

High stakes

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High stakes

by [empirestateofus](#)

Summary

From @midpollo_'s twitter prompt : Shane puts himself up for a date at the Irina Foundation gala to prove Ilya wrong. Rose bids as a joke, a mysterious man raises the stakes, and jealous Ilya jumps in to win. ♥

Notes

Read this prompt on Twitter, decided to write about it.

https://x.com/midpollo_/status/1988147076211916805?s=20

I know several other people wanted to write about it and they'll probably do a better job, but please do tell me what you think!

I'll put the translation of Russian sentences used at the end :) (I used google translate, hope it didn't say shite)

Any mistake is my own as English is not my first language

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

Every year, the Irina Foundation hosted a gala to raise money for various organizations that raised awareness and provided support for people struggling with depression or other mental illnesses.

Tonight, the ballroom was crowded with players, coaches, donors and far too much champagne.

Shane's polite, PR smile had started to make his cheeks ache, but he kept shaking hands, alongside Ilya, thanking every guest for being here.

It was for a good cause, an important one, so neither of them minded the extra mingling. Even if small talk wasn't exactly their thing.

Eventually, both men drifted toward the bar, wearing perfectly tailored suits, and their very well-practiced smiles. With their drinks in hand—Ilya with vodka & coke, Shane with sparkling water with a slice of lime—they walked to a more secluded space, away from the noise and the crowd.

They found themselves in an empty hallway, glad to have a few minutes for themselves, where they could drop the polite smiles and finally, truly look at each other.

"Hi," Ilya whispered, a hand slowly caressing the side of Shane's waist before retreating, mindful of their surroundings.

"Hi," Shane said in a similar tone, a shy smile playing on his lips as his eyes fixed on his boyfriend's.

Ilya raised a hand to fix Shane's tie. It didn't need fixing, but the man desperately needed to *touch* him. Shane's eyes never left Ilya's face throughout the process. His gaze was so soft Ilya felt himself blushing under the intense stare.

He reluctantly dropped his hand away and finally met Shane's eyes again. They just looked at each other lovingly, smiles gracing their features. They needed that moment for themselves. They really weren't good with big crowds. But, again, it was for a good cause, so they'd do whatever was needed.

When a door opened in the back, they both startled and took a step back.

Ilya motioned for Shane to walk back to the main room and Shane let out a sigh and opened the door behind him.

In passing, he whispered, "Be good."

Ilya leaned in close, his voice barely audible over the music and chatter.

"I can't wait to get you out of that suit tonight."

A shiver ran through Shane, goosebumps rising in the wake of Ilya's slurred whisper.

A low laugh escaped Ilya, warm against Shane's ear.

"You like that, kotik?"

Shane swallowed hard, fighting the urge to step back...or closer.

"Are you drunk?" He asked instead, trying to put some distance between them.

"Maybe," Ilya said, raising his glass with a lazy tilt of his wrist. "But not that drunk."

"Stop standing so close to me; people are gonna talk."

Before Ilya could answer, the lights dimmed, and the host's voice boomed through the room.

"Ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for joining us tonight for the Irina Foundation's annual charity auction!"

Applause rippled across the ballroom. Shane stepped away, grateful for the distraction, while Ilya just smiled smugly.

They were both called on stage to give their traditional speech, telling people about the importance of this foundation, the story behind the name, and the amazing memories about his mom it brought Ilya back. Everyone in the room seemed to be hanging on Shane's every word as he spoke. And everyone seemed to just melt at Ilya's accent whenever he spoke.

Whenever one of them spoke, the other's gaze lingered a moment too long. They did everything they could to not look so smitten with each other in front of their crowd, but sometimes, the boys just couldn't help themselves. They let their guards down and showed their true feelings, plain on their faces and free for everyone's interpretation.

Afterwards, the auction started simple: signed sticks, jerseys, a private skate with a Centaurs player. Shane and Ilya stood side by side near the stage, hands shoved in their pockets, playing their parts.

Then the auctioneer moved on to Shane's prizes.

"Our NHL star Shane Hollander has offered some really cool memorabilia. Bidders, get ready!"

Among them, there were a couple of signed pucks, a Voyageurs jersey, and a two-day visit to their summer camp in July. It wasn't the craziest stuff, but it raised money and that's what mattered.

Beside him, Ilya groaned loud enough for the mic to catch it.

"Boring!"

Surprised, the auctioneer turned toward the men and gaped at Ilya.

Laughter broke out across the room. Shane turned slowly, one eyebrow raised.

“Something to add, Rozanov?”

Ilya grinned, utterly unrepentant. “Maybe give them something exciting, da? People want more. Passion. Not... laundry.”

Shane’s smile tightened, that polite PR curve turning sharp. “You think you can do better?”

“Always.”

The crowd was eating it up. Even the auctioneer looked amused.

“Fine,” Shane said. He stepped onto the stage, next to Jacob, the auctioneer, and leaned toward the mic.

“How about this: since my items are so dull, let’s add something more personal.”

He glanced at Ilya, eyes gleaming.

“One date with me. Dinner, anywhere the winner chooses.”

A ripple went through the room. You could hear the surprised, delighted gasps, laughter and muffled chatter.

Ilya just stood at the side of the stage, stony faced, but Shane knew better. That man was shocked to his core.

The auctioneer didn’t miss a beat. “You heard the man! We’ll start the bidding at one thousand dollars for a date with Shane Hollander!”

Shane took a few steps back, not enough to walk out and join Ilya again, but close enough that he could hear him if Ilya spoke.

Hands shot up. Someone in the front called, “Five thousand!”

Shane tried to keep his composure, but his ears burned.

Then—

“Ten!”

Rose Landry waved her paddle with a mischievous grin. She was sitting front row, a burgundy dress hugging her figure and her blonde hair falling across her shoulders.

“Just doing my part for charity!” she called, winking at Shane.

The crowd laughed again, and Shane laughed with them, trying not to look mortified. The media would probably eat this up.

“Twenty.”

A male voice said. But Shane didn’t recognize the voice. His eyes followed the raised paddle, and he didn’t recognize the man either. But the brunet looked sharp, interested and overly

confident.

From his spot, Ilya was boiling inside.

“If he wins, I’ll kill him.” Ilya said in a low voice, but Shane’s body and soul was so attuned to him that he had heard him loud and clear. He ducked his head to hide his flushed cheeks as bidders continued to fight.

“Twenty-five,” someone else continued.

“Thirty.”

“Forty.”

Ilya scoffed and uttered a few russian words that Shane couldn’t understand but was sure were not kind ones.

The number kept climbing, and the laughter turned to murmurs. Shane’s pulse picked up. He was already starting to regret his choice. Rose had since given up. She just sat back and admired the way several people— no matter their gender—seemed keen on having dinner with Shane Hollander.

Both Jacob and Shane thought that was it: forty thousand dollars spent by a man Shane didn’t know. But then again, forty thousand dollars for a charity that was so dear to Shane and Ilya.

But then—

“One hundred thousand.”

The room went silent.

All heads turned toward Ilya, who stood by the stairs leading up the stage, his face expressionless.

Shane stared. “Ilya—”

“It’s for charity,” Ilya said evenly. “You said dinner anywhere. I will choose.” Ilya wasn’t looking at Shane; he was staring down the man who’d dared bid big money for a date with his boy. The man just raised an eyebrow and clapped sarcastically.

The auctioneer gaped, then slammed the gavel down. “Sold! To Ilya Rozanov!”

Applause erupted, mixed with laughter and disbelief. Ilya just smiled, slow and smug, while Shane stood frozen on the stage, heart hammering. And as composed as Ilya tried to appear, Shane could see the small tremors of Ilya’s hands as he lowered the paddle onto the table next to him.

As he stepped down, he looked at Ilya, still in shock, before joining him.

“Guess you’re mine for the night,” he murmured, eyes glinting.

Shane regained his spot next to Ilya as the bidding for his other stuff went on.

“You didn’t have to prove anything.” Shane said gently.

“Was the closest I could get to let everyone know you’re mine without outing us.” Ilya shrugged like it was no big deal, but saying those words aloud hurt more than he’d thought.

Meanwhile, Shane’s heart just hammered against his chest. He carefully stepped closer to Ilya, brushing his arm against him. The only physical contact they could allow themselves to have in public.

“Don’t worry, I’ll be the perfect gentleman.” Ilya promised solemnly, “Until I get you out of that suit. Then, I’ll fucking ravish you.”

The last words were whispered, but they felt so fucking loud in a room full of people.

They walked back to their table when the next bids were announced. They would watch from there.

Shane kept his gaze down as they squeezed past tables, but just as he was about to sit down, he heard something that made his heart stop for a full minute.

“He only bids like that when he cares,” a retired coach whispered to another.

He practically flopped into his chair, surprised and a bit scared.

But scared about what?

Scared that they were about to get caught? Scared about the overwhelming feelings that had taken over him? Scared that he was falling a bit too hard for a man that was originally his rival?

He didn’t really know. Probably a mix of it all.

Ilya sat down beside him, his chair closer to his than probably necessary. His hand rested on the back of Shane’s chair while he mingled with the other people sitting at their table. Their knees were touching; he could feel Ilya’s fingers barely grazing his back, and the loud voices were triggering. The sensory overload hit him hard, sending his pulse skittering out of control.

He felt the need to get out of here but knew it would look suspicious, and he didn’t wanna drag the attention away from the auction.

He jumped when he felt Ilya sliding a hand over Shane’s thigh and squeezing it comfortingly. Shane turned his head and locked gazes with Ilya, seeing the question in his eyes. *Are you okay?*

Shane nodded imperceptibly and stroked Ilya's hand with his thumb. The grounding touch was almost enough to stop him from growing restless, but he still escaped into the bathroom as soon as the auction ended and the first few guests started leaving.

He didn't expect Ilya to follow him mere minutes later, so he nearly jumped out of his skin when he felt someone crowding him against the sink he was leaning on, hands gripping the edge of the sink.

Ilya's lips were at his throat, not kissing, just resting there, but it felt even more like torture. His arms wrapped around Shane's middle, squeezing comfortably.

"Are you okay?" Ilya asked for the second time tonight. Clearly, he wasn't satisfied with Shane's earlier answer.

Shane squeezed Ilya's arms tighter, resting his head against his chest and letting out a long breath.

"I am now," he whispered, closing his eyes. "Sorry, it just got a bit overwhelming." He didn't really want to tell him about what he'd overheard here, in a public bathroom. Actually, anyone could walk in any minute, but he didn't really care at that instant; he just needed Ilya's grounding presence.

Ilya squeezed him tighter against his chest, his nose buried against Shane's neck. He inhaled deeply, getting drunk on his scent and cologne.

"Let's go home, da?" He whispered. Whenever Ilya referred to his house as *home*, his heart skipped a beat or two.

Shane nodded but didn't move. They were in their own world. Ilya indulged him for a few more minutes, happy to just bask in this intimate and maybe pivotal moment.

The elevator doors closed behind them, shutting out the last of the gala's chatter. Shane slid into the backseat of the car that would drive them home, letting out a long breath he hadn't realized he'd been holding. Ilya followed, sitting close enough that their thighs brushed.

The divider to the driver's seat was up, encompassing them in privacy and, well, tension-filled silence. Sexual tension. Shane could feel every inch of Ilya's presence. Heat pooled low in his stomach.

Ilya leaned in, resting an arm along the back of the seat, his eyes dark.

"So," he murmured, voice low enough for only Shane to hear, "you cost me a lot tonight, Sakharok."

Shane swallowed hard, “I didn’t think—”

“You didn’t think anyone would want you that badly?” Ilya interrupted, a faint smirk tugging at his lips. “Don’t pretend you didn’t see the way they were looking at you.”

Shane turned his head towards Ilya, their lips barely a few inches apart now. “You bid a hundred thousand dollars.”

“You’re worth millions to me.” The words took Shane by surprise, and Ilya, too, blinked in shock at what he’d just said. This was probably the closest he got to revealing his feelings.

“So do you,” Shane admitted shyly. Their hands tangled together in a familiar way.

“Esli by ty znala, chto ty so mnoy delayesh’...” he growled. Shane just smiled at him, not having understood anything he’d said. He was just stuck on his intense gaze as he pronounced those words. Personal space was a foreign word to them.

“We’re supposed to keep this a secret” Shane said lowly. Thank Goodness for dividers, because otherwise the driver would have found their secret.

“Then, be quiet,” he said in a firm voice before catching Shane’s lips in a deep, long kiss.

A shiver ran up Shane’s spine as Ilya’s hand brushed along his thigh, slow and deliberate. “Ilya...”

“I know,” Ilya whispered, pressing just a little closer. “I know we can’t,” His words dropped, his lips hovering dangerously near Shane’s ear. “Not here. Not now. But I swear, Hollander...”

Shane’s chest tightened. He could feel Ilya’s breath, smell the faint scent of cologne, hear the faint edge of desire in his voice. “I know,” he repeated, voice barely audible.

“Behave, or I might have to make you regret it later when we’re alone,” Shane said, biting his lower lip.

Ilya stared at Shane for the longest time, making the man duck his head in embarrassment. Ilya tilted his head back up with two fingers, eyes staring deeply into his, still.

“Ty znachish’ dlya menya bol’she vseh.” Ilya whispered against his temple, eyes closed.

He felt pain and a love so deep that he didn’t know what to do with it. They weren’t there just yet. They hadn’t talked about their feelings beyond their appreciation for each other’s body, and each other in general. Nothing below the surface. It was too scary, too dangerous.

Ilya was ready to risk it all, he just didn’t know if Shane was, too.

For now, he was happy to just enjoy moments like this one—unguarded, void of PR smiles and unrelenting shooting cameras.

Just the two of them in their own bubble.

End Notes

Comments & kudos are love ♥

If a second part with the steamy scene when they get home, or even THE date scene, is something you'd enjoy, do tell me! I hesitated writing it but...yeah

TRANSLATION

Kotik: kitten

Esli by ty znala, chto ty so mnoy delayesh': if you only knew what you're doing to me

Ty znachish' dlya menya bol'she vsekh: you mean more to me than anyone.

Sakharok: Sugar/(sweetie)

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