers, a hotel room.

An unusually strong response to “Where’s your boy Rozanov?”

The immediate chemistry when they were finally placed on the same team.

Hundreds of small moments on the ice, not at all suspicious typically, but when viewed from a certain lens...

Ilya’s insistence that it was *complicated* beyond the challenges imposed by his home country.

Scott couldn’t prove anything, wouldn’t go digging further, wouldn’t ask the questions he knew he could find answers to if he wanted. Even so, he felt his heart breaking for the two boys as more and more pieces fit together to cement a fairly clear conclusion. Despite his own years of secrecy, he couldn’t imagine the added pressure those boys must have been carrying from the time they were drafted. If I truly helped them, even a little bit, this will all have been worth it.

Years later, when Ilya Rozanov kisses Shane Hollander on national television after they won the Stanley Cup together, Scott can’t help but laugh. Rozanov was certainly right about one thing- his kiss had been crazier.

End Notes

This was so fun to write!

Title from "Treacherous" by Taylor Swift- it came on when I was writing and the lines "this slope/hope is treacherous" and "nothing safe is worth the drive" stuck out to me as fitting with Hollanov.

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