

Come On, Let's Get You Your Chicken Parmesan

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Come On, Let's Get You Your Chicken Parmesan

by [shieldedstar](#)

Summary

After their meeting with the commissioner, Shane and Ilya finally get their first proper date. It might not be what they wanted their first date to be like, but fuck it. They were out and they might as well make the best of it.

Notes

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

It felt weird being out with Ilya in the middle of the day, let alone walking the streets of downtown Montreal hand in hand. Shane, admittedly, never spent much time downtown. He didn't love the city as much as the city loved him – his free time spent either at home in Brossard, on the highway to Ottawa, or the cottage. Even before he and Ilya decided to be together, Shane never cared much for exploring the city. Some great captain he was.

With their fingers tangled together and heads bowed to the wind, Shane led them through the city. A blanket of clouds hung over the city trying to suffocate their carefree mood. Despite the past three days and the unknowns yet to come, they both felt light. There was nothing left to worry about and if there was, no matter what, they would do it together.

"Watch out." Ilya steered Shane around a slush pile as they stepped off the sidewalk to cross the street.

"Thanks," Shane smiled up at him. Once back on the sidewalk, he leaned over and pecked Ilya's cheek. Ilya's eye crinkled as he smiled back at Shane, his rosy cheeks deepening where Shane's lips had made contact.

They continued their walk down the grey street, a stark contrast to what Montreal was normally like. Grey clouds loomed above their heads, grey buildings towered over them, grey sidewalk stretched below their feet. All Shane saw though was the rosy red of Ilya's cheeks, a beautiful splash of colour in their otherwise bleak grey world. For the briefest moment, the imminent backlash that was most likely about to hit them vanished from Shane's mind. A wave of calm washed over Shane, a rare reprieve from his anxious brain, before the fear inevitably started to slowly trickle back in.

They continued to walk in silence. Shane couldn't help himself from nervously glancing at the people passing them. The times he had been out downtown, either with Hayden, J.J., or other teammates, fans would stop them in the streets. With his free hand, Shane tugged his toque further down, almost covering his eyes. Old habits wouldn't die so easily.

"Cold? Come on Hollander, it's practically April." Ilya teases. He hadn't bothered with a hat today proclaiming it too warm that morning even though there had been snowflakes falling from the sky.

"No, I just really don't want to be recognized today. You know how it is, once one person starts it never ends."

"I remember," Ilya nods. Shane knew there weren't as many rabid fans in Ottawa, not like in Boston, but Ilya was still stopped on occasion.

"And I don't think they'd be congratulating me on our winning streak," Shane huffed. Ilya took his thumb and rubbed it up and down Shane's hand.

"Maybe some, not all I think. I hope."

“Yeah, sure.” Shane rolled his eyes. “I don’t think everyone will react like my teammates. That was tame compared to some of the shit the fans say and even their reactions were brutal yesterday. “Oh!” Shane’s eyes locked onto an approaching pedestrian. She looked to be college aged – unsurprising given there were a handful of colleges and universities downtown. Behind her glasses, her eyes went wide with recognition.

Shane froze for half a second before being tugged forward by Ilya. His heart raced, bracing himself for the onslaught of insults. Ilya gripped his hand tighter in anticipation and picked up the pace. If they passed her quickly, everything would be okay. A second later, a warm smile broke across her face and she passed them. Air rushed out of Shane’s lungs from the breath he didn’t realize he was holding.

Ilya turned to look at Shane, a soft smile on his face. “I was right, not all.”

God, Shane wanted to kiss him right there while they waited for the lights to change. He supposed he could now. It wouldn’t be out of the ordinary for two men to kiss downtown, but Shane still wasn’t sure how public he wanted his affection to be. He settled for smiling back at his boyfriend.

Realizing they were outside the restaurant, Shane stopped abruptly. Ilya continued walking until he was pulled back by Shane’s stationary arm. Closing in on Shane, Ilya wrapped his free arm around him and looked down.

“This is it?”

“Yeah,” Shane breathed. They’d never been this close together out in public. He could feel Ilya warm breath as he hovered over him.

“Is perfect for our first date.” Ilya’s words hit Shane like a freight train. Like he’d just been slammed into the boards and couldn’t get up. Was this really their first date?

Shane started to choke up. All these years and this was their first real date, and it’s only happened by accident. If everything had gone to plan, they’d be in different cities right now still hiding from the world.

“What would you call our double date with Ryan and Fabian last summer then?”

“Is not the same,” Ilya proclaimed. “Yes we were out together, but not like we are now. We couldn’t show that we were in love. And I couldn’t do this.” Ilya leaned down for a kiss. Shane closed his eyes as his lips met Ilya’s.

He was right, even Shane himself didn’t count that night as a date. Just dinner with friends plagued with awkward questions that they weren’t ready to answer then, not comfortable being seen with each other out in the open. Shane stressed about his food and created an invisible barrier above the table separating them not wanting to even bump elbows.

Shane broke apart first, remembering they were standing right outside the door blocking others from entering and exiting. Throughout all of this, their hands were still clasped

together. Shane wasn't sure if Ilya would ever let go – not that he wanted him to anyways. Shane yanked open the metal framed door and pulled Ilya in.

“Come on,” Shane cleared his voice. “Let's get you your chicken parmesan.”

The hum of the espresso machine was the first thing they heard upon entering. With less than a dozen people inside, the place was quiet. The mid-afternoon only boasted a few late lunch meetings and a handful of people eating alone. No heads turned as the door shut behind them.

“Two please,” Shane told the waitress as she greeted them.

“Great. Sit wherever you'd like.” She smiled and picked up two menus for them.

Shane turned to Ilya, letting him decide. Ilya's eyes scanned the restaurant weighing all the options. They might be out but they weren't ready to be sitting ducks in the middle of a restaurant. Ilya led Shane over to the half booths on the side wall. He slid into the solid wood chair leaving the booth for Shane so he could look out at the restaurant.

“Hi, I'm Marie and I'll be serving you this afternoon. Can I get you started with anything to drink?” The waitress asked as she handed over their menus.

“Two waters, please. Oh, and a coke. Please,” Shane ordered for them.

“I'll be right back.” She vanished with a smile.

“Would it shock you if I said I used to come here all the time?” Shane asked nonchalantly as they opened their menus.

“Ha! You are funny, Hollander. I forget sometimes.”

“No, I'm serious. When I lived on the island – actually,” Shane pointed out the window at the building facing the restaurant. “When I lived there, Hayden and I would come maybe once a month. Sometimes lunch, sometimes just for coffee.”

“I'm still sad I never saw you there. Would have been nice fucking you against the skyline.”

“Ilya!” Shane said through gritted teeth. “There may not be that many people in here, but you can't just say that out loud!”

“What? The world knows we fuck now. I am just saying would have been nice.” Shane huffed and turned back to the menu. He squinted his eyes and held the menu at arms length, again cursing himself for forgetting his glasses.

Not much had changed since he moved to the South Shore. Well, a whole lot *had* changed, but it was nice to know that some things were staples in his life. The Family salad, for example, with all its protein and vegetables (Shane's order) was still there. Hockey was better than it ever had been. And Ilya – in a different way from before, but he was still there in Shane's life, and always would be.

“Why are you staring at the menu? I thought you knew what you’re getting.” Shane asked his boyfriend as he folded up his own menu.

“Maybe there is something better. Worth looking through.”

“They have the best chicken parmesan in the city! I know, I researched it. I even made Hayden try several.” Shane grumbled the last sentence under his breath.

“Ha! Why would I trust Hayden? He is terrible. Terrible puck mover, terrible shooter, he barely passes you the puck. It’s a wonder you have as many points as you do.”

“Without him we wouldn’t be here right now.”

Ilya reached across the table and grabbed Shane’s balled up fist. Instinctively, Shane unclasped his hand and let Ilya cradle it.

“I know. I still don’t love how he did it, but I’m happy to be here with you. It feels... normal.”

“Normal,” Shane jeered. “That’s definitely the word I would use to describe everything right now.”

“No, moya lyubov.” Ilya started to trace circles on Shane’s palm with his thumb. “Us. Out at a restaurant. On a date. This is what feels normal. I’ve wanted it for so long. Waited for so long.”

Staring into the face of the man he loved, the rest of Shane’s frustrations melted away. It was nice, better than nice, to finally be out with Ilya.

“It does. It feels right.” Shane’s finger started tracing the spot where Ilya’s wedding ring would soon lay. They held onto each other’s gaze until they were interrupted.

“Here are your drinks. Are we ready to order?” Marie asked, her pen posed at the ready.

After placing their orders, Ilya turned to the side, staring at something on the brick wall. Shane studied his face, the way his expression shifted as his eyes danced over the decor on the wall. He knew Ilya’s face like the back of his hand. Every dimple, wrinkle, and scar. Sometimes, when he was supposed to be out running, he’d lay in bed for an extra few minutes staring at his sleeping boyfriend. Cataloguing the details of his face. Eventually, Ilya turned back to Shane with a question.

“The logo is weird. Weird three legged Starbucks looking woman.”

“Really Rozanov, that’s what you’ve been staring at? Not the artworks or old photos.” Shane paused, waiting to see if Ilya had anything else to add before he explained. “It’s the flag of Sicily. The family immigrated from Sicily to Montreal in the fifties.”

“Huh. Interesting. Still weird looking. Could have a better design.”

Shane rolled his eyes. “Says the man with a bear tattoo.”

“Do not be mean. You love him, and he loves you.” Shane couldn’t argue with that.

“I love more than just him. Maybe we’ll go to Sicily, then you can see the flag everywhere.”

Sooner or later, their food arrived. Before Shane could even pick his fork up, Ilya’s phone was in his hand. He’s almost taken aback – when was the last time he saw Ilya take a picture of his food? As he moved to put his phone back in his pocket, Shane stopped him.

“Give it here.” He gestured for the phone. Ilya handed it over and beamed as Shane pointed the camera back at him. Not sure what to do with his hands, Ilya laid one out on the table – secretly hoping that Shane would grab it – and when he did, well, Shane wasn’t sure how it was possible for Ilya’s smile to get bigger. The photos he’d taken showed Ilya, his chicken parmesan, and their entwined hands.

Ilya glanced at the photos before pocketing the phone. “I will post them later. No one needs to know where we are now.”

“Good idea since we haven’t said anything publicly yet either. We should figure that out first.” Shane dove into his salad.

When Ilya didn’t reply, Shane looked up. Ilya was making a face only a few people – okay maybe a few dozen – people have ever seen.

“I take it you like it?”

“Is so good. Better than I could have imagined. Here,” Ilya cut off a piece and held out his fork.

Shane already broke his performance diet, but that had just been a moment of weakness. He stared at the fork, tempting him. A few weeks ago, Ilya’s gesture would have seemed cruel. Tormenting him, trying to wear him down into cracking. This, though, felt different to Shane. It is what couples did, wasn’t it? Share food. Wanting the other to experience the joys they were experiencing.

In what was only a few seconds but felt like hours to Shane as he willed himself to do it, he leaned forward and wrapped his lips around the chicken.

“Is good?”

“It’s incredible.”

Unbeknownst to Shane, a shaving of cheese clung to his lips. Ilya reached across the table and wiped it away with this thumb, his hand lingering, cradling Shane’s face for a moment.

“I will pay them to drive this to Ottawa for our wedding.”

“We’re getting married in Ottawa?”

“Where else? Family is already there. Friends not far away.” Shane beamed. He loved this man so much.

“That makes sense. What else have you been thinking about for the wedding?”

Stepping out onto the street, the grey clouds overhead had lifted leaving a sharp blue crystal clear sky. It felt like the sun had melted away the stress from the past few days. Shane hadn't expected to feel this relaxed out with Ilya. No one had bothered them, and people barely spared a glance when Ilya's bark of laughter filled the restaurant. They were just two ordinary people on a date.

Hand in hand, they trudged through the streets. The temperature hadn't changed; the wind still raced through the streets, they had to dodge slush on their way back to the car. Once there, Ilya crowded Shane around the door to the SUV. He looked down at his boyfriend with a dark glow behind his soft eyes. Their lips met halfway. No one else and nothing else in the world mattered.

“Take me home,” Ilya whispered against Shane's lips.

End Notes

Feel free to come yell at me about Hollanov and how precious Ilya is on on [Tumblr](#)

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