

## Continental Drift

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# Continental Drift

by [RimsHiddenQuill](#)

## Summary

Everyone can see it. In the way Ilya Rozanov's voice gentles, in the way his focus narrows, in the way every argument ends the same way. Set post-*The Long Game*, this is a study of marriage, conflict, and the slow, irrevocable shift of a man who loves too openly to hide it.

Or, five times they argue and Ilya gives in, and one time it becomes clear he always will.

## Notes

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

Ilya Rozanov did not fall in love quietly.

He fell in love the way a continent shifts. Slowly, imperceptibly at first, and then all at once, with consequences that cannot be undone. By the time he realises what has happened, everyone else already knows. His teammates know. The staff knows. Reporters know. They see it in the way his gaze tracks one person without effort, in the way his shoulders soften when Shane Hollander enters a room, in the way his voice loses its sharpest edges when he says his husband's name.

Shane knows too. Shane has always known.

It begins, as most things between them do, with something small and domestic, something that looks insignificant from the outside. The kitchen is warm, early season, snow just beginning to threaten the sidewalks outside. Ilya stands by the stove, wooden spoon in hand, certain in his authority.

"I am telling you," he says, steam rising around him. "You cannot salt water before it is boiling. It is waste of salt."

Shane is grating cheese, relaxed, comfortable, barefoot on the cool tile. He looks up, eyes immediately expressive, soft and dark and open in that way that makes Ilya's chest ache. His freckles stand out against skin flushed from the heat of the kitchen.

"Ilya," Shane says gently, like he is soothing something skittish. "That's not how cooking works."

"In Russia we do it this way."

"We are in Ottawa."

"I am still Russian."

Shane's mouth curves, fond and patient. He tilts his head, and his eyes do that thing, widening just slightly, lashes casting shadows on his cheeks. Ilya has learned, without ever meaning to, every micro-expression Shane possesses.

"I just thought," Shane says carefully, "since I'm the one who does most of the cooking."

It is not said to wound. It is not defensive. It is simply true, offered with the quiet vulnerability that always disarms Ilya completely. Shane's shoulders dip almost imperceptibly, and his eyes soften further, turning glassy at the edges, like a puppy unsure if it has done something wrong.

Ilya feels the loss settle immediately. He exhales, long and resigned, adds salt to the water.

Shane's relief is instant. His smile blooms slow and warm, lighting his entire face, and Ilya feels ridiculous for how much it affects him. He feels sick with love, overwhelmed by how easily Shane can undo him with nothing but honesty and those eyes.

Weeks later, the argument is louder, sharper, fuelled by cameras and bad questions and the particular exhaustion that comes from being observed too closely. Ilya paces the kitchen, agitation radiating off him.

"I do not need to smile more," he says. "My face is fine."

Shane leans against the counter, arms folded, still in practice sweats. He watches Ilya without interrupting, eyes attentive, thoughtful.

"It's not about fine," Shane says. "It's about approachable."

"I am not approachable."

"I know," Shane says fondly. "That's the problem."

Ilya stops pacing. "You are saying I am problem."

"I'm saying the team wants you to look less like you're going to murder a reporter."

"This is my murder face."

Shane smiles despite himself, then steps closer. He puts his hands on Ilya's chest, grounding him, looks up. His eyes are warm brown, shining, impossibly emotive. They always look like they are carrying more feeling than Shane is saying out loud.

"When you smile," Shane says quietly, "people listen to you. They trust you."

Ilya swallows. He sees now that this is not about the media. It is about being understood. About being allowed to be human in public.

"I do not want to perform," he mutters.

"I know," Shane says softly.

The silence that follows is heavy but gentle. Ilya sighs.

"I will smile," he concedes. "Sometimes."

Shane grins like he has just won something enormous, pride and affection written plainly across his face.

The argument about sleep happens later, after the season has worn them both thin. It builds slowly. Nights where Ilya stays up too late. Mornings where Shane wakes alone. One evening

Shane sits on the edge of the bed, knees drawn up, arms wrapped around them.

“You cannot go to bed at two in morning every night,” Shane says. “You have practice.”

“I am night person.”

“You are a menace.”

“I play better tired.”

“That is not true.”

Ilya has facts. He has stubbornness. He is prepared to defend them all until Shane’s voice shifts.

“I miss you.”

That’s all Shane says.

He doesn’t look at Ilya at first. His eyes are fixed on the floor, glassy and tired. His freckles look softer in the low light, his shoulders slightly hunched, like he is bracing for disappointment.

“I go to sleep alone,” Shane continues. “I wake up alone. I know you’re just in the other room but it feels like... I don’t know. Like we’re ships passing.”

Ilya sits beside him immediately. The argument evaporates.

“I am sorry,” he says quietly, taking Shane’s hand. “I will come to bed earlier.”

“You don’t have to,” Shane murmurs.

“I do,” Ilya replies.

Shane leans into him like he has been waiting for permission. Ilya presses a kiss to his hair and feels, acutely, how completely this man owns him.

The suit argument happens near the end of the season, before a charity event. Ilya stands in front of the mirror, unimpressed.

“This suit is ugly.”

“It’s classic,” Shane says.

“It makes me look like accountant.”

“It makes you look like a very hot accountant.”

“You are biased.”

Shane steps closer, straightens Ilya's tie. His fingers linger. His eyes track up slowly, openly, full of something like awe.

"I like when you let people see you," Shane says softly. "Not just the hockey version."

Ilya exhales. "Fine. I wear suit."

Shane beams, kisses him, and Ilya thinks he would wear anything if it earned him that look.

The discussion about moving comes in pieces. Half-finished conversations. Long pauses. One night it crystallises. Shane curls into himself on the couch, eyes shining.

"I like it here," he says. "It feels like us."

Ilya opens his mouth to argue. Then closes it.

"Okay," he says. "We stay."

Shane leans into him immediately, relief and affection unmistakable.

The one time it matters most, the one time the argument threatens to become something sharper, it's over the laundry.

"I am not doing it like this!" Shane says, holding up a pile of clothes. "You cannot just mix whites and colors. It will ruin everything!"

"I know how to do laundry!" Ilya protests, a little exasperated. "This is fine. It's fine, Shane. Stop fussing."

"I am not fussing!" Shane snaps, though his voice betrays him. "I am trying to save us from a disaster of pink socks and ruined shirts!"

Ilya laughs, incredulous. "It is one shirt! And it is red, not fuchsia!"

"You are impossible," Shane mutters, shaking his head, but there's a reluctant grin tugging at his lips.

"I am sorry," Ilya says softly, stepping closer and pressing a kiss to Shane's temple. "I am wrong. I will separate the laundry next time. Okay?"

Shane exhales, finally letting himself relax. "Fine. But only because I love you," he says, pressing his forehead to Ilya's chest.

"I know," Ilya murmurs, wrapping him in a hug. "And I love you too."

Anyone watching would know.

They would see Shane smiling, shaking his head, and Ilya grinning like a fool, completely disarmed. He is so, so in love.

## End Notes

Yes, I know. Ilya gives in way too easily. But can you blame him? Shane's eyes are a weapon, and Ilya has been disarmed since day one.

Also, yes, there are arguments in this. Lots of them. But honestly, if your husband has the audacity to look at you like that in the middle of the kitchen, who cares who's right?

Thanks for reading, and yes... they're still very, very in love.

—RimsHiddenQuill

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