Reveal Themselves (One Star at a Time)

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at https://archiveofourown.org/works/77396086.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Heated Rivalry (TV), Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid
Relationships:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov, David Hollander & Yuna Hollander
Characters:	Shane Hollander, Ilya Rozanov, Yuna Hollander, David Hollander
Additional Tags:	POV Yuna Hollander, POV Outsider, Good Parent Yuna Hollander, Secret Relationship, Coming Out, the cottage, Fluff, Domestic Fluff, Parenthood, Character Study, Oneshot
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2026-01-09 Words: 6,637 Chapters: 1/1

Reveal Themselves (One Star at a Time)

by ashes2ashes15

Summary

She had always expected the same life for Shane. Perhaps she couldn't have predicted birthing and raising the number 2 draft pick, and future captain of her hometown team, but she saw him ending up in an easy and loving marriage.

He took after David mostly, being shy and introspective. Despite knowing her son's intricate list of tells and behaviours, Yuna couldn't pretend she would ever truly know what was going through his head. Shane was like that. He always had been. Still, Yuna expected some cute, pretty girl to come around and throw Shane over her shoulder one day - similar to how Yuna had found her shy husband.
...
Or how Yuna tries to understand Shane's love life for years, until she finally does.

Notes

A very self indulgent fic where we get to follow Yuna's perception of Shane through the years.
It's a mix of book and show events because I actually cannot separate them anymore.
Title of fic is the last line of Bobcaygeon, a famous song by a famous Canadian band The Tragically Hip. (Listen to the song it'll destroy you)

See the end of the work for more notes

Yuna Hollander had always been described as intense. She hated that word; intense. It felt like it actually meant ‘too much’, or ‘obsessive’. She thought it was the world's way of understanding a woman who knew what she wanted, who didn’t bend to the typical pressures of her gender in society, and didn’t take no for an answer.

She decided one day that she liked David Hollander, and that was that, he hardly had a choice in the matter. Now, nearly 30 years down the line, he didn’t seem to have any complaints about it. In fact, the pair were happily and healthily married. Over the years many of Yuna’s friends and coworkers had been divorced, or were trying *not* to get divorced by going through copious amounts of couples therapy. In her late 20s, she watched people she cared about get worried about their futures and settle into relationships that didn’t serve them. Now, in her late 40s, she watched those same people eat away at each other and fall out of love.

Not her and David. Yuna was certain about everything she did. And every morning that she woke up to her loving and gentle husband, she was certain she loved him more. Their marriage was the furthest thing from ‘intense’ as possible. They loved each other softly, and easily. The same went for their little family of three.

She had always expected the same life for Shane. Perhaps she couldn’t have predicted birthing and raising the number 2 draft pick, and future captain of her hometown team, but she saw him ending up in an easy loving marriage.

He took after David mostly; being shy, and introspective. Despite knowing her son’s intricate list of tells, and behaviours, Yuna couldn’t pretend she would ever truly know what was going through his head. Shane was like that. He always had been. Still, Yuna expected some cute, pretty girl to come around and throw Shane over her shoulder one day - similar to how Yuna had found her shy husband. Much like David, Shane would accept his fate, fall in love, and then Yuna could spoil her grandchildren and daughter-in-law at Christmases and birthdays.

She loved her small family unit. She wouldn’t ever change the life she and David built, but sometimes Yuna felt guilty at the size of it. Her own parents had moved back to Japan a few years after Shane was born. They were never too fond of the idea of her marrying a white man. While they had eventually accepted her marriage to David long ago, it had permanently altered their relationship. It was cordial between them, almost formal sometimes. The distance between Yuna and her parents sometimes made her heart ache with childlike disappointment. She had made a vow the day Shane was born to never let anything damage the love she had for him.

Her and David were both only children. When they were newly married they talked about a big family, multiple kids, maybe a dog or two. It wasn’t in the cards for them in the end, and that was okay. She just wanted Shane to have someone one day. She didn’t want him to be alone.

…

Shane had had a few girlfriends. One in high school that Yuna had liked. She was quiet and sweet, and everything she did or said made Shane blush with teenage jitters. When they broke up Shane forgot to tell her and David. After the draft, he was immediately swept up into the fast paced life of the NHL. At a rare lunch, Yuna had asked how Jessica was dealing with the distance and the news of their split came out.

“What happened?” she asked reaching to give Shane’s hand a sympathetic squeeze. So much had been changing in his life this year, and to add a first heartbreak into the mix? She wondered if that was why he had been withdrawn lately.

He shrugged, “it just didn’t work out”.

Yuna watched him sip his ginger ale, his posture tense and eyes burrowing into the wooden table between them, and let it go. Highschool relationships weren’t built to last anyways. If Shane didn’t want to talk about it, she wouldn’t force him.

Rose Landry was *not* what Yuna had been expecting. Shane was very secretive about his life. He rarely even let his parents into the deeper parts of it. In all his years of the NHL Shane had never introduced them to another girl.

In her son’s typical nonchalant fashion, she found out about the relationship through a coworker. Debbie had sat beside her on her lunch break, her heavy perfume and hopeful smile already rubbing Yuna the wrong way. Debbie was always looking for an interesting scoop - whether it was office gossip, or an anecdote about her famous son.

“What are your thoughts on this whole Rose Landry thing?” she asked.

“Pardon me?”

Debbie pinched her eyebrows, looking annoyed. “I thought Shane was seeing that actress girl? It’s all in the media - but I guess they can twist that stuff”.

Yuna had to press her lips together. She didn’t want to admit to Debbie of all people that her son hadn’t mentioned a thing about dating anyone. “I just wish they’d leave him alone” she brushed off the question, “he deserves to have his private life be private”.

Debbie nodded in an exaggerated symbolic agreement and said something about how unfair it was. Afterwards, in her office Yuna typed in her son’s name on twitter. Naturally, a barrage of articles and photos appeared.

Shane was leaving a club in Montreal - something he never did, holding the hand of a beautiful and slightly familiar girl very publicly - another thing he never did. In a short video he opened the back door to a dark SUV and helped her climb over the seat. His hands grazed tentatively at her waist, holding the hemline of her ridiculously short sequined dress in place. She sighed at that, at least he was carrying himself like a gentleman - though Shane usually did.

The video continued, and he slid into the seat beside her. He held himself well, but Yuna could tell he had been drinking by the looseness of his body. Shane rarely ever drank. He

didn't see the nutritional need for a glass of wine with dinner, and didn't appreciate the loss of control that came with being drunk. In fact, Yuna had only seen her son drunk once - the night of his first NHL awards after being pressured into drinking with some veterans.

…

After Shane was steered towards the bar by Scott Hunter, Yuna and David decided to retire to their rooms. She hadn't been able to sleep well that night. Ridiculous as it may be to worry over her 18 year old son having a drink, she couldn't shake a nagging anxiety. Shane's room was right next door to theirs, and she hadn't heard him come in. It was after midnight when she couldn't take it anymore.

Yuna crept from her bed and headed towards the lobby. She told herself (and her husband) that it was to get a snack from the small shop beside the desk. The banquet hall was shut up now, and the lobby bar was rowdy - but she couldn't find her son among the many drunk NHL players. Feeling satisfied she headed back upstairs only to find Shane leaned up against the wall beside the elevators.

"Shane?" she pressed a hand against the lapels of his heavily rumpled suit and wrinkled her nose. He smelled strongly like cigarette smoke.

"Mom" he said, head still leaning on the wall. He sounded whiney, the way he did when he was a toddler and begging her not to leave the park.

Yuna took his droopy head in her hands and righted it so they were eye to eye (or as close to it as she could be with her athletically tall son). She was ready to chew him out for whatever caused the cigarette smell, but was stopped short by his puffy and red-rimmed eyes. He had been crying. The skin of his cheeks was cold to the touch, and his hair was windswept. She realized he had probably been at the club on the roof. Though she had no idea who let him in - Shane was 3 years away from being legal in the states.

"I might be a bit drunk," he mumbled.

He managed to wiggle out of her grip and pressed two fingers over his lips, pulling at them. They were slightly swollen. Yuna swallowed. She just hoped there were no videos of whatever had happened.

"Lets get you to bed"

Nobody prepares you for the sudden whiplash of your child becoming an adult. Everyone says stuff like 'time flies by' and it does, but most people's children go to university and come home for breaks and take all their laundry with them, and beg them for grocery money that they instead spend on booze and partying. Most people's children weren't millionaires, and didn't suddenly start investing in properties and buying apartments and flying all over the country on their own.

Shane had always been independent, sure, but when he was living at home he still depended on his parents for things like food and a roof. He was a private person with his feelings, but at

least Yuna had *that*, and could take care of him in some way. Now, or lately especially, it felt like she had to politely knock at his door and beg for a scrap of her own son's life.

She liked to think that she knew what he was doing in Montreal. That he was the exact same as he was a year ago, and living across the hall. A run in the morning, a smoothie for breakfast, a book before bed, with his head on the pillow by 10pm. She wasn't so naive as to think that he wasn't exploring his new freedom. He was rich, and a bit famous, and had an expensive apartment all to himself…she just hoped he was being careful, and wasn't getting into too much trouble. But she trusted her son, even if she found him drunk and swollen lipped in the hallway. At least he had the good since not to bring her back to his neighbouring room.

When she slid back into the stiff hotel bed David stirred, "find him?" he asked knowingly.

"Mhm" Yuna let herself be pulled into her husband's warm embrace.

"And?" he questioned, giving her tightened muscles a poke. She released the tension in them, not having realized how wound up she was.

"Drunk," she said, laughing a bit.

David chuckled too, his deep voice sending vibration through their joined chests, "good" he said, "kid needs to unwind a bit".

"He was…" Yuna wondered if she wanted to tell him the entire story, but it was 1AM now, and David was likely to brush the entire thing off and remind her of what they were doing when they were his age. He always said things like that, as if Shane wasn't completely different from them in that aspect.

"I think he was with someone earlier…like *with them*" she didn't remember any perfume emanating off of him, but the cigarette smoke had been obviously deposited, and it wasn't likely that another NHL player would be smoking.

David hummed, staying quiet for a moment. Yuna loved how carefully he always thought about his words, "well, he is the rookie of the year Yuna".

…

Rose Landry lasted all of two months. Shane had never even formally introduced her to his parents. He sheepishly admitted to the relationship after Yuna had artfully poked around the topic until he broke. She didn't understand why he was so reluctant to tell them about these things. It wasn't like he was a teenager anymore. Shane had been living on his own for nearly 8 years, he was a grown man. Yuna and David had already been married for a year by the time they were his age. But Shane had always been odd about these things; dating and sex.

He flushed heavily whenever Rose was brought up or asked after. Just like the first time, when they ended things Shane only casually mentioned it when David's mother asked if she was planning on coming to the cottage that summer.

“No, no” Shane shook his head, “she’s - we - we’re both really busy” he reached for his ginger ale taking a longer than necessary sip. Yuna knew then what that meant. Before Shane said it himself.

“She’s filming on location in Romania for a while” he coughed, “and we uh, well we actually decided to um” he was squirming in his seat now, eyes anywhere by another person in the room, “we’re just friends now”.

David’s parents offered their sympathies, but Shane was quick to cut them off “it was mutual - just… scheduling stuff in the end. But we’re friends, yeah”.

And they did stay friends. David was relatively confident that they would get back together with the way they were constantly texting. Yuna couldn’t deny that her son looked rather smitten while he grinned down at his phone.

There were other inklings of something ongoing - beyond his frequent calls to Rose. After Shane took a bad hit during a Boston game he stayed at home in Ottawa for a bit. He needed help with most things due to the sling, and Yuna was terrified of post-concussion syndrome. Besides, they were all feeling a bit rocked by the severity of the hit. She could tell it was driving Shane a bit mad to share a space with his parents again after so long, but it felt nice to be together. It helped them all feel a little less shaken, and until Montreal’s chance for the playoffs ended (unsurprisingly now that Shane was injured), all of Shane’s teammates and friends had been too busy with the post-season ramp-up to provide reasonable support.

Before they headed up to their cottage for the summer, Yuna and David stopped by Shane’s apartment in Montreal to pick up a few things and check on the property. He still wasn’t allowed to drive.

It was meticulously clean, despite Shane having left not knowing he wouldn’t be returning for a while. He was a bit neurotic with cleaning, that definitely came from Yuna. They pulled some comfortable clothes from the closet, and various items he had requested - books, chargers, glasses.

It was David who pointed out the second toothbrush in his washroom, and the shampoo in the shower that read ‘curl routine’.

“Rose doesn’t have curly hair” Yuna rolled her eyes at her husband. He was still convinced that Shane and Rose were secretly finding time to see each other before he had been hit.

They cleared out Shane’s fridge, dumping the old food-prepped meals that had been molding in their tupperware. Now it was filled with ginger ale, gatorade and coke - another discrepancy highlighted by her husband. Shane did not drink coke. He found it too sweet.

“He might keep it for friends or teammates,” Yuna told him. As much as she wanted to believe that Shane was trying to rekindle his relationship with Rose, she didn’t. Her son might not offer a lot of information, he might omit things sometimes, but he was not a liar. He had said they were friends now, and Yuna knew that was the truth.

“Before we forget, can you grab his glasses? I think he said they’re on his dresser” David’s hands were full with the greenbin and garbage bags.

Yuna returned to Shane’s room. She couldn’t help herself and had to briefly pause to straighten out his bedspread and throw pillows. As she reached to plump up the biggest one her hand found a soft material. She pulled it out, ready to toss it in the laundry hamper before she froze. The undeniable scent of cigarettes floated from the material, it was faded and mixed into Shane’s eco-friendly supposedly scent free laundry detergent.

She picked up the garment and studied it carefully. It wasn’t anything special, just a black tank top, nothing Shane ever wore - at least not in public. It also wasn’t his. Shane refused to use anything but aluminum-free deodorant, he was terrified of gum-cancer and had a rigorous tooth brushing routine. He did not smoke. Beyond the smoke, the shirt was also too large. Even if Shane did wear it, the oversized shoulders would probably slide down his arms.

So who’s shirt was it? Why were they important enough to her son for him to stow their unwashed clothes at the head of his bed? And how fucking tall were they?

With slightly shaky hands Yuna reached for the tag, she had to hold it up to the ceiling light to read it.

Mens Large. *Oh god. Oh god.* She quickly folded the shirt and grabbed Shane’s glasses, putting them both into the small suitcase they brought.

In the car ride back to Ottawa she was quiet. David flipped between radio channels, eventually settling on one that was playing “The Hip’s Best Hit’s”. If he noticed her being strange - which he almost certainly did - he didn’t mention it. They knew each other well enough by now to know when the other needed space.

“David,” she asked quietly after a while. He reached forwards and turned the knob for the radio, the melancholic crooning sound of Bobcaygen turning into a lowered background hum.

“Do you ever wonder why Shane hasn’t dated much?”

He looked at her, surprised at the question, before turning back to the road. “I suppose I’ve always figured he probably dates more than he lets on with us” he drummed his fingers on the steering wheel.

“You know how he is Yuna. He doesn’t like us old-folks poking around. The only reason we know about Rose is because it was in the news”.

Yuna bit at her bottom lip, worrying at what that shirt meant. She wasn’t a fool. She had wondered before if maybe Shane was gay, even David had brought it up once a few years after Shane had ended things with Jessica. She felt her eyes sting as tears sprung into them unexpectedly. If he was gay, he was probably terrified, and alone, and hiding it. Her jaw trembled at the thought of her son feeling so isolated.

“Oh honey” David’s hand grabbed hers and he drew circles on her skin, “what’s this really about?”

She thought about telling him but Yuna couldn’t bring herself to. It felt like a betrayal of her son’s trust. She had stumbled into something that he wasn’t ready to tell them, the most she could do now was keep his secret.

“I just want him to be happy”

“I know honey,” David gave her hand a squeeze, “we both do”.

…

The cottage was a nice change for a few days, but Shane was going stir crazy and they both knew it. He was constantly on his phone, and Yuna was constantly telling him it was bad for his head. He wasn’t cleared to work out, he hadn’t seen anybody but his own parents in weeks, and the only television they got up north was either a movie channel that seemed to play every Rose Landry movie back to back, or the playoffs (the ones his team had been brutally kicked out of). At least it looked like Boston was out now, so Shane didn’t have to worry about Rozanov taking home another trophy.

One afternoon, after chastising Shane for being on his phone again, he threw it on the coffee table with a huff and announced he was going on; “a light, non-exercise, doctor approved, walk - *alone”*.

His phone buzzed constantly, and annoyingly against the wooden table, interrupting the calm puzzle she and David were trying to focus on.

“I can’t take it anymore,” Yuna huffed. She reached for the phone and went to turn it to do-not-disturb. And she didn’t mean to pry, she really didn’t, but it was right there on his lockscreen. About 20 texts from someone named Lily. She swallowed her guilt and scrolled through the previews of them. Some were a running commentary on Scott Hunter’s most recent post-game interview - apparently Lily was not a fan of the Admirals captain. But the most recent few were… well, flirty, racy even. Yuna blushed and turned the phone back around.

Lily: Hollander?

Lily: Am I boring you?

Lily: So I have to be naked to get your attention now?

Lily: Don’t be boring.

“Who was it?” David hadn’t even looked up from the puzzle in front of him.

“I don’t know” Yuna had to smooth her hands over her face and pull herself together. It was her fault for snooping. “Some girl”

“Rose?”

“Stop it with that David”

They returned to their silent puzzling until Yuna got too antsy - she could never sit still for long. She went to tidy up the yard, using the time alone to think. Maybe she had been too hasty jumping to conclusions about Shane’s sexuality. He was obviously relatively familiar with this Lily girl. The shirt…the shirt didn’t make much sense, but maybe there was an explanation. Or maybe Shane was bisexual. Yuna knew all about the different letters of LGBTQ+, she prided herself on being educated and progressive.

It was only a few days later when the Admirals won the cup. Yuna had called it from the start - Scott Hunter had gotten out of whatever slump he was stuck in earlier that season and was playing better than ever. The celebrations on the ice started and David turned down the commentary so they could talk over the game. Shane thankfully, didn’t seem too put out about not winning the cup.

Then it happened. She wasn’t really paying attention to the television until she noticed Shane. His eyes were glassy, his mouth partially open, as he stared raptly at the screen. And then Scott Hunter was kissing a man on the ice.

Yuna felt her mouth drop as well. Her first instinct was to reach out and grab Shane but he was already halfway off the couch, phone pressed to his ear as he disappeared around the corner.

“Wonder if it’s Hayden” David said when Yuna’s outstretched hand fell to the couch, “I’ll bet every player’s on the phone with another one right now. Phew - that was pretty crazy eh?”

Yuna didn’t think it was Hayden. She also didn’t think it was Ilya Rozanov - but who could’ve guessed that?

…

The truth came out a few weeks later when David returned from Shane’s cottage dishwasher-tablet-less and shell shocked. He stumbled through a complicated tangle of words; *Shane, visitor, saw me, saw him, kissing, oh god, trying to eat him against the glass* - that one got Yuna to sit him on the couch and press the condensation of a cool beer to her husband's face.

“I shouldn’t have gone - shouldn’t have left. Fuck Yuna he’s probably freaking out right now”

“Slow down, slow down” Yuna cooed as calmly as she could. She wanted her husband to stop panicking and rubbing his hands over his face the way Shane did when he was stressed. She was also desperate to know what he was talking about.

“Shane,” David let her pry his hands from his reddening skin, “he had a guest over”.

Kissing. “I knew that silent retreat thing was bullshit” Yuna frowned. Shane had always been protective over his love life, it didn’t surprise her that he had secretly brought someone up to the cottage, it did surprise her that he had lied to them about it. Was it the Lily that Yuna had seen on his phone?

Or... she took in the grayness of David's face, and the guilty shock on it. David was usually the one who was blase about their son's romantic life. When Shane was sixteen and got caught in a rather heated kiss with his high school girlfriend on the living room couch, David had steered Yuna into the kitchen with a fond shake of his head and said 'it's just a part of our boy growing up'.

She thought about the men's shirt behind Shane's pillow, the care and preciseness that he always took to clean things. It wasn't there by accident. Shane put it there. Shane cared about whoever's shirt it was. He probably cared enough to lie to his parents and invite him to the cottage.

"Was it…? It was another boy - man, wasn't it?" Yuna asked carefully. David and her had talked about it as a possibility, she knew he didn't care if their son was gay. It must have been a shock for him to walk into… whatever he had unfortunately interrupted. Still, his reaction seemed over the top.

"Yes" he sounded breathless, his car keys were still pressed in his hand, "but that's not…I'm not…I love Shane no matter what Yuna" his eyes widened in sincerity.

Distantly Yuna could hear the rumble of wheels on a dirt road. She had no doubt it was Shane on his way over, maybe with his house-guest in tow.

"It's about *who* the man was".

…

That was how they found themselves at Shane's cottage with a bottle of white wine and a salad at 5:00. Instead of letting themselves in they rang the doorbell. David was *very* adamant about waiting for Shane to reply to his text before they even got out of the car. Shane answered sheepishly and with an air of uncomfortable formality.

"Come come!" Ilya's voice was always a decibel too high, "all the bugs are getting in".

"Ilya is scared of blackflies" Shane rolled his eyes but quickly shut the door as Yuna and David shuffled in.

"Am not" Ilya was pouting. He was pouting and wearing a frilly flower printed apron and holding a wooden spoon. Yuna could hardly believe what she was watching. Ilya Rozanov, the menace on and off the ice, was standing in her son's foyer with splatters of red sauce on his cheek. He was also wearing the socks Yuna had put in Shane's Christmas stocking last year.

"And spiders"

"He lies"

"He makes me kill them all for him" Yuna watched the feigned annoyance on Shane's face and knew it for what it really was - fondness.

Despite the complicated day, and slightly awkward tone of their evening he looked relaxed (well, as relaxed as Shane could ever look). Her and David slipped off their shoes and wandered over to the dining table to set down their dishes, listening to the couple - *the couple* - continue their hushed playful bickering on their way to the kitchen.

Shane's cottage was his favourite place. It was much larger than the family cottage, and certainly more modern with its high windows and open concept. From here she could see Shane and Ilya move in practiced domesticity as they brought dinner to the table. Likely thinking they were out of view, she watched Shane lean in and rub at the sauce stains on Ilya's face. The Russian smiled, big and almost goofily. He looked entirely different off the ice. Less intimidating and more loose, doting… loving. They mumbled a few quiet words at one another, before Ilya pressed a chaste kiss to Shane's brow bone and handed him the bread basket.

The entire scene made Yuna's heart clench. It was so abnormal. In the sense that it was incredibly normal. Ilya opened one of the cupboards and pulled out four wine glasses. Yuna didn't even think Shane owned wine glasses, and yet here Rozanov was, moving through the kitchen like it was his own house.

Eventually the table was properly set, and the food was served. Ilya let David carve the roast - which Yuna thought was very old-fashioned and likely a ploy for her husband's admiration. He complimented the wine, and asked about the salad dressing ingredients.

"Ilya likes to cook," Shane explained. He let Ilya take his wine glass and fill it appropriately, without complaint or forethought. She shared a look of surprise with David when Shane lifted the glass and took a sip. He was usually always the one at the table with a ginger ale or sparkling water.

"Well somebody has to" Ilya finished filling his own glass and placed the bottle back in its cooling bin - another kitchen item Yuna didn't think she would ever see Shane own. "If Shane had his way, we would eat smoothie for every meal".

"You don't *eat* smoothies"

"Fine, he wants to swallow then" Rozanov waved his fork in the air in a sort of blase annoyed motion. The expression was quickly wiped when he jolted- obviously having been kicked under the table.

"Wrong verb" Shane ground out through tense teeth. He looked like he wanted to crawl under the table. Yuna wanted to join him.

"Is not my first language" the Russian explained as if that fact weren't abhorrently obvious.

"Did you make the roast then?" David thankfully began a different conversation after the ill-fated dinner party lapsed into too long of an uncomfortable silence. He had come a long way in the few hours since he initially walked into Shane's cottage.

The rest of the meal passed in a similar fashion. Small talk would end, they would all stare at each other, then David or Ilya would propose another meaningless topic to conversate about.

Yuna used this time to watch Shane. Earlier at the family cottage Shane had fallen into a sudden panic - something he hadn't done in many years - or at least not in front of her. Yuna had nearly forgotten about all the hours she spent pulling Shane out of panic attacks, or anxious spirals in his childhood and early teens. It was something she assumed he had grown out of. When Ilya had cut in, saying careful words and bending to Shane's level at the table… that was when Yuna knew whatever they were doing was real. She had never been able to get through to her son as quickly, as effectively.

"Since rookie year" she had said as she and David watched on. The man in front of them, rival or not, asshole or not, threat or not, knew eight years worth of their son. Rozanov probably knew more about Shane than Yuna did now. He had been there in secret all the times Yuna wasn't, talking Shane down, learning about her son. Much of their relationship was still shrouded in time gaps and mystery but it would unravel with time, and trust.

After dinner ended, the two retreated to the kitchen to tidy, waving away offers of help from Yuna and her husband. She felt bad but David reminded her they were probably overwhelmed and wanted a few minutes to themselves before guiding her outside to Shane's deck.

They leaned on the railing watching the orange sky reflect down onto the water, and chatting idly, until Yuna slipped inside to use the washroom. She didn't want to bother them so she crept through the living room, familiar enough with the space to make her way to the main-floor powder room.

On her way out she could hear the mumbling of voices above the running sink. She didn't want to pry any further but she couldn't help her curiosity and she stopped behind the half wall in Shane's sunken living room - just for a moment, to check in.

Shane was over the sink scrubbing what looked to be the last of the dishes. Ilya, with a plaid dish-towel tossed haphazardly over a shoulder had abandoned his post at the drying rack to come up behind her son and wrap his arms around Shane's waist. The blonde man's curls looked like a mop the way they draped over Shane's broad shoulder as he buried his head into the crook of Shane's neck.

"Ilya" Shane's tone was like a warning. It still felt odd to hear Ilya's first name coming from Shane's mouth - after so many years of 'Rozanov'.

Ilya grumbled something back, too muffled by Shane's shoulder for Yuna to hear. Whatever it was made Shane stiffen and push the other boy off of him. Ilya quickly retreated, leaning his back on the counter. He looked… dejected almost. Yuna hoped they weren't arguing, hoped she and David hadn't pushed this dinner on them too quickly. She knew her son struggled with change, and he also liked to have a plan. He probably had a plan for when he was going to tell her and David before it all blew up.

"Shane," Ilya said slowly, his hands gesticulating in the air - something that Yuna had noticed he did before he tried to articulate a thought. His English was far better than she had assumed, but Yuna rarely watched his interviews these days. His cocky responses and overconfident promises always managed to rub her the wrong way.

“You are…” Ilya kept gesturing like he was trying to catch the words from the air, “you are icing me”.

She had to press a hand over her mouth to stop the laugh that threatened to escape. Of course they would resort to hockey terms. No wonder it had taken eight years for them to have a conversation about their relationship. *Men.*

Shane seemed to also find this comparison humorous. He turned from the sink and raised an eyebrow, a small smile playing at the corner of his lips. “Icing you?” he repeated. His voice was soft and fond in a way Yuna had never heard it.

“Yes,” Ilya crossed his arms over his chest still looking a bit hurt about whatever had transpired between them that Yuna hadn’t been able to hear.

“I am puck, and you are shooting me across the ice in panic whenever I touch”

“Ilya”

“I know today is hard for you” Ilya sniffed and wrinkled his nose, “but we are not on penalty kill yes? We are with your parents. You do not need to…defend the zone anymore?”

“Are you seriously using hockey as a metaphor?”

“Is the language we know best” Ilya shrugged.

Shane left the dishes, but not before carefully wiping the water from his hands, and walked up to where Ilya was still against the counter. He reached out and brought the other boy into a tentative embrace.

“I’m sorry” Shane said that word too much, “I just don’t know what to do, how to act”.

“Why are you acting now?” Ilya’s words settled heavily over Yuna.

She knew her son struggled sometimes in the public eye, in big social settings. He had friends, he was always on good terms with his teammates but he put on a good act, a good media voice. Yuna had always thought that when he was home, with his family, he was letting that mask slip. She felt her eyes begin to sting again at the realization that he had been guarding part of himself from them for so long. When was the last time Shane had felt completely comfortable with himself in front of them. Was Ilya the only one who knew him, all parts of him?

She pressed a cold hand over her eyes. She had been gone for too long and she was invading Shane’s privacy now. Yuna decided to leave them to it and head back outside when Shane spoke again.

“I can hardly look my dad in the eyes”

That made her stop in her tracks. David had probably made the wrong choice speeding out of there as fast as he did earlier today, but Yuna thought that he had been supportive and

understanding since then. Maybe she needed to get David to have some one on one time with Shane tonight. Her few minutes with him that afternoon had been important.

“Why because he saw me kissing you?”

“Your hand was on my ass” Shane gritted out between his teeth.

“Yes?” Ilya didn’t seem too phased. It was clear by his brazen nature and his long public history with women in the tabloids that he was relatively comfortable with sexuality. Shane was absolutely not.

When Yuna had tried to give the ‘birds and bees’ talk before high school Shane had turned bright red and told her he had already learned everything in Grade 6 health class. When he billeted in Kingston for a few months his junior season, she put condoms in his bag (just in case) and found them in the garbage the day after he left. It was something they just didn’t talk about, something they had never needed to.

“Could have been worse. He could’ve come by 10 minutes later when I…”

“Stop it” Shane had fully released Ilya from his embrace now and was standing stiffly a few steps away.

“What?” Ilya sounded exasperated, “your parents think you are 25 year old monk?” he was teasing now and he closed the new distance between himself and Shane.

“You are virgin mary?” he continued, but Yuna could see the way Shane relaxed as a large hand tilted his chin up. Ilya’s eyebrows were raised in question.

“Gonna make you sleep on the couch” Shane muttered, but the threat was lost in the softness of his face.

“Mhm mhm” Ilya tutted, “you’d miss me”.

“I wouldn’t” Shane was so quiet now Yuna could hardly hear, “could finally wake up without you yelling at the alarm”

“Why is there alarm?” Ilya threw his free hand in the air, his other still on Shane’s face - holding them close together, “Hollander you are on vacation!”

Yuna realized she had been watching again. It was too easy to be pulled into their bubble of intimacy. It was almost nice to watch the way her son smiled, and loosened in the safety of their privacy (or what they thought was privacy). Feeling a bit guilty she made her way carefully back outside to her husband who was waiting for her with a knowing look. He always knew what she was thinking, or doing, or about to do.

“Find the washroom okay?” He wrapped an arm around her waist and pulled her close. The sun is almost gone now.

“I think he’s good for him” Yuna let herself lean back into David’s chest.

“Yeah? You don’t hate him anymore?”

“He makes Shane… he pushes him I think” she resisted the urge to try and look through the tall windows and back into the kitchen. “On and off the ice”.

“I’ll admit I still don’t understand it all that much,” David said. Then he nudged her, “but I haven’t been snooping like my wife. Maybe she can help explain it to me”.

She didn’t have time because the couple emerged from the house with blankets and the plan to start a fire. And now, as they watched the flames snap up towards the sky, as they curled on the benches and made idle chatter, Shane let himself be held by his boyfriend in front of his parents. Yuna could sense that he was still tense, but as the night drew onwards he slowly melted into Ilya’s touch, his face as unguarded as Yuna had ever seen it.

There was still so much that was undiscussed, and so much ahead of them, but here in this moment Yuna knew she had always been right. Shane would end up the way she expected, in a soft and easy love. It wasn’t externally easy by any means, and it was evident that years of tribulations and confusion marred the path of their relationship, but the simplicity of *love* itself was there, clear as day. She leaned up to press a kiss to her husband. And Yuna Hollander would know.

End Notes

Might add some fluffy oneshots later as part of a collection. We will see :)

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!