

Crestfallen

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Summary

“Although I wouldn't change it. I love cooking for him. And he loves eating it, yes Shane?”

Shane didn't quite register the question. He was still somewhat stuck at the sentence about his diet. His eyes were clouded and unfocused, looking straight ahead in the direction of the camera but not on it, rather over it.

"So who is the cook in your relationship?"

"Usually me," Ilya chuckled, answering Harris's question. He looked at his husband, before looking back at the camera, "Shane is on this *performative diet*, so he can't eat normal food. He always drinks this disgusting shake in the morning. He swears, he likes it, but I can see his handsome face scrunching up every time, he drinks it, trying to fight the urge to throw up. It's also a pain in the ass, trying to find a recipe, he can have. Although I wouldn't change it. I love cooking for him. And he loves eating it, yes Shane?"

Shane didn't quite register the question. He was still somewhat stuck at the sentence about his diet. His eyes were clouded and unfocused, looking straight ahead in the direction of the camera but not on it, rather over it.

Ilya and him were doing a video with Harris, as some kind of promotion of their team. Apparently their fans were eager to hear more about their marriage, which didn't sit quite right with Shane and his privacy.

Shane wasn't someone, who shared things about his personal life to just anyone. His instagram had a few posts only and they were all some kinds of ads, sponsorships and game related content. It was rare to see anything remotely personal on there, which was the exact opposite to his partner's account.

Ilya's instagram was filled with random pictures. Anya, the cottage, things Shane liked, their wedding... he posted just about everything, he saw. If Shane showed even a little hint of interest in something as simple as a bird, Ilya would take a picture of it and post it. The man was the same with his tattoos too and his 'stupid wolf-bird' tattoo was a great example of this.

That's why Shane was uncomfortable with this *interview* right from the beginning. And he thought, he was dealing with it well, until this question was asked.

Who is the cook in your relationship?

Shane did cook sometimes, but not very often compared to his husband. It was Ilya's hobby to cook, especially if he could do it with Yuna, Shane's mom. Ilya always had to prepare special meals for Shane, because he was on a diet. A performative diet. Ilya had to adapt, because Shane was being difficult. It came to a point, where Shane wasn't sure anymore, if the diet was actually good for him and helping him, or it was just the feeling of discipline and control, that the man enjoyed and cherished so much. It was something stable in his life.

Ever since the secret about their relationship was out of the bag, nothing seemed to be constant in Shane's life. He switched teams, because his team wasn't accepting him anymore. The team he gave everything to. The team, he carried, to winning three Stanley cups. The team that celebrated every win with him. It changed, after Shane came out to them. Most of them were supportive, but Shane wasn't blind. He could see some of those faces looking at him with disgust. So different to their happy and excited expression.

After his relationship was out, even the supportive teammates were angry at him. All except Hayden and J.J., because apparently, "we can accept you being gay. What we cannot accept, is your relationship with ILYA ROZANOV. A person who is supposed to be your rival." Truth was, Ilya was never Shane's rival. The media made it up, because it was convenient for them.

Shane used to wish, him and Ilya were rivals. He used to think, it'd make everything easier. They were seventeen, when the entire mess started. It was supposed to be a one time thing happening out of curiosity and the need to do something, that wasn't expected of them. However after a few years of occasional hook ups, Shane realized, he was in too deep. The curiosity changed into love and Shane found himself yearning for Ilya anytime, they were away from each other. It felt, like Ilya was the only person, who actually knew *him*. *Listened to him*.

He had to thank his past self for actually admitting and acknowledging his feelings for once and inviting Ilya to the cottage. He wouldn't have his precious husband otherwise.

Another thing that seemed to change all the time was people's perception and opinion on them, as if it mattered. But it did. At least to Shane...

Before the secret was revealed, the only thing the media could talk about, was how well Shane played in his games. Now they talked about everything. Analyzing every single thing and shoving their nose everywhere.

Shane Hollander was seen with Rose Landry, is he cheating on his husband?

Shane Hollander wasn't at the present in the game against Montreal today, is he sick or just jealous?

Shane was still not able to deal with this. At least not completely. Even before their relationship was exposed to the entire world, Shane already struggled with people's opinions on him and what could happen, if he came out publicly. He was terrified of being judged, as it was something, he was very familiar with in his childhood. Fear of messing up, fear of being different... fear of not being good enough. He literally had a panic attack, when his parents found out. Imagine, how he reacted, when the entire world knew.

Before starting hockey, he wasn't very popular among others. He wasn't white. He wasn't neurotypical. He wasn't straight. It may've been the twenty first century, but that didn't mean, people were any kinder. People used to bully him a lot, when he was little. For missing social cues, not understanding stuff others did... a lot of things.

"Do you agree with what Ilya said, Shane?"

He was pulled out of his thoughts by Harris asking him, if his husband was right. He raised his head and was immediately hit with a bright light and the camera pointed right at his face.

"Y-yeah sure, I do," he stammered through his sentence, managing a small, slightly awkward smile. He never really knew, how he should act in front of a camera, when he wasn't playing

hockey. It seemed to natural for Ilya, so why wasn't it like that for him too? "I love his cooking."

Ilya noticed his nervousness and put an arm around him casually to not bring too much attention to Shane, but still trying to comfort him. He shot the shorter man a quick, genuine smile, mumbling quietly, "Vso v poryadke, skoro vso zakonchitsya, moya lyubov."
[Everything is okay, it'll be over soon, my love.]

Shane absentmindedly nodded his head, his point finger lightly scratching the skin on his thumb. The repetitive motion always calmed him down and he rarely realized, he was doing it. It was an automatic thing for him. Ilya's thick Russian accent somehow seemed to calm him too every time.

"Of course, you do! Who wouldn't? Okay, next question is, who is messier? Shane or Ilya?"

Ilya laughed, answering Harris's question, "definitely Shane! He's a bit of a neat freak. It's amusing sometimes. I can be waiting in bed for him and instead of him joining me, he'll go and start folding our clothes. But I love if."

Harris laughed and Shane smiled a little. It was true. It didn't matter, how good Ilya looked, naked on the bed. Shane would go and fold the clothes. He couldn't just leave it on the floor.

"Okay, guys, that'd be the last question! Thank you so much for joining me today and we'll wrap this up!"

Shane let out a deep breath, he didn't realize, he was holding in, the relief coming to him quickly. No matter, how often he will do this, he'll feel uncomfortable.

Ilya beamed at him, "you're welcome!"

Harris turned off the camera and started packing things up and the two men got up from their chairs. Shane had to hold back to not wince, as he felt, how stiff and numb his body had gotten. He always tried to stay still in interviews and interactions like this, feeling too anxious to even move in a way, that could be *wrong*. He feared, people's reactions to basically anything. Eating in public was completely weird, awkward and uncomfortable. If he sat down, he couldn't move around too much, because that would suggest something to others.

Just stay still and don't move too much. That should be fine, he would tell himself. That way no one will think, you're W E I R D.

"Are you okay, moya lyubov?"

Shane hummed questioningly, looking up at his husband, as their entered their car. "hm?" It took a minute, before he registered, what Ilya said and answered just in time to see the other man was about to repeat the question, "oh, yeah."

"Why did you hum like that then," Ilya tilted his head to the side like a curious puppy.

"What do you mean?"

"You acted, like you didn't hear me, but before I could repeat myself, you answered."

"It just took a minute, before my brain understood and unwrapped the puzzle. The hum was an immediate response, my body does."

"Oh...interesting."

The drive home was quiet. Normally, Ilya would put on a playlist or something to listen to, but he figured, Shane wasn't in a mood for that, probably overwhelmed and at the brink of a headache. They arrived and got out of the car, unlocking the front door. Ilya took off his shoes and followed his husband to the living room. He was a messy person, but he tried to not leave a mess anywhere near Shane, knowing, the man didn't like it and wanted him to take his shoes off too.

They sat down on the couch and snuggled close together. Ilya put a blanket around Shane, seeing the man was cold. Coming to think about it, Shane was cold most of the time these days. Cold and tired.

Ilya knew, it had something to do with the diet his husband was on. He'd tried to tell Shane, that he didn't need to be on any kind of diet. Shane said, it was *helping* him. But was it really? Ilya didn't think, this diet really suited the other man, but Shane swore, it was good. Not that he was a very good liar.

"Look! Harris already managed to upload the video," Shane said, his face filled with surprise, while he watched the video on YouTube. Ilya looked over to see him scroll down to the comment section, that was somehow already filled. He quickly grabbed Shane's hand with one of his and went back to the video with the other.

"Who cares about that? Not us, yes?"

Ilya knew, Shane cared, a little bit too much to be honest. The man always wanted to know, what other people thought of him. It was, so he could analyze it himself and then change things about himself. It was the same, when Shane was learning something new.

He'd analyze every single thing and step, the professional was doing, try it, perfect it, perform it. It was just, how Shane functioned. It was his system.

"...not us," Shane mumbled in agreement, but it was visible, he wasn't actually on the same page as Ilya.

"Great," Ilya smiled and stroked Shane's shoulder with his thumb. He took the phone away from his husband and put it on the coffee table, "what would you like for dinner?"

"I'm not really hungry, Ilya."

Ilya frowned, "are you sure? I can make your comfort food, babe"

Shane looked up at him and sighed. The last thing, he wanted, was to worry his husband. It wouldn't hurt, to eat something, even if he wasn't hungry. He was feeling quite lightheaded and he knew, Ilya would make him something, that he could eat on his diet.

"okay...sure."

"Отличный! I'll go make it and then we can watch a movie. You can choose something in the meantime, moya lyubov."

While Shane was cuddling up on the sofa with a blanket, trying to choose a movie, Ilya was making tuna melt in the kitchen. Tuna melt was one of Shane's comfort foods. Ilya knew this. Shane himself admitted, it has been his safe food ever since Ilya made it for him for the first time. He valued the fact, Ilya knew, he liked tuna. The fact, he knew, Shane's favorite drink was ginger ale and Ilya had it stocked in the fridge 24/7. It made Shane feel seen and safe.

"What did you choose?"

"Call Me By Your Name."

"Of course, you did."

The two fell asleep, cuddled together under a blanket, an empty plate left on the coffee table.

Unfortunately Shane didn't stay in this blissful state very long. One hour later, he stirred beside Ilya and reached for his phone. Unlocking his phone, he saw the YouTube video still open and scrolled down to the comments again. He saw a few, that caught his interest.

@hollanov69: Oh my god! Can't believe, we actually got this!

@hollanderforever: Shane looked kinda uncomfortable.

@hockeyfan2481: Still can't believe these two are married... weren't they rivals like what...yesterday?

@user5382918626: They're both disgusting and a disgrace to hockey.

@hollanovstan334: you're a disgrace.

"Turn it off babe. None of it matters," Ilya kissed his neck, taking the phone away once again.

Those kisses on his neck made him think for a second, that everything will be okay.

Would it?

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