

I've always been in love with you

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by [EchoOfaWind](#)

Summary

Shane receives an unexpected gift at an unexpected place for an unexpected reason.

Notes

Welcome to Flufftober! I am hoping to write something for as many of the prompts as I can. Lengths will vary. I'm making this up as I go. Trying to relearn the joys of writing. Beta'd only by me. Enjoy the ride.

Oh, I tried to make it as plausible timelines wise as I could manage. Some liberties were taken.

Much love to my fellow loons on the Heated Rivalry discord for all the encouragement. ❤️

Day 1: "Anniversaries"

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

June 18, 2011

Shane's phone buzzes on the floor. Wiping sweat from his brow, Shane checks the status of his current run: just over 9km. The phone buzzes again, indicating a call. Wavering, Shane looks back at this display. Today, his training schedule requires a minimum of 10km, and Shane hates interrupting his workouts. Getting out and back into the right headspace is not worth the hassle when he can avoid it. A third buzz makes the decision for him. He pauses the treadmill, mentally committing 9.6km to memory while he dismounts and walks over to his phone. Checking the caller ID to see Margaret Bouchard, he answers.

“Hello?”

“Mr. Hollander? This is Margaret Bouchard, the new building manager for Le Mésangeai?”

Shane panics. Why would the building manager for the condo he owns be calling him? He just owns the building; he doesn't know how to take care of anything for it. He hired a property management business to actually run the place. Was there an earthquake in Montreal that he didn't feel from his place that collapsed the building? Does he now own a pile of bricks? “Yes,” Shane answers, his voice a little higher than before.

“I just wanted to let you know that you have a delivery here, sir.”

Shane's heart rate speeds up. He is always careful when inputting his address for deliveries to minimize his connection with that space. He never stays there. Except for... Had he messed up an order?

“I wasn't expecting anything,” Shane hedges.

“Oh really? Then, it's a surprise. How exciting!” the woman on the other end of the phone gushes.

“What is it?” Shane starts his mental tetris of logistics between workouts and errands to figure out when he could go by the building.

“I couldn't spoil the surprise! You have to come by and collect it.”

Shane puts her on speaker, switching over to his calendar app. “I could come by on Tuesday afternoon?”

“No, no. It's time sensitive. You have to come today,” Margaret counters.

“Today?” Shane's fingers jitter. What is it? A surprise that has to be dealt with today. Did he accidentally order a live animal instead of new athletic socks? Is he going to show up to a surprise tarantula?

Shane glances at his abandoned treadmill, calculating how long to finish his run, shower, change, and drive over there.

“I can be there in 2 hours?”

“Great! I'll meet you when you arrive. See you soon!”

~

Fifty-five minutes later, Shane pulls his baseball cap further down over his face as he steps through the doorway into the lobby of Le Mésangeai.

A young man behind the front desk smiles. “Hello! How can I help you?”

“I was told I have...” Shane suddenly realizes he would have to give his real name to get whatever he is here to pick up, and did he really want the front desk person questioning why NHL star Shane Hollander is getting deliveries at this condo? “Can you tell me where Margaret Bouchard’s office is please?”

“Hello!” a short, middle age brunette calls from behind Shane. “I'm Margaret. Come with me.” She smiles broadly before turning on her heels and leading the way down a short hallway.

Shane nods to the man at the front desk and follows his building manager to her office. She stops outside the door, gesturing for him to go inside first. Stepping inside, Shane wonders if she is starting a floral shop. What he assumes is her desk is covered in a small ocean of flowers. She must really like having flowers to brighten up the place, Shane thinks. With her desk otherwise occupied, he peers around the rest of the room, looking for a box. Or maybe a mountain lion? How big of a box would be needed for a mountain lion? That would definitely be “time sensitive”.

Turning back to her, Shane asks, “I’m sorry. Where is the package?”

Margaret gestures to her desk. “It's all of these! Someone must have raised a dozen gardens to put this beauty together. They do smell divine.” She looks over the impressive arrangement. “I was worried that they would wilt if you waited until Tuesday to pick them up. And since your admirer went to all the trouble to celebrate your accomplishment — congratulations on rookie of the year— I wanted you to enjoy them at their best.”

“They said there's a note, if you can find it,” she laughs. “Don’t worry, I didn't read it, ” Shane reaches for the pink card nestled between blooms and unfolds it.

“Today marks something special. I didn't want you to forget.” Shane's brows furrow. That's an odd way to congratulate someone on an award. His eyes scan the card for the sender. Blinking, he reads the name again. Lily.

His breath stutters. Lily. Lily—Ilya sent this? He has to act cool. “Uhhh,” Shane starts.

“I know. Isn't it romantic?” Margaret sighs. “Would you like help carrying it out to your car? I'm surprised they didn't send two people to deliver it.”

Shane stares at her. He's supposed to take this home? She looks at him expectantly for so long that Shane eventually finds enough brain cells to move his frozen limbs towards the desk.

After a few moments of shifting the waves of flowers to get a hold of the vase, Shane lifts his ostentatious gift.

“I’ll get the doors for you!” Margaret exclaims, happily clearing a path.

The next thing Shane knows he is back in his apartment with the bouquet on his kitchen table. He holds the note in his hand. “Today marks something special.” Today, Shane thinks. The NHL awards were days ago. Why would Ilya say today? Grabbing his phone, he checks the date. June 18th. What happened on that date? Nothing that he remembers last year. Or even the year before. Before that was—*oh*.

Scrolling as fast as his fingers will go, Shane checks his calendar. June 18, 2009. Draft day. Shane look at the flowers. Red roses and blue hydrangeas. Yellow sunflowers and black calla lilies. Lilies. From Lily.

Happy Anniversary, he thinks. Three years ago he met Ilya, and subsequently the gravity of his life fundamentally shifted to revolving around his annoying, stupidly handsome Russian pretend rival.

End Notes

Thank you for reading!

If you're feeling up to it, tell me something you liked!

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