Or, I will tell Jackie

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Or, I will tell Jackie

by Frostberry

Summary

AU where Hayden had been drafted to Boston instead of Montreal.

The only thing Rozanov and Hayden had in common was the same phone. Unfortunately, this meant Hayden was picking up Ilya’s phone for the wrong reasons. While Hayden keeps picking up the wrong phone, he's catching pieces of Rozanov's life he was never meant to see.

Notes

Inspired by last week where I smashed my phone to pieces while trying to send a meme

Hayden was planning to get wasted with the others, at the large rooftop bar at their hotel celebrating tonight's away win against Calgary. Since Connors was on injury leave, Hayden was to be sharing with Ilya Rozanov.

They were complete opposites, and the only thing they shared in common was they both owned a Samsung Galaxy II. Hayden's luggage had been sent upstairs earlier in the day and did not realise, until he was in the queue at hotel reception getting his key, that he was bunking down with Rozanov.

Night RUINED.

"I'd rather pay for my own room than share with Rozanov," he said, turning to LeClaire, who stood behind him waiting in line. He then looked back at the lady who gave him the keycard. "Is there any other rooms available?"

The receptionist shook her head.

"You can bunk with the extremely happy, drunk Boston fans in the hostel down the street, if you like," LeClaire said, who of course had his own private room (bastard). "Or share with a loud slutty Russian."

Hayden had been playing for Boston for a year at this point, and Rozanov was this season's newest player. Rozanov was known for being far too perceptive, picking up on things he had no business noticing. He was too smart to be a hockey player and Hayden felt a bit dumb near him. He scanned the lobby for any people who might be coming to cancel a reservation, then turned back again, as if a different room assignment might appear if he waited long enough. After admitting defeat, He took the elevator up to the fifth floor and found Rozanov already inside the room, luggage scattered across the bed, putting on a slut outfit (white leopard-print shirt over brown jeans and leather boots).

He scowled when Hayden came in. "I was planning to come back with a hot chick to this hotel room."

"Why?"

"Because Connors isn't here! Go hang out with Marlow. Cliff needs a chaperone."

Hayden didn't argue. He opened his case and pulled out a nice shirt, one he hadn't thrown up on yet.

"I need to sleep later," he said. "Give me your number, in case I have to gouge my eyes out and room with Marlow."

Rozanov pulled out his phone. It was the exact same model as Hayden's.

"Put a cover on it, Rozanov," Hayden said. "I don't want to accidentally answer your booty calls."

“Don’t pick my phone up, then, like you did last week.” Hayden had already accidentally seen what was on Rozanov’s phone when he accidentally picked it up the other day and it was a dick pic on the gallery screen.

“How do you spell your name correctly?” Hayden asked, typing. He got as far as *Illy,* before autocorrect changed it to *Lily*.

Rozanov fiddled with his hair, making a curl spring up a little on his forehead.

“Fucking write whatever,” Rozanov said, rattling off his number quickly before leaving with a flash of his middle finger.

Hayden (8.40pm)

>:(

Lily (8.42pm)

Go to Marlow’s

It was going to stay as Lily for the rest of the time he knew Rozanov, he decided. He sent Jackie a quick text before heading out.

Hayden (8.45pm)

Going out with the boys, love you x

Jackie (9.01pm)

Have fun! Got a surprise for you when you get home tomorrow xoxo

Hayden spent the rest of the night holed up in a sticky, flashy corner with Marlow and Kovalev, who were both in the Doghouse, after they’d been caught cheating on their respective girlfriends last weekend after the game against Minneapolis. Hayden was proud of the fact he didn’t go after puck bunnies, because he had his own fiancee.

Fuckboy Rozanov moved through the crowd like he owned it, (which Hayden ignored). He disappeared soon after with a group (not that he cared).

Past midnight, he received a message just as he was about to go back to his room.

Lily (12.31am)

Go find another room Pike. I have people over

Hayden (12:45am)

What the fuck? Go to their hotel room!

Lily (12.45am)

No. You are not allowed to go near sexy other people or I tell Jackie.

Hayden (12.46am)

You've never met Jackie, how do you know her name

Lily (12.48am)

I know things

Hayden ended up on the couch in Marlow and Kovalev's room, trying to block out their snoring, confident that keeping them contained for the night prevented any girlfriend-induced disasters. By early morning he went back to his own room for a shower and change of clothes before the team left for their flight back to Boston.

He swiped his card and went inside. The first thing Hayden saw was smears of coke on the coffee table, a Calgary bus pass, and a bottle of empty vodka which rolled onto the floor when he walked past. The breakfast tray already had food missing. Ignoring the sleeping bodies, he rummaged in his luggage that had been put on the pull out sofa, and headed for the shower.

The people in the room hadn't moved twenty minutes later when Hayden got out. He checked the time. They needed to leave soon.

"Rozanov. Get up," he said to the head of curly hair barely peeking out from under the covers.

Rozanov didn't move.

"I'll call you what autocorrect gave me for your name last night."

"Whatever." Oh. He was awake, then.

"Lily." Now that definitely got Rozanov's attention, who immediately scowled and poked his head out.

His necklace was stuck to his dry lips. "Don't call me that."

"That's what I have you as in my phone."

"Fuck off, Pike."

A blonde head poked out from next to Rozanov. "Who are you?" The woman asked.

"I'm on his team? I play for Boston?"

She squinted and sniffed. Some part of her septum was missing. Well, at least Hayden knew where the coke went. Hayden took in the rest of the scene: there were two other women and a man sprawled across his own bed, very comfortable. Rozanov sighed, finally got up, dick swinging free. Hayden rolled his eyes.

Eventually they managed to kick Rozanov's orgy buddies out who had the decency to clean up the mess for them on the coffee table for them. Rozanov showered, while Hayden sent Jackie flirty messages and put his jacket on.

They headed downstairs, now fully dressed, scraping their luggage behind them. Rozanov looked grumpier than usual.

"Aren't you glad I put my name in your phone?" Hayden asked. "Wouldn't want to walk in on that. Hungover?"

"No," Rozanov muttered. "I…" Hayden saw, for the first time, Rozanov lost for words. "… Are you going to change my name on your phone?"

"Hmm… no. I don't think so." He grinned. "You should see what I've got for one of my other friends."

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It was strange. Rozanov didn't have much to do with him, and now he was following Hayden around like a dog.

Hayden grabbed his first breakfast at the airport from a smoothie bar (kale, banana, spirulina, hemp seeds), while Rozanov went for his second breakfast (McDonalds). Rozanov approached him, stared for a second at Hayden's green smoothie, then plopped down opposite him.

“Are you judging me for my smoothie?” Hayden asked. Shane had told him about this particular order from the last time he’d been to this airport, so Hayden decided to get the same thing. He took a photo of it and sent it to Shane.

Hayden (9.33am)

Got that breakfast smoothie you were banging on about! Attachment.jpg

Holly (9.34am)

So good.

“Yes, Pike. I am,” Rozanov said, making Hayden look up from his message back to Shane. “You’re boring.”

“Go away, then, Lily,” Hayden said, taking a big grassy gulp while Rozanov tucked into his second McMuffin. “You’re clingy today. Go sit with Marlow.”

“Why, American boy? I’m perfectly fine sitting here.”

“American? I’m Canadian, can’t you tell?”

“Really? I can’t tell the difference between these accents,” Rozanov paused. “…How do you, Pike, pronounce ‘out’?”

“Out.”

Rozanov nodded. “Definitely Canadian. What part of Canada?”

“I’m originally from Drummondville. Near-ish to Montreal.”

“Why aren’t you playing for Montreal?”

Hayden hesitated. Montreal had been Hayden’s choice if they’d offered, but Jackie’s family lived in Boston. He was happy where he was, but he missed his friend Shane, who currently played for them, having joined last year. They were a fucking good team, but the rivalry between the Boston and Montreal ran deep. Poor Shane, when he came to Boston, only ventured out of his hotel when he was there to have dinner with Hayden and Jackie. He wasn't there for very long, but Hayden appreciated it all the same.

“They didn’t offer. I would have liked to go there, though. My best buddy Shane is their star rook,” Hayden said. His eyes lit up. “Oh! I forgot you know Shane! Shane Hollander. Your rival.” He’d forgotten about the rivalry. Rozanov loved digging at Shane to the press.

“Yes,” Rozanov said.

Rozanov didn’t say anything else on the subject. It didn't matter anyway.

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“What are the flowers for?” Rozanov asked as they left BOS in the afternoon. Hayden had made a quick stop at the florist by international arrivals and grabbed Jackie’s favourites—bright pink peonies and white lilies. Thankfully, he’d managed to ditch Rozanov for the flight, but now he was trailing behind him, at pick up. He came to a stop by Hayden. Jackie was usually here by now, but was a few minutes late due to traffic.

Hayden smiled. “Flowers for Jackie. She said she has a surprise. Thought I’d surprise her back.”

“Keeping romance alive. What a perfect Canadian boy,” Rozanov rummaged in his pocket and got a packet of cigarettes out. “Airport flowers, huh? Just before Jackie turns up?”

Hayden turned to him. “How do you *know* her name?”

Rozanov shrugged. “I know everything.”

Moments later, Jackie pulled up in her sleek black Jeep. Her face lit up when she saw the flowers, and opened the drivers door to receive them. “Hi babe! Wow! Thanks so much! These will be good to replace in the kitchen window. Who’s this you have with you? Oh, this is Rozanov!”

If it wasn’t for the fact Rozanov was with him, Hayden wouldn’t have figured out what said. She said his surname with a different accent. She said it as Ro-ZA-Nov, stressing the second syllable, instead of ROZ-a-Nov like everyone else. Rozanov stared at her for a few seconds, then took his unlit cigarette out of his lips and back into the box. “Hi. I’m just getting a cab,” said Rozanov.

“No,” Jackie said, carefully putting the flowers in the drink cup. “I’ll drop you off. Where's your place?” Rozanov told her. “Oh, we’re about ten minutes away! We’ll drop you off. I’m sure Hayden wouldn’t mind.”

Hayden did mind, thank you very much.

Rozanov got into the backseat, and suddenly, Rozanov’s usual asshole persona disappeared as he started asking about the pronunciation of his name as they left the airport.

Within minutes, Jackie was explaining her Russian roots, and before Hayden could say anything on the matter, they had decided to head to a café to chat. Hayden would have been happy if Jackie dropped him off then she could go out to get a coffee with Rozanov. But no.

Hayden, from what he knew about Rozanov, when flirting, only mingled with singles, so it wasn’t like he was going to touch Jackie or anything. They stopped at one of their favourite brunch spots near their home - a tiny hipster cafe with exposed brick walls from it due to being an old factory with a drink menu as long as the official NHL rules book.

“I’ve never been in this one,” Rozanov said as they stepped into the café. “Probably because there’s no alcohol served here.”

“It’s not a nightclub,” said Hayden.

“You’re still here, Pike?”

“You’re with my fiancée,” Hayden shot back.

“Shut up, Hayden. He’s funny,” Jackie said, then turned to the barista. “Hi! I’ll get a chamomile latte with oat milk and honey. Thanks. And fries to share. No salt… Actually, yes - add extra salt…”

“Just make up your mind, Jackie. I’ll get a decaf, skim,” Hayden said. “And you, Rozanov?”

“Normal coffee.” The barista nodded, completely understanding his order.

They sat down in an empty corner near a happy looking gaggle of indoor plants by a window, Hayden was boxed in by the wall, trapped on his own side by spider plants and next to him by his beloved so he couldn’t run away.

“‘I’ll introduce you to Svetlana,’ Rozanov said to Jackie as the barista set down their drinks. ‘She’s at university here, my best friend. You two will get along.’”

“But I don’t know much Russian…” said Jackie. She took a sip of her chamomile latte and put the cup back on its saucer before continuing. “My grandparents escaped the Soviet Union… and they never really spoke much Russian around me. They wanted to fit into the American way of life right away and tried to stop speaking it as soon as they came here. I wouldn’t really understand what Svetlana is saying…”

“No, no, Sveta speaks English. She speaks with a perfect American accent. Not sure how, considering we learn together and I sound like I do. She’s the best. Da! Thanks for the quick fries, Mr Barista.”

“You’re welcome.” The fries were placed on a wooden chopping board with little ceramic pots of various sauces. Jackie took one fry and moaned softly. “These are so good… I’m basically eating for two, anyway,” she said, with a smile on her face as she dipped another fry into a little pot of garlic aioli, not really paying attention to the men with her.

Rozanov blinked. “Oh. Congratulations.”

“For what?” Hayden asked, scooping a few fries onto a napkin so he didn’t have to lean forward near Rozanov. “Did you finally stop that diet you’ve been doing with your friends?”

“Jackie is having a baby?” Said Rozanov, looking a bit puzzled.

“No she isn’t,” said Hayden, looking at his fiancée, the love of his life. “She would have told me by now.”

“Umm…” There was a pause from Jackie. “About that.”

“Pike, you are not smart,” said Rozanov, flapping a fry in front of Hayden. “I picked that up straight away!”

Oh. *Oh.*

“I’m only a few weeks along,” Jackie admitted. She looked a bit sheepish. “I was planning to tell you later on. Sorry, Hayds!”

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To Hayden’s absolute horror, Jackie and Rozanov became good friends. He taught Jackie important words (mostly swear words and occasionally something nice for her to say to Hayden). He taught Jackie how to say 'Hayden is Boston's fifteenth best player’ in Russian, which, for a few hours, Hayden thought it meant something cooler until Rozanov pointed out what it actually meant. But then Jackie figured out how to change it to 'Hayden is THE best player in Boston', so he was alright with that.

Jackie wanted to learn more about the part of her family’s culture she had never really known. Rozanov introduced her to the group of Eastern Europeans he was friends with—which meant Hayden now had to also put up with Svetlana Vetrova, whom he secretly called Velcrova because she practically glued herself to the house. She was also one of Rozanov’s fuckbuddies, which came as no surprise. She was literally the female version of him, knew more about hockey than anyone else did, but was slightly less vulgar than Rozanov.

Over the next month, Hayden would often come home to some sort of activity - whereas it was Jackie and the others watching *Goodbye Lenin!,* or her new friends explaining the differences between the Anna Karenina translation vs the English one (especially the controversial Garnett translation), or even of them in the kitchen making Medovik, a dessert that required a lot of waiting time in-between ingredients, so much that Hayden never had the chance to try it.

Jackie had transformed from the sweet, All-American church girl Hayden had met at a club into someone eagerly learning Russian and spending time with her new friends as they congregated at their house. Somehow, Jackie seemed much happier this way.

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After a few months of friendship, Jackie asked Rozanov to come to their joint bachelor and bachelorette weekend. He was due to fly back to Russia a few days later anyway, so it agreed, much to Hayden’s demise.

Svetlana (Velcrova) couldn’t make it because of another commitment, and the very last person to late-join was Shane, who only managed to give a yes a few days in advance.

They decided early on they would be in Punta Mita for the weekend, because one of Jackie’s sisters had been there and loved it. Also, most crucially, the resort they'd chosen was child free, which felt important before the twins arrived (it turned out Jackie had been eating for three).

The night before they left, Rozanov came over to drop off a small stack of old children's books written in Soviet Russia, prime reading material for Jackie to read to the twins one day, and for Hayden to stare in confusion at the Cyrillic front covers. They reminded him of Little Golden Books, if Little Golden Books were unreadable titles with a dash of socialism inside. Hayden added them to the growing pile of reading Jackie's new friends had given her, and they settled in to watch TV with a few beers, because Hayden now had some sort of unwritten truce with Rozanov, that he could tolerate him at his house, considering he was always there.

On the TV screen was Shane, featured in a famous architect's documentary, sitting on a large rock, beside a half-finished building on a lake front near Ottawa and talking about their collaboration, and what it meant to him as a longtime fan of the architect's work.

Which reminded him. Hayden had been meaning to tell Rozanov that Shane Hollander was coming this weekend to Mexico. The last time they played against Montreal, Rozanov had checked Shane into the boards, sending him sprawling and earning himself a two minute penalty and a power play for Montreal. Hayden wasn't entirely convinced that translated into friendly weekend energy.

"You have to be nice to my friends this weekend, Lily," Hayden said, while Shane droned on from the television about the collaboration and how special the house was going to be to him. He took another sip of his beer. If it wasn't for Shane being in this part of the documentary, he wouldn't have watched it. "And I mean *all* of them."

"I'm always nice," Rozanov said, fiddling with his phone when Shane's part of the documentary was over. "When am I not?"

"You called Shane Montreal's fifteenth best hockey player at a press conference the other day."

"Well, he is," Rozanov looked offended. "And you are Boston's fifteenth best hockey player! What's this about?"

Hayden set his beer down. "Shane's coming to Mexico with us. He had a last minute advertising cancellation. He's booked a hotel instead of crashing here tonight. His mother works him to the bone with all these sponsors."

It was true. Hayden was very glad Shane would be able to relax and not have to deal with whatever luxury item he was doing a weekend shoot for.

Rozanov didn't look surprised, like he already knew. He drank his beer all the way to the bottom of the glass, before replying. "Okay."

"I hope your rivalry is only on the ice."

"Hm. It is." Rozanov shrugged. "You're brave to invite a Montreal player, Pike." He put his phone down in between both of them. "I'm going to go take a piss in the nice bathroom."

"Use the upstairs one, jeez."

“Never!”

Hayden’s phone buzzed and he grabbed it off the lounge. Except it wasn’t his. Second time in months he’d picked up Rozanov’s phone.

Damn him for being good at reading.

Московская шлюха 2 (1.10am)

Приезжай домой. Нужен член

Alexei DO NOT ANSWER (3.43am)

Позвони мне

Spam 1 (1.22pm)

SALE 20% off luxury brand sports cars… [VIEW ENTIRE MESSAGE]

Jane (7.20pm)

1836 usual hotel after 10pm, or I’ll see you on the plane.

Jane? Jackie didn’t have anyone on the guest list named Jane. He frowned.

“I accidentally picked up your phone again,” Hayden said when he came back. “Change your damn phone.”

Usually, Rozanov would laugh. But he glared a little as he snatched it off the lounge. “Change your own.”

He’d gone from funny to slightly defensive, and so Hayden didn’t ask who Jane was. It felt intrusive.

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Jackie and Hayden hired a charter plane to take them to Mexico. Hayden loved his salary, and the Gatorade sponsorship bonus covered the cost of the flight and return. He booked the same private charter company Boston used, and the pilots were fans of the team, which showed. Hayden even let them stay for the weekend too, where they would be doing their own thing. The plane seated thirty, with black leather seats trimmed in white, arranged in pairs facing

each other between a table. Twenty people were coming, and currently, eighteen were on board.

Rozanov and Shane were late.

Rozanov being late was normal, but for Shane was never late to anything, considering he lived by the clock. When Shane stepped into the cabin, half the plane went quiet and goggled at him. An enemy in their midst.

“What took you so long, buddy?”

“Got yelled at by Boston fans when I parked my rental,” said Shane.

“Do you want me to put a statement online saying leave you alone, he’s allowed to come to Boston?”

“No, don't bother. I can handle it.”

“Whatever. Come sit with me.”

Hayden headed to the front of the plane to greet everyone on board, while Shane made his way to sit next to Hayden’s empty seat, giving the flight attendant his bag.

“Hi everyone. Quick announcement before we go. This is Shane Hollander. We all know him. Yes, he plays for Montreal. Any Montreal-related rivalry is OFF for the weekend. Don’t fucking boo, or Jackie will kick you off the plane.” A few of Jackie’s friends laughed. “He’s my best friend. It’s a truce weekend.”

“I don’t feel comfortable with this many Canadians on the plane.”

“Fuck off, Cadyn. There’s just the two of us. Where’s Rozanov?”

“Said he’d be a few minutes late,” Jackie said, glancing at her phone, while Shane slid into the seat next to Hayden’s empty one. She peered out the window across the tarmac. “No! My bad! He’s here.”

“Ah, sorry I am late,” said Rozanov, as the flight door shut behind him. “I would give an excuse, but I don’t have one. Hello Jackie. Hello Jackie’s friends. Thanks for inviting me to your super sexy bachelor resort party, Pike.”

"I didn’t invite *you*. Jackie technically invited *you."*

“Hayden! You are friends with Ilya here!” Said Jackie.

“Am I? So many pretty ladies here though...”

“Don’t flirt with Jackie's friends until you’re up in the sky, jeez,” said Hayden, who went to sit in his seat next to Shane. Rozanov looked around before his eyes landed on Shane. Hayden, up close, saw Rozanov’s smile slightly curve on his lips.

"What's he here for, Pike? Checking out his real estate fetish?" Said Rozanov loudly as he sat opposite them, as if he didn't know Shane was coming. He put his feet up on the seat next to him, before deciding to put them back on the carpet instead. “Building houses for the Pacific coastline, huh, Hollander?”

“What?”

“He’s talking about the documentary from last night,” said Hayden. “We saw you up close with that famous architect… whatever his name was.”

“Oh.” Shane grinned. “It’s Deschênes.”

“The fuck is that name?”

“French?”

“Boring name, like Hollander.”

Hayden was praying nothing would go wrong having Shane Hollander on the same plane with Ilya Rozanov. They were fully grown men who needed to behave for the next 48 hours.

“Right. You guys are going to be very nice to each other this weekend,” Hayden said. “For Jackie’s sake. I, for one, personally don’t care if Shane murders Rozanov.”

“I’ll warn the resort in advance,” said Shane.

“That’s a good idea, Hollander.”

The plane was moving, and Hayden could see Shane was starting to get a bit anxious, especially with Rozanov so close to him it seemed. He kept looking the other way, not at him. But Rozanov, very clearly under the table, kicked Shane in the leg.

They hadn’t even left yet and Hayden was not going to put up with this all weekend.

“Lily,” Hayden started to say. “Stop it-”

“What did you just call him!?”

He wasn’t expecting Shane to answer him instead of Rozanov. Both him and Rozanov stared at Shane, who, for the first time in his life, actually interrupted someone.

“That’s my nickname for him—Lily? Funny story, actually… autocorrect on my phone changed his name to that when adding him as a contact.”

Rozanov groaned. “I hate that fucking name on your phone. Change it.”

“No.”

“I have two thousand dollars in my wallet. I will give to you. Change it.”

“We are currently on a charter plane I hired, which cost more than a thousand dollars. Anyway, I have Shane down on my phone as Holly.”

“Holly?” Rozanov laughed. “Really?”

“Yep.”

Shane nodded. “He’s down as Hayden on my phone, though.”

“Can’t think of any girl names similar to ‘Hayden’, Hollander?”

Shane shook his head.

***

Once the plane was stable, Hayden unbuckled and went to chat with the others, leaving Rozanov and Shane to their own devices. He fully expected Rozanov to leave Shane alone to flirt with Jackie’s single friends, as half of them were fair game. Rozanov usually hit on anything that moved anyway. But today, he seemed a little more subdued and didn't approach them.

Maybe he had a girlfriend he hadn’t told Jackie about, or maybe he was just taking a break from being a slut.

Hayden kept an eye on them out of the corner of his vision. They chatted quietly together, then went silent when Hayden returned to his seat. They weren’t talking like normal, mostly talking quietly as if they didn't want anyone else to hear them. Neither seemed about to snap. Hayden didn’t dwell on it, busy with conversation elsewhere.

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They landed safely, and they took a private shuttle bus to the resort at lunchtime. They had about a few hour's rest at the hotel, with Hayden mostly talking to Jackie about how strange Rozanov and Shane were during the flight.

“They’re probably fucking,” she shrugged.

“Fucking gross, Jackie. They barely know each other.”

“Sure, Hayden, sure,” She laughed. “We’re meeting the others at three, right?”

***

Hayden split his time between the infinity pool, walking around the gardens, or sitting in one of the hidden hammocks with Jackie, his hands on her slight bump while sipping nojitos.

By the late afternoon, there was a volleyball match on, which ended with Shane kicking sand into Rozanov’s face and Jackie having to pour her water bottle over Rozanov’s red eyes. She used her pink sash to cover them for a while. Shane and Hayden looked down at Rozanov,

who was now lying under a white frangipani on scratchy grass full of ants. Shane leaned in, then poked him with a toe. Rozanov took the sash off his face.

“What do you want, after blinding me, Hollander?”

“For you to use sunscreen. I’m just inspecting skin damage.”

“And I want a tan.” Rozanov leaned forward, and pulled quickly at Shane’s ankle, who yelped and fell down.

Hayden looked at Jackie, who was smiling with the same facial expression she used in the hotel room before she pulled him away for a quick cheek smooch.

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After dinner, the boys went to one end of the resort (the one with the go go dancers), with Jackie at the other end (the more sensible rooftop bar).

He impressed his friends had managed to keep the Montreal Boston rivalry to a truce for the weekend for Shane’s sake. Speaking of Shane, who was usually quite reserved - got fucking wasted. Drunk Shane was a lot like normal Shane, but more slurry and prone to not paying attention to any conversation, preferring to explain to anyone his fantasy hockey league statistics from his computer.

Shane and Rozanov kept disappearing, only to reappear twenty minutes later with another drink in hand. Hayden was glad they seemed to get on. Rozanov stayed mainly in the group, instead of wandering off to find women to hit on. Near the end of the night, Rozanov gave one of the dancers one thousand dollars in cash (“Very pretty. Here is money for boob job.”) before they all left to go back to their hotel rooms, with Rozanov and Shane disappearing first.

Jackie was up waiting for Hayden, having finished with her own party about half an hour earlier. She was sitting on the balcony, her legs leaning on top of the railing.

“Have fun?”

“It was great,” Jackie put a finger to her lips. “I’m so glad they’ve stopped the music though.” She paused. “Why can I hear Shane?”

“Shane?”

Jackie looked down, searching. “Shh!”

Hayden looked out the balcony as well. They were on a corner balcony, and could see just into parts of other people's rooms.

Jackie pointed down one floor and to their left. “That’s Ilya’s room. Shane’s supposed to be on the second floor in Sveta’s room.” She leaned forward on the railing and poked her head through.

“Jackie! No!”

She pouted. “I wasn’t allowed to drink tonight! Let me have my last bit of fun before we go to sleep.” She looked for several seconds. Her eyes widened, then pulled Hayden in closer. “I was right, babe.”

Hayden was not usually an eavesdropper, preferring to find gossip out a much better way, but it was very clear what was going on. He squinted at the section at the top of Rozanov’s curtain wasn’t covered nor closed. Neither he nor Shane were wearing shirts, only their shorts. Rozanov slowly pressed his hips into Shane’s, who toppled onto the bed and laughed. They were only meters away from Hayden and Jackie, and he felt like he was intruding on them.

“All I wanted to do was fucking dance with you, Hollander. Grind into you until you came.”

“I know. Same. This is the longest we’ve been around each other that isn’t hockey or some fucking hotel room after a match.”

Rozanov buried his nose in Shane’s neck. “I can put music on now to dance to? Then grind me?”

“I’d rather you just fuck me.”

Now, Hayden wasn’t the most observant person out there. His sisters told him that all the time. He could follow a puck across the ice but couldn’t figure out if a woman was pregnant until someone else found out first. Yet right in front of his eyes, Rozanov was kissing down Shane’s body, and Shane was very much into it.

They only watched for another ten seconds before Hayden pulled away. Jackie looked away as well.

“Yeah, Hayds, they’re fucking,” she said, looking tired now. “I was joking when I said it last. But I wasn’t… expecting that. Let’s go inside.”

They shut the balcony door, and Hayden went to sit on the bed to take his shoes and clothes off.

“I’m… just confused? Shane and Lily, Jackie?”

Hayden never had a gaydar, and had never clocked Shane for it. It was too late at night to be overthinking things. Shane being gay was fine. It was Rozanov that complicated things. Hayden had always thought of him as a big womaniser. He’d never known him to go for a man. But then again… that night in Calgary, the day before he found out Jackie was pregnant, there was a dude in his hotel room with those coked-up women. Was that man there for the orgy or for Rozanov?

Hayden knew how gay sex worked. But, like Jackie, he’d grown up in a nuclear-family bubble, church on the weekend, each family with a set of 2.3 kids at their service. He’d never

thought twice his or anyone else's sexualities. He'd always been a tits-and-butts kind of guy and nothing else.

"It's expected for Shane to hate Ilya," Jackie said. "The media, the team rivalry… Man, their situation sucks. Did I hear Shane say they fuck around in hotel rooms?"

Yes. So it wasn't the first time it seemed.

"Should we tell Rozanov what we saw?"

Jackie shook her head. "No."

"…Shane?"

"Never. Never in a million years, Hayden."

***

The next time Shane and Rozanov were in the same room was at Hayden and Jackie's wedding.

Shane stood beside Hayden as best man, steady and composed, while Rozanov sat in the third row with Svetlana and his congregation of Eastern Europeans who seemed to live permanently on their couch. The ceremony was held at their local church, the one they tried to make it to every Sunday Hayden was not out, which was not very often.

Hayden barely remembered most of it. The day moved too fast, with a blur of hands being shaken and cameras flashing until his face was sore. He was fairly certain that while Jackie read her vows, voice steady and soft, Rozanov had his tongue pressed into his cheek and was staring at Shane instead who kept looking right back at him.

Can't they flirt after I get married?

The answer, apparently, was no.

He didn't think much of it, until at the reception hours later, when Jackie threw her bouquet straight at Rozanov's face. Rozanov's friends cheered for him, and Hayden looked on the other side of the room, where Shane was. He saw his face slightly crumble up and turn away to get some ginger ale (Jackie's only personalised request at the bar was to stock Shane's particular brand for the night).

"You upset Shane," Hayden said to her, when the noise had softened into background music and laughter, in-between mains, speeches, and cake.

Jackie looked genuinely confused. "What?" She followed his line of sight. He was listening to some of Jackie's single friends talk about their woes of not being able to bring a partner tonight in the corner by the wishing well. "He looks fine to me."

"You threw the bouquet at Lily."

She shrugged. “Maybe they’ll be next after us.”

“You don’t understand,” Hayden said. “That upset Shane. He made an *emotion.”* Hayden had known Shane for years at this point, and knew his micro-emotions and slight twitches on his face very well.

“What, in public?” Jackie squinted. Right on cue, Shane laughed at something one of her friends said. She nodded. “Oh. Never mind. That’s his fake *‘I am interested in your conversation’* laugh.”

“Doesn’t count,” Hayden muttered. He watched Shane glance across the room again, towards the dance floor, where Rozanov was spinning one of the neighbourhood kids on his shoulders, the child shrieking in delight. “What are we going to do about them?”

“We can’t do anything,” Jackie said. “We just make them comfortable. Keep inviting Shane to dinner. We'll have Ilya over at the same time. Let them see each other more.”

Shane and Rozanov disappeared long before the rest of the drunk guests, Hayden noticed, then decided not to think about it.

He didn’t mind one bit.

***

The only thing Hayden and Jackie could agree on, was they should keep giving Shane and Rozanov chances to exist in the same space outside the rink. Shane came over for dinner twice in between two advertisements and a photoshoot filmed nearby, which Rozanov always seem to know about before Hayden did.

Games came and went. Jackie decided the last one she wanted to attend was the Boston versus Montreal match, the final chance before the twins arrived. She wrapped herself in Hayden’s Boston jersey, sat through the whole game with sore feet, and declared herself officially done with hockey crowds until further notice.

Hayden asked Shane if he wanted to come by afterward. Shane said yes, but not for very long, before he left with his teammates.

That afternoon, it was Rozanov who drove them to the hospital.

He was the only player who had brought his car to the game, which turned out to be very useful when Jackie doubled over in the parking lot and said, very calmly, “I think this is happening now.”

“You’re not due for another few weeks?”

“Ilya, do you even know anything about pregnancy?”

“No. Women’s thing.” Rozanov unlocked his car. “Get in. We’re going to the hospital now.”

"Ah, they'll probably just send me home..."

"No, Jackie," said Hayden. "Come on." He opened the door for her.

Jackie was incredible. Her labor was quick.

When it was over, Hayden sat there stunned, holding her hand, overwhelmed by the fact she had just done something impossibly huge like pushing out two little babies, which was terrifying and she had come out the other side smiling at him.

Hayden had never been more prouder of her.

***

Holly (8.34am)

I know it's early, but I rescheduled my flight to NYC today. I would like to see you both and introduce myself to the twins before I go.

Hayden (8.35am)

Sure! No drama. Come anytime.

Jackie's super tired though

Jackie was asleep, but Hayden planned to wake her when Shane arrived. He kept half an ear on the hallway, listening for the rhythm of Shane's steps.

What he did not mention to Shane was that Rozanov was already there.

Shane, out of all things, turned up in a suit ("Making a first impression counts.")

He walked in to see, much to Hayden's amusement, Rozanov in an armchair with two sleeping babies, one on each side of him. His arms were very full. "Hi," Shane said, voice softer than usual and drifted closer to Rozanov. Hayden pressed a finger to his lips as Jackie was sleeping.

"Welcome, Hollander," Rozanov said, without lifting his head. "Nice suit. These are my babies. This one is Ilya, and this one is Rozanov."

Hayden bit the inside of his cheek, trying not to laugh from his side of the hospital bed with Jackie. "No, Lily. They're called Ruby and Jade."

Rozanov frowned and finally looked up at Hayden, pretending to be extremely puzzled. "Who?"

"He's just joking, Shane," Hayden said, because someone had to keep the room tethered to reality.

“I’m not joking,” Rozanov said. “Look. They even have my features.”

“White, straight blonde hair,” Shane inspected the little pink squishy faces. “Exactly like you. Genetic.”

“Exactly. Genetic.”

Hayden decided to intervene before Rozanov started filling out paperwork. “Do you want to hold one?” he asked Shane, going over to where Rozanov was sitting. Shane perched himself on the arm of the armchair. Hayden slipped a hand into the blanket, checking a wrist tag for identification. “You can hold Ruby.”

“Ruby,” Rozanov said. “Short for Rozanov.”

Hayden ignored him and lifted the baby out of Rozanov’s arm, then deposited Ruby into Shane’s arms before Shane had time to argue.

“Head,” Hayden said automatically. “Support her head. Yeah. You’ve got her.”

Shane looked down like he’d been handed a live grenade. “You’ve never held a baby before, have you?” He shook his head.

“Don’t drop her like you dropped that puck last season,” Rozanov said.

“I’ll drop you like a hockey puck,” Jackie said, hoarse and half-asleep.

Hayden turned just in time to see her blink herself awake. “Oh. You’re up,” he said, quietly pleased.

“Hi boys,” Jackie said, eyes flicking from Shane to Rozanov. “You adopting my kids now? Shane, you're looking like you're here to take the adoption papers to the courts.“

“Just wanted to make a first impression,” Shane said too quickly. “I’m too busy… Adoption thing, Jackie. Congratulations on the birth of…” He trailed off, clearly forgetting the names already.

“Ilya and Rozanov,” Rozanov supplied.

Shane spent an hour or so with them. Hayden figured Rozanov would have left sometime ago if Shane wasn’t there. Eventually, he had to go and catch his flight. He said goodbye to the sleeping girls, goodbye to Jackie, and then a ‘I’ll see you later’, at Hayden and Rozanov.

Hayden’s phone buzzed and he saw the notification come up when Shane left.

Jane (11.05am)

See you.

Of course. Wrong fucking phone.

“That’s my phone, you bitch.” Rozanov swiped it away from him and balanced it on the top of Jade’s little hat.

“It's just someone called Jane, Lily. Put a fucking passcode on your phone, jeez.”

At this point, Rozanov went slightly white at the names. He didn’t respond, but peered down at Jade instead. "Your father is a terrible person. Snooping."

“You are putting money both in the swear jar that Shane got you for the gender reveal party, Hayden,” Jackie said, already sounding tired. “That can go toward their college fund. It’ll be full by Tuesday.”

“And I think I’m buying a new phone, Jackie,” Hayden said. “I’m sick of seeing Lily’s messages and dick pics.”

“Yes,” Rozanov said, nodding. “I also do not want to see a picture of Jackie’s titty like I did the other day.”

“Hey,” Jackie protested. “That was a good photo.”

“It was,” Hayden agreed.

That seemed to satisfy everyone. Rozanov left shortly after, giving Jackie a forehead kiss and the girls a small squeeze of their tiny thumbs. “Where’s Hayden’s goodbye?”

“Ugh, Jackie, I don’t want-” *SMOOCH.* “…A forehead smooch.”

“You got one. Bye.” Hayden watched him go, the door closing just a bit softer than necessary.

Jackie looked over at him. Ruby snuffed a little on her chest. “Jane’s Shane, isn’t he? They’re not very imaginative.”

“No,” Hayden said, looking down at ~~Ilya~~ Jade, who was asleep and blissfully unaware of any of this.

***

A few weeks later, Hayden finally caved and bought himself a new phone, only to discover Rozanov had somehow ended up with the exact same one.

He and Jackie took the girls in their double pram to training because Hayden was bored out of his fucking mind and there was only so much television a person could endure before losing all sense of self. Rozanov wandered over afterward, sweat-damp and grinning like he’d just won something minor but satisfying.

“I got a new phone,” Hayden said, pulling it out and holding it up.

Rozanov glanced down. “That’s the same as my phone.”

“No,” Hayden said. “It’s the Samsung Galaxy III.”

Rozanov reached into his bag and produced his own.

It was the Galaxy III.

Jackie burst out laughing, one hand braced on the pram. Hayden stared at the two identical phones, then at Rozanov.

Complete coincidence, he told himself.

Which it was.

“I dropped my old one on the locker room floor,” Rozanov explained. “Match against Toronto. Went straight to the nearest phone shop afterward. Do you like my lock screen?” He turned it on. The photo was of Rozanov flipping the middle finger directly at the camera in front of a mirror, with 'fuck off Hayden' written in lipstick. “It’s so you know not to snoop.”

At least they had different cases. Hayden had picked a boring leather one from the shop, the kind with slots for cards and photos, practical and boring and exactly what Jackie had encouraged him to buy. Rozanov had a knockoff Bruins case he’d clearly ordered online, the logo slightly crooked and very pixelated.

“Why didn’t you just get an iPhone?” Hayden asked.

“Why would I bother learning a new phone?” Rozanov said. “I am an Android bitch through and through. Not everyone is on holiday at home with screaming babies named after Ilya Rozanov.”

Hayden sighed. “It doesn’t matter. Okay.”

They checked their ringtone settings anyway, just in case and made sure they were set to different sounds. But then they both left it on vibrate and called it a day.

***

The rush of having two tiny girls to look after pushed what Jackie called the ‘Hollanov Issue’ far to the back of Hayden’s mind.

The only thing he’d managed now, over the next few years, was to force Shane over for lunch or dinner whenever he was in town, always with the excuse the kids missed their Uncle Shane. Hayden made sure Rozanov was there too, and somehow, over time, Shane had completely relaxed around him. It got to the point where Shane automatically said yes to late dinner.

It wasn’t really fair to either Shane or Rozanov that they had to hide their relationship, even from Hayden and Jackie. Outside the rink, they got along well. It felt like a secret, knowing Shane and Rozanov didn’t actually hate each other and probably still had some sort of

arrangement behind closed doors. Hayden and Jackie always made sure they sat next to each other in the lounge room, and at the dinner table. They always left around the same time.

“I think it’s working,” Jackie said after watching them head out together. Hayden followed her gaze. Rozanov had placed a hand lightly on Shane’s back, which as soon as they got past the privacy hedges, he took his hand away. “They seem better."

At the next dinner, Hayden and Jackie were in full domestic mode. The game wasn't till tomorrow, and Shane had come in early. The kids were asleep upstairs after flinging lumps of sweet potato into Hayden’s hair during their early dinner prep. He still had flecks of orange crusted into his hair, which Jackie pretended not to notice while she finished off the meal for tonight - coq au vin. Both Shane and Rozanov were later than normal.

The doorbell rang, startling them both. Rozanov usually let himself in and never bothered with ringing.

“He insisted we ring the bell,” said Rozanov, walking past Hayden and taking off his jacket, throwing it onto the couch over a blanket covered in hockey sticks. “I’d never.”

“I’m a guest, not a pet,” said Shane.

“Lily’s both,” Hayden said. “I see you two turned up together. That’s good.”

Shane froze. “… Is it? Good?”

“It is. Give me your jacket, we’re making coq au vin,” Hayden said, taking Shane’s jacket and putting it on the coat hook and not crumbling up like Rozanov’s on a blanket.

“Cock-a-Van? Like cocks in a van?” Rozanov asked, tilting his head as if he was pretending to decode a foreign language.

“You’ve had it before, Lily. Remember the day Ruby swore in Russian? That day we made this.”

Rozanov put a hand over his chest in mock honour. “She makes Uncle Ilya proud.”

Shane went over to the mantel, where there were five swear jars all in a row, full of coins. “Did she put a dollar in the swear jar for that?”

“She will, when she gets her first job, yes.”

“A few years to go then,” said Shane. He seemed a bit jumpy tonight. He kept walking up and down the couch several times before settling down at the dinner table next to Rozanov.

“Are you alright, Shane?” Asked Jackie, handing him the bread roll basket. He tapped his fingers.

“Yeah. I… I just want to say… We wanted to say…”

They waited patiently. Like a goldfish, no sound came out of Shane's mouth. He was silent for at least thirty seconds, before Rozanov put his fork down. “We’re lovers," he said, a little too loudly.

“Oh my god!” Shane put his hands up. “Don’t use that fucking word, Ilya!’

“Swear jar, Shane.”

“Ugh. No. Not lovers. But together. We are together.” Shane got up and put a dollar in the jar. He took a deep breath, and went back to the dinner table.

He then looked at both Hayden and Jackie, who didn’t look surprised, who resumed tucking in their meal, as if nothing had been revealed.

“You aren’t going to… tell us off? I’ve been wanting to say something for so long, because it's the only time we can kind of be together in front of others…”

“We already knew,” said Hayden. He grinned. “Jackie and I saw you in Mexico.”

Jackie nodded. "Next time you guys make out, make sure it’s not in the position of our balcony and you pull the curtains shut properly.”

“Spying on us, were you?”

“It was at 3am, Ilya,” Jackie said. “Nobody makes good decisions at 3am.”

They explained that they always made sure Rozanov came to dinner whenever Shane was around. Hayden and Jackie didn’t want to force it, so they just created an easy excuse for the two of them to be in the same room. Shane, once he realised Rozanov would be there, never said no. It was like an unspoken deal between the four of them, and it worked.

Shane and Rozanov spoke in surprisingly G-rated detail, sketching out the history of their private mess around each other. From the few years Hayden had known about, it had been quiet, contained and behind closed doors. Hayden didn’t pry, letting Jackie do the questioning. She asked everything from the perfectly innocent to the slightly perverted. What had started as casual encounters with barely any talking had somehow evolved into Shane getting updates on Hayden from Rozanov, which meant they had conversations that didn’t involve hockey or hooking up which evolved into more.

“So we tricked each other,” Shane said, finishing off his meal.

Jackie sipped her wine and shook her head. “No. We tricked *you* into being more comfortable behind closed doors. Away from the media, away from the rivalry bullshit.”

“There’s something else,” Shane added. “You call him Lily. That’s his nickname on my phone too.”

Hayden froze for a second, remembering why Shane had snapped at both him and Rozanov on the plane to Mexico years ago, and why Rozanov asked him to change the name.

“And yours is Jane,” Jackie said, grinning. “A rhymed word. Very original.”

“If you talked to him about me,” Hayden said slowly, “Is that how he knew Jackie’s name?”

Rozanov just shrugged. “I’m perceptive-”

“Yes,” Shane said, leaning back in his chair. “He knew from me. Knew we were friends.”

“I needed to learn what I could about my new teammates and Shane knew you.”

“You two really are impossible,” said Hayden, shaking his head.

Rozanov smirked. “And yet, here we are.”

Shane leaned forward, resting his elbows on the table. He reached over and intertwined his fingers with Rozanov.

“I’d call that progress. And for the record, I expect you both to keep showing up to dinners, whether you like it or not.”

“Deal,” Rozanov said, glancing at Shane.

They had their wine, and medovik Jackie had started the day before for dessert. Soon, it was time for them to leave. They gathered their things, sliding chairs back quietly. Hayden and Jackie exchanged a glance and a small smile as the two of them headed for the door.

“See you next time,” Shane said over his shoulder.

“Next time,” Rozanov echoed, and with a final shared look, they stepped out into the evening, hand in hand.

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