

The (more than) 12 Years of Christmas

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/76256451) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/76256451>.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Categories:	Gen , M/M
Fandoms:	Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid , Heated Rivalry (TV)
Relationships:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov , Shane Hollander & Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Shane Hollander , Ilya Rozanov , Original Child Character(s)
Additional Tags:	Romance , Fluff , Canon Compliant , Future Fic
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2025-12-23 Words: 5,077 Chapters: 1/1

The (more than) 12 Years of Christmas

by [JayeReid1](#)

Summary

“Papa... what did you do at Christmas when you were a little boy?”

“Solnyshko, Papa was never little boy. Always big, strong man.”

Notes

Who needs a life when you have Heated Rivalry to watch and write?

In honour of this special week (S1 Ep6 - 'The Cottage', not the other thing happening this week...), I present you with this seasonal fic.

Anything you recognise is from the creative genius of Rachel Reid or Jacob Tierney, distributed via Crave & HBOMax. Anything you do not, has come from my overstimulated brain. I make no financial gain from this work.

Proofed by spellcheck and Grammarly (neither like Ilya's cadence 🙄), so mistakes are all mine until my amazing beta Mia (who, unlike me, has an actual life) gets a chance to give it the once-over here.

I prefer to write in the first person, so this one... meh? Hopefully it's okay.

Enjoy!

*

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

“Papa... what did you do at Christmas when you were a little boy?” Ania asks, looking up from the Christmas scene she has been dutifully, carefully colouring between the lines. Her feet are curled up beneath her as she sits at the coffee table. Paper and coloured pencils are strewn across it, and some on the floor.

Ilya did not look up from the string of Christmas lights – or *strings* – as he was starting to realise, when he found the third endpoint, as he answered.

“Solnyshko, Papa was never little boy. Always big, strong man.”

Shane snorted from his chair closer to the fire. One playbook open on his lap and the Ottawa 67’s schedule tucked in beside.

“Paaa-paaa...” she giggled, adding an eye-roll as an eight-year-old, far belied her maturity, before returning to her picture. “That is *not* true. Is it Daddy?”

“No, not true at all,” Shane agreed, looking to Ilya, who was still focused on untangling the lights. Well, he was giving the *impression* he was focused, but Shane knew better and caught the twitch of his husband’s mouth and a quick – but there – crease to his brow that had nothing to do with the task in front of him, before it disappeared.

“Yes!” Michael chimed in from his own picture, not as carefully executed as his older sister, but still... not bad for a five-year-old. He dropped his pencil and, from where he’d been kneeling at the table opposite his sister, darted to the stairs, climbing halfway before pointing to a photograph of toddler Ilya and his mother.

“See,” he declared.

Ilya looked up and offered a grin. “Ahh Moye sokrovishche. Thank you for reminding me. Was soooo long ago, Papa forgot!”

Shane noticed Ilya’s gaze stayed on the photograph as their son bounced back down the stairs to his place at the coffee table. After Ilya and Shane had first moved in together, Shane had found the snapshot as he’d helped Ilya unpack boxes. It turned out to be the only one Ilya had of him and his mother. Actually, the only image he believed *existed* before those as an up-and-coming hockey prodigy, as a junior. If not for this proof, anyone would have thought he had always been a huge hockey God. Shane had quietly taken the image, with its damaged edges and creases, and had it repaired, copied, enlarged and framed. He gave it to Ilya for his 31st birthday, just after their first wedding anniversary. Ilya had burst into tears, and Shane had thought he’d fucked up with his well-meaning gift, until Ilya had gently placed it on the table and thrown himself at Shane, declaring it was the best gift he had ever received. Shane assumed now, quite rightly of course, that the arrival of their children had surpassed this ranking. But all the same, Shane knew it was still special, and he was proud that he had brought that little bit of joy to him.

“So, in Russia, what did y–” Shane began to ask, picking up from their daughter’s question.

“Urgh! Nyet! I done!” Ilya declared dramatically, dropping the bundle of lights back down into the box with a clatter of plastic as he clambered to his feet. “We get *new* lights. These stupid. We go now. Get lights – yes – and ice cream. Who wants ice cream?” he questioned as he kicked the box halfway under the coffee table.

Shane was about to complain that it was at least minus fifteen degrees outside, looking like rain or more likely snow, and the last thing they needed was ice cream when it was only an hour or so before dinner. It wasn’t that they couldn’t afford new lights for the tree – between them, they could probably afford to buy Christmas lights for the whole damn city – but Annie and Mich had jumped up and cheered at the thought of an impromptu trip to the store and ice cream... well, who was he to say no and look like the bad parent. It was only a few weeks until Christmas, so why put a dampener on their Christmas spirit?

And Ania’s question was forgotten.

Just as Ilya had hoped.

**

2008

World Juniors were in Saskatchewan, and Shane was having a ball. Getting to play hockey for your country at Christmas – what a bonus present.

Shane loved Christmas. Seriously, what was there not to love?

As an only child, at 17, he was mature enough to admit he had been spoiled growing up. The sheer number of gifts he received from ‘Santa’ as a little kid, in addition to his parents and extended family... it had been ridiculous, and it didn’t really decrease as he got older.

He’d met that Russian wonder kid, Rozanov, earlier in the day. Shane thought he’d been a bit of a dick, but maybe he was homesick. It must suck being in another country, away from your family at Christmas. Shane surmised that maybe he *could* have tried harder, but really, Rozanov didn’t seem like the kind of guy to be friends with.

Probably lucky he was a reasonable hockey player with that sort of attitude.

~

Ilya knew *exactly* who was interrupting his sneaky cigarette before he introduced himself.

Shane Hollander.

Canada, wonder boy.

Everyone knew who he was. In Russia, before they’d set foot on the plane, the team had been warned that – of *all* the players on *all* the teams they would be playing against – Hollander

was one to look out for. The kid was born to play hockey, they said. “Ne vazhno” – *whatever*, Ilya mumbled to himself as Hollander disappeared back to his team.

The boy with the sun dots on his face would be no match for him and his team.

That night, Ilya slipped out of the team hotel. He had spotted the Cathedral out the window of the team bus as they were transported between one of the rinks and the hotel. He counted, and it was only four blocks away from the hotel, and he figured if he was caught, he could proclaim he was training – out for a run – that if the team wanted him to be at his best, then he needed to be able to train to his usual level away from home.

The church was quiet as he stepped inside. He carefully climbed the thirteen – *thirteen!* *Were the people who build this church not superstitious* – steps, mindful that slipping and injuring himself would *not* be good. He shook the few snowflakes from his hair as he stepped into the quiet church, dipping his fingers into the holy water on offer, genuflected and crossed himself. No, it wasn’t Russian Orthodox like his mother, and he supposed he was by default, but the Holy Rosary Cathedral was at least a house of God, and he hoped his mother would have been pleased he was in there. His belief was moderate these days at best. He sat towards the back, sliding himself along the empty pew until his shoulder rested against a column that disappeared into the form of a grand arch, one of many that made up the internal structure of the church. There was no service or mass, just random people – mainly older people, not paying him any attention in their bowed, shuffled gait to the front pews. He ran his fingers along the chain around his neck, pulling his mother’s crucifix out before kissing it gently and pressing it between his thumb and forefinger. Ilya closed his eyes and let his mind speak jumbled words of love for his mother. How much he missed her and the few random lines of prayer he remembered as a child when he would go with her to church.

He wasn’t sure how long he sat there, but after his mind quietened, and he was satisfied he had spent long enough in this self-punishment of reflection, Ilya stood and moved along the wall to the front left-hand side to where candles glowed under the outstretched arms of a statue of Jesus – he thought... He threw some coins into the donation box... he had no idea how much money it was, he only had coins to feed the vending machine at the hotel, and he had no understanding of the conversion between Rubles and Canadian dollars. He just fed the machine until it seemed satisfied by his contribution before it spat out a Coke. He took a taper from the holder at the side of the table before lighting it and extending it with a slightly trembling, shaky hand to a candle as he whispered, ‘*lyublyu tebya mama, ya skuchayu*’

And that was Christmas.

*

2009

Christmas!

This was just... this was... *bliss!*

His first Christmas in his own place in Montreal, and he was going all out. It didn't matter that he would be spending the three-day mandated Christmas break at his parents' house – his childhood home in Ottawa – he was going all out here. His new home would be drowned in Christmas spirit.

He had a huge fresh tree, not caring about the post-Christmas pine needle clean up – *well, not until after Christmas and for maybe months, when he was still finding random dry, green sticks*. The tree was barely visible anyway under the sheer number of decorations and swathes of tinsel and lights. There were more lengths of tinsel strung from curtains and doorways, and a custom-made wreath for his front door that was a homage to both the season and his Montreal Metro's in team colours.

Christmas – *best* time of year outside Stanley Cup playoffs...

Now, if they beat Boston tomorrow... well, that would be a great Christmas present to win against Rozanov.

*

2013

"So... Merry Christmas," Shane smiled in his perfectly polite, cheery, Canadian good boy voice as they surprisingly found themselves passing in the same hallway in the bowels of the stadium. Shane was working off some energy and going over his pregame meditation and mantra – Ilya was heading for what he hoped was a still faulty emergency door, so he could slip outside for a cigarette – without alerting the whole building.

Ilya just... almost glared at him.

"What?" the Russian questioned.

"Oh ah... sorry, I just thought... happy holidays then? Sorry, shouldn't assume..." Shane tried to keep from feeling like an idiot. He'd seen the crucifix around Ilya's neck... he refused to think about when, where or *why* he remembered it. Wasn't a crucifix a symbol of Christianity and therefore someone who believed in God and all that, and therefore probably celebrated Christmas?

"Is stupid," Ilya almost snarled back, stopping to lean against the painted cinderblock wall. "Three days – no hockey."

Fuck, Shane thought... what a fucking grouch. Yes, they didn't get to play or even train, and he would miss that too... but at least it was three days that players could spend with their families. He wondered if he looked up 'Grinch' in the dictionary, there wouldn't be a picture of Rozanov beside it.

Shane walked away, shaking his head as he went.

~

His touchdown, hook-up apartment – it was just that. Shane never went there unless it was to meet up with Ilya when Boston was in Montreal. It held ghosts of encounters past that he could avoid by not going there any other time. And when he was there, well, he wasn't there alone for long before Ilya arrived, and then he had other things on his mind – and dick – *like Ilya's hands and mouth*.

So being there, the game before Christmas with its starkness and lack of Christmas... or well, anything... it was like stepping into another world.

Which he supposed it was.

Maybe next Christmas he would... but his thoughts were interrupted by a text message.

Here.

And when Shane Ilya came to his Christmas-less apartment that night to fuck him, Shane didn't bother mentioning Christmas once.

*

Ilya was... *something. Bad feeling...*

Well, no. The trouncing win against Montreal two days ago still buzzed in his bloodstream as his feet pounded against the Boston pavement. He refused to think about whether it was just such a good win or whether it was a good win against *Montreal*.

He also refused to think about whether the buzz was caused by a well overdue fucking with Hollander.

No – not going to think about that – at all.

But he was still... what was word... not happy. Annoyed... *more* than annoyed. *Itchy* annoyed. Not only was there no hockey for three days, but today, *today* – December 25th – he'd had to run an extra half mile just to find an open coffee shop.

Back home at least – Christmas – when his mother had been alive, had been January 7th.

Stupid day.

His usual caffeine dealer shop was closed, which also meant no little pastry snack that he sometimes indulged.

Okay... *always* indulged. He trained enough to burn it off. To make it even worse, they didn't have the ones he liked, so he had to pick something else. The shop was basically deserted, and he had no qualms about sitting at a high-top in the corner to drink his coffee and eat his pastry while sweat dripped from his forehead to his phone screen.

Urgh... more annoying.

~

Home, showered, and changed into comfortable clothes. The heat turned up because he liked to leave the drapes open to let the light in. He collapsed into his sofa, turned the TV on and began to channel surf.

Holiday movies, happy shiny people.

Happy and shiny like Shane Hollander. He wondered what he was doing for the break with no hockey.

Blyat!

Why should he care what the pretty and perfect Hollander was doing with his time? Ilya turned to sports and streamed the last game between Pittsburgh and Admirals. His Bears would play Pittsburgh in four days.

He would use this time to study.

*

2016

Shane's thoughts stumbled a bit from the words he had rehearsed. He couldn't believe he was going there again. Not after the reaction he got from Ilya a few years before. The words had sounded calm – cool even – in his head in the days and hours before he saw Ilya. But by the time they managed to have a few moments together, like tonight after Montreal had won their home game against Boston, well, they were blown to the winds on a metaphorical storm.

“I know you don't, you know... celebrate or even *like* Christmas, but I...”

“Who say this?” Ilya questioned with a crease to his brow as he pulled the two halves of his dress shirt from the bottom to make it even, before going to work buttoning it up.

“Well, I... I know you wear a crucifix, but...” he nodded as the said crucifix was just disappearing from view under his shirt.

“Was my mother's. She was good Christian woman. She believe in God,” he shrugged like it didn't mean the world to Ilya to have this tiny relic to remember his beloved mama.

“Oh, well... I... I um... sorry, well... I got you something, you know. For Christmas. It's not much, I just thought... well, I love Christmas and...”

“Hollander. Stop with the... the lot of talk.”

“Rambling?” Shane half scoffed, half laughed, nodding.

“If mean talk, talk, talk *and* talk...,” he stopped to take a dramatic breath, “...then yes. Stop with the rambo-ling.”

“Rambl– you know what...” Shane left Rozanov standing in the bedroom and headed out to the kitchen.

“Hollander! You got me gift! Give me gift! Come back here! Getting old waiting for you to finish with all the talking!” Ilya called after him as he pulled his still knotted tie over his head and grabbed his shoes and socks from the floor to follow him out.

Shane huffed a little again and rolled his eyes. He was starting to wonder if it was worth the trouble of being nice and getting him something if he had to listen to Rozanov’s jibes.

Ilya stopped in front of him, a shy smile creeping across his face as he lifted a finger to under Shane’s chin to tilt his face so he could look him in the eye. “You got me gift. You very thoughtful Canadian, polite man.”

“Um... well... here,” Shane sighed as he dumped his backpack on the table in front of them, almost toppling the little decorated, table-top Christmas tree he had placed there. He rifled through it, muttering for a moment. “Here... Merry Christmas,” he said, holding out the small, wrapped gift.

Ilya took it, held it in one hand, just staring at it, almost reverently, for more moments than either should have felt comfortable with.

“It won’t... kapisssshhhh,” Rozanov questioned, breaking the spell, making a breathy hissing sound with his mouth as his other hand went from clenched fist into splayed wiggling fingers.

Shane laughed loudly. “No... it won’t *explode*!”

“It is very... You wrap yourself?” Rozanov questioned with a smirk as he looked up from the gift, catching Shane’s nervous expression.

“I um... yes? Sorry, not a perfect job wrapping, I guess. I probably used too much tape and...”

“Shut up, Hollander. Is wrapped good. You good at something then, no.”

“You know... I need to get going soon, and you really should go first, so... have a great Christmas, Rozanov.”

“You do not want me to open?” Ilya asked, waving the gift in the air. “You sure not go kappishh?” he added with a questioning smirk.

Shane laughed again. “I’m sure. Save it for Christmas. Stick it under your Christmas tree until then. I’ll... we catch up, yeah? In a few weeks, when Montreal is in Boston?”

Ilya cocked his head to the side as if he was considering his answer.

“January 16 – yes, Hollander. I see you then. Lily, will call you, yes? Make time... organise,” he replied as he picked up his coat that was draped over the chair in front of him. Shane watched him pull a black toque from a pocket before he poked the gift in its place.

Shane offered a soft smile back before turning to the kitchen. He hated this part, watching Rozanov leave.

“See you next month,” Rozanov called, obviously now near the door about to leave. “Ahh... Merry Christmas.”

Shane smiled and called back, “Merry Christmas,” but he wasn’t sure if Ilya even heard it as the door closed.

~

On the ride back to his hotel, Ilya pulled the gift from his pocket and smiled. He felt a bit guilty that he did not have something for Hollander. Maybe he would send him something... but maybe he would not. He was tempted to open the little package, but no... Hollander had urged him to wait. Ilya scoffed to himself, *put it under his tree!*

Ha! He didn’t even *have* a tree. It was only a few days before Christmas, well... December 25th... where would he even *get* a tree...

Ilya put the gift back in his pocket and pulled out his phone.

Did Amazon sell Christmas trees...

**

It was Christmas Eve in the Hollander-Rozanov home.

The children had put out treats for Santa and his reindeer under the Christmas tree with its multi-coloured, new lights before climbing into their Papa’s lap to hear the same Christmas story he had read to them since their birth. It was something he knew he would miss when they were too big to both fit on the chair with him, or grew out of wanting to sit like this with either of them. So he would soak up every second of it that he could.

“Papa, you never told us what you did at Christmas when you were a little boy in Russia,” Ania questioned just as Ilya had peeled the cover open and held the book on the inside title page.

“Yeah,” Shane added from where he was sitting on the floor in front of the oversized chair. He had an arm around Ilya’s legs, and his forehead was resting against his knee. He gave one of Ilya’s calves a squeeze of encouragement.

Ilya sighed. He should have known their bright little girl would remember her question from weeks ago.

He didn't really want to tell them much about life in Russia. The few stories he had told their children – and to an extent even Shane – had been sanitised to within an inch of being pure fantasy.

But, a little truth...

"We did not have Christmas when I was a boy in Russia," he offered with a shrug, but braced himself, knowing that it wouldn't be enough of the story to stop further questions.

It wasn't.

"What do you meannn... Christmas is everywhere, Papa!" Ania giggled, as if he were playing yet another prank. Being a child of Shane's meant the thought of Christmas not existing was... *inconceivable*.

Shane leant forward and twisted to look up at his husband. Ilya saw the question in his eyes, but also the reassurance that whatever the story was, he was in a safe place to tell it.

Ilya closed the book and rested it on the arm of the chair.

"Well, Russia was... *is* a different country from here in Canada. They have different rules. Back when *I* was a little boy, they have even *more* rules. The year I was born... was first year in very, *very* long time since people were allowed to celebrate Christmas," he explained, looking at Shane rather than either of his children.

"I never knew that," Shane said softly, then scoffed and laughed. "Geez... no wonder you always acted like you were the second coming if that was the same year we were born!"

Ilya rolled his eyes. After living for so many years outside his birth country, he understood most turns of phrase these days. "Is not my fault I am god-like."

"But..." Shane stopped and frowned. It was a complete reversal that *he* couldn't quite find the words he wanted to express, not in front of the children at least. He waved his hand around in the air without words coming out of his mouth.

"I give you brief history lesson, yes? Then we read story and *you*, my little Christmas mice, go to bed so jolly man in suit can break into house during night and leave you presents," Ilya said, looking to Ania and Michael in turn as they offered a quick nod. It was rare that Ilya spoke about Russia, and they were ready to soak up any morsel of information he was willing to share. To the children, it was a faraway magical land and why their Papa spoke another language compared to their family or friends who spoke both English and Québécois.

"Before I was born... even before my *Mama* was born and perhaps *her* mama – my Babushka – people were not allowed to celebrate Christmas in Russia. It was not allowed... the... I do not know... ah! Yes, government... the people in charge in Russia. They do not like people celebrating anything religious. So, no Easter, no Christmas... My grandparents... my Mama's parents and my Mama... it was not something they were allowed to do, so when I was born... well, being allowed to do that... to celebrate her Christian holidays... well, it still was so very new. My Father, he was not... he did not believe the same things like my

Mama... so sometimes she and I would just go to church at Christmas, and sometimes I would just happen to need new jacket or gloves or hockey stick at that time of year, so she would buy me things and give to me when we get home from Church. And then after my Mama went to be with her God, then... well, I did not have Christmas again until your Daddy... he brought Christmas back to me when I moved from Russia. And I love Christmas – it is good,” he grinned at both of them, avoiding Shane’s watery gaze. “Now – story time! You must be *very* asleep, or Santa will not be able to bring you presents!”

“I am sorry Santa didn’t bring you presents,” Ania offered dolefully, as she snuggled into the almost non-existent space between the arm of the chair and his body, tucking herself into his side and resting her head on the front of his shoulder.

“Santa brought me *best* present first time I came to this country in Saskatchewan,” Ilya said softly with a wistful smile, now seeking out his husband’s eyes that had actually spilled tears. “Made up for missing when I was boy.”

“Story,” Michael demanded with an impatient bounce on Ilya’s leg. Reading the room was not a skill he would learn any time soon. And if he grew to be his father's child, it probably never would.

“Oomph! Yes. Ready?” Ilya offered with a questioning cheer.

“Yes!”

“Yes, Papa!”

“Okay,” Ilya grinned as he picked the book up again and began reading.

*

Ilya was sitting up, leaning against a mountain of pillows, reading. The book was in Russian, something Shane had actually read as a required text when he was in high school. But it was a classic and not something Ilya’s father would have ever let him read at the same age. If he had been interested in anything other than hockey back.

The last thing Ilya would have been allowed to read would have been a story about the fight for innocence and equality of a minority.

“You never told me,” Shane said as he joined his husband in bed.

“Hmm?” Ilya mumbled, knowing he needed to put a bookmark in now, because he was *not* going to get any more reading done.

Shane slid under the covers and into his husband’s side, pulling the glasses from his face and taking the book from his hands. The glasses were a new addition, but tonight he resisted the return teasing. He stretched across Ilya’s body to place them both on the nightstand on his side, then kissed his way back across his bare chest until he was sitting up, back pressed against his pillows.

“Christmas. I always thought you were... well, a bit of an asshole those first few years or maybe homesick for your family. I mean, I know better *now* than you weren’t homesick. And then I just... I dunno... thought you were just joining in because you knew I was a little bit obsessed with Christmas.”

“My Mama... she was believer as were her family... but was Russia. They had spent their whole lives... how you say... squashed down?”

“Repressed?”

“Yes, repressed. Good word – well, bad word – but right word, I think now. Believing in something other than the word of the Leaders and their underlings... it was not safe. It did not help guarantee a long life to go against them. And my father and *his* father before... then later, my useless brother... they were part of wanting to squash it all down. People still do as they were told, even with the new government changing things a little.”

Ilya pulled Shane in against his side, pushing his head towards him so he could place a soft kiss on his temple before wrapping an arm around his shoulders to pull him closer.

“But you and your family gave me back Christmas... and the children... oh my god, now with Ania and Michy and seeing Christmas through their little eyes... I *love* Christmas... is *best* time of year. Better than birthday, better than Stanley Cup... just *better*. Makes my whole heart almost full to top.”

Shane chuckled to himself, never would he have dreamed of a time when something was better than winning the Cup – for either of them. But Ilya was right. Some things were better than hockey and better than winning.

“You know, I think I know something that would be better than just Christmas,” Ilya offered after a few moments of silence.

Shane chuckled out loud this time.

“One minute you’re saying that *nothing* beats Christmas and now...”

“Two Christmases!” Ilya declared, almost maniacally.

“What?” Shane laughed along.

“Two Christmases! We have your December 25th, and then we can also have my Mama’s January 7th. Would be prefect!” he continued, his grin growing wider. “Look up when your 67’s are playing!”

“They play the 8th... I know we play the 8th,” Shane replied in wonder, shaking his head.

“You know, I’d like to... we could do maybe traditional Russian food if you wanted. The kids would probably really like that. They get a kick out of it when we have something you cook from back home. They’re old enough now to learn some of the traditions that mean something to you. I know you don’t like to remember much from back in Russia... but maybe this? Maybe these good memories?”

Ilya pushed Shane back against the pillows, “Love you,” he said gently as he leaned down and kissed him.

“Love you too,” Shane smiled. “Just one rule.”

“Urgh! My husband and his rules,” Ilya grumbled as he dropped his forehead to Shane’s. “What... what is your rules, my grouchy, Canadian husband?”

“No extra presents. We put a couple that are under the tree aside for the second Christmas. I was spoiled as a child with too many presents. I don’t want to do that to ours,” he replied.

“Ahh... party pooper!” Ilya snorted. “We have money... millions... we can afford to give them whatever they want!”

“Ilya.”

“Yes, yes... alright. Means you do not get extra present either,” Ilya added with a sly grin.

“I don’t need extra presents. I don’t actually need *any* presents,” Shane shrugged.

“I should take your presents back to store? No... I just keep for myself then,” he smirked.

“You can do that,” Shane grinned. “I’ve got my own present.”

“Ah... you can’t do that,” Ilya complained, dropping his body down into Shane’s side. “We talk about this time and time again. No buying things before Christmas. You will end up with two of the same thing – again! What did you get, hmm?”

Shane sighed as he looked into Ilya’s smiling eyes.

“Santa didn’t just bring *you* the best present back in Saskatchewan,” Shane grinned.

“Urgh! We is saps! Old, married saps,” Ilya groaned as he rolled onto his back, pulling Shane with him to land across his chest.

“You love it,” Shane laughed.

“Yes, I love it. I love you. Now... can think of ways you can show me how much.”

End Notes

Feedback & kudos - warms a writer's soul. 😊

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!