

Lulu

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Lulu

by [Felxia](#)

Summary

"How about adoption?" the Russian suggested, earning him a sharp slap on the back of the head.

And Luca, holding the little boy in his arms, who had just named him, knew one thing.

If he had to have a nickname for the rest of his life, "Lulu" would be his favorite.

Or how Luca got a new nickname and a quite responsible role.

Notes

Another one-shot with older brother Luca in the lead role. Regarding "In sickness and in health.", the chapter will appear today, Friday and Sunday.

And now I invite you to read!

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

Misha, despite being only three years old, had something about him that made people involuntarily slow their pace and lean closer to him. He knew how to look, truly look.

He observed faces, tones of voice, gestures. He knew who was just being loud, who was pretending to be tough, and who had true tenderness within. And he reacted instinctively, without hesitation.

He allowed some to be picked up, ignored others with a stony seriousness. Yuna joked that her grandson had already inherited his father's Slavic stare, and rewarded still others with a broad smile that disarmed even the most armored hearts.

Misha was small, but aware, as if he had understood from the very beginning that this ice rink was his world, and these people, with whom his parents were constantly present, were at his every beck and call.

The entire Centaur team had been wrapped around his little finger since his very first days. From the moment almost everyone burst into the hospital, bringing too many flowers, too loud congratulations, and completely unnecessary miniature hockey jerseys and moose mascots; from the first time Misha was carried onto the rink, still wrapped in a blanket, and the players leaned over him with reverent concentration, as if gazing upon something holy.

And then there was the day when his little legs first stepped onto the ice with skates.

He fell almost immediately.

And immediately, half the team rose too.

Some knelt, others held out their hands, someone shouted, "Easy!", someone laughed, but there was no malice in it. Only warmth. And pride. A huge, disproportionate pride.

Misha didn't cry at all then. Instead, he looked around at the faces around him, as if checking if they were still there. And when he saw everyone was there, he smiled.

And at that precise moment, it became clear that he wasn't the one growing up among the Centaurs. The Centaurs were the ones growing up with him.

Many hockey players had children; it was no secret; the Centaurs themselves had children, but there was something about Misha that drew everyone to him like moths to a flame.

No one knew if it was his dark blond curls, his blue-hazel eyes, or perhaps the constellation of freckles across his nose that Ilya adored.

Little Misha was the team's favorite; that was obvious and unquestionable. Every Centaur had time for him, every one had candy in their pocket, a funny face, or a willingness to pretend to be a horse, an airplane, or even to wrestle in the locker room.

But as was always the case with Misha, he also made his own, very conscious choices. This also applied to his time spent with the team; he liked some more than others, but one

particular person could never escape his sticky paws.

Luca Haas.

The young Swiss was completely out of place with the rest of the team in a way that immediately caught the eye. He was quieter. More delicate in his movements. Always a step behind the others, a little to the side. His blond curls were perpetually unruly, his childlike face blushed at the slightest attention, and those blue eyes that held uncertainty but also a profound attentiveness.

And that was precisely what attracted Misha.

Luca never grabbed him abruptly, never raised his voice, never tried to force him to laugh. When Misha approached, Luca simply... was there. He crouched down to be at his level. He waited. He let the child decide whether he wanted to be picked up or just have his finger held.

And Misha loved holding his finger.

Sometimes he'd sit next to him on the bench and lean his head on his shoulder. Sometimes he'd press a plastic disc or a crumpled sticker into his hand, as if conveying something important. And Luca took it all in stride, as if he'd just received the most precious gift in the world.

"He chose you," Troy had once said with a hint of envy.

"Children sense good people." Wyatt added, looking suggestively at Troy.

Luca just looked down, blushing.

"I... I just like him," he said quietly.

But the truth was, Misha saw something in him that others didn't immediately notice. Peace. Security. Someone who didn't disappear, didn't overwhelm, didn't expect anything in return.

And even though he was still very young, Misha already knew one thing:

The world was quieter around Luca. And that was enough.

At first, the Swiss was completely unsure what to make of this comment. Truly.

He had no siblings, had never been the "older one" who knew how to offer a hand, how to calm a cry, how to react to a child's expectant gaze.

He knew children mostly from afar, as loud, fast, slightly chaotic beings who always seemed to know more than they should. And Misha... Misha looked at him as if he knew exactly that Luca had no idea what he was doing.

And it didn't bother him at all. On the contrary, it amused him.

Luca stiffened every time he felt a small hand grasp his fingers. He glanced nervously around the locker room, as if searching for an instruction manual. Some adult. Anyone. And the team just looked at him with amusement.

"Breathe, Haas," someone would say.

"He doesn't bite," another added.

"Not yet." But what really complicated everything was the name Ilya Rozanov.

Misha's father. The captain. The legend. Luca's childhood idol.

The same Ilya Rozanov whose poster hung above his bed when he was twelve. The same Ilya Rozanov whose games he watched at night, analyzing every move, every hip movement, every acceleration. And now... now this man was the father of the child who was currently sitting on Luca's lap, playing with the string of his sweatshirt.

Every time Luca looked up and saw Rozanov, his heart leaped into his throat.

"He'll think I'm doing something wrong."

"He'll take him."

"He'll ask why I'm holding his son."

But Ilya never did.

Sometimes he just watched from the sidelines, a faint smile and a calm look in his eyes. Sometimes he'd offer a curt,

"Are you okay?"

And Luca nodded so rapidly that it was a wonder his neck didn't hurt.

"He likes you," Ilya said calmly once, walking past.

Luca almost gasped.

"I-I know," he replied too quickly. "I mean... I hope... I just..."

"Easy. He's obviously comfortable." Ilya laughed softly.

And that was probably the worst part.

Because with each passing day, Luca realized more and more that Misha truly felt safe around him. That she sought him out with her eyes. That she chose his arms. That she fell asleep faster when Luca sat next to him and spoke to him quietly, in Swiss German, unaware that he was doing it aloud.

And Luca, though terrified, though completely unprepared...was beginning to get used to this role.

And at some point, it all just became... normal.

A routine fell into place, without any conversations or arrangements. The Hollander-Rozanov couple appeared at the rink almost as regularly as morning warm-ups. Shane sat in the stands with his parents or chatted with the rookies, Ilya disappeared into the locker room to check on the team, and Misha?

Misha glanced around from his stroller, his curious eyes already searching for the first victims.

Sometimes he stayed with Shane's parents, safe, wrapped in a blanket and patiently fed snacks at his grandparents' house. Sometimes he found himself in the hands of Coach Wiebe, who kept an eye on him from the bench and could simultaneously lead practice and respond to a child's babbling as if he were holding a perfectly competent conversation. And sometimes... sometimes Misha was grumpy.

Tired. Overstimulated. Overloaded with the sounds, lights, and smell of the rink.

And then nothing worked. Not Shane.

Not Ilya. Not the coach. Not his favorite hat. Not the pacifier.

Only Luca.

All it took was for the Swiss to skate closer to the boards, take off his glove, and hold out his hands. Misha would almost immediately extend his own in response, snuggling into him as if he'd known the gesture forever. Luca would take him carefully, place him on his hip, hold the baby with one hand, his stick with the other, and off he went.

No rush. No showboating. Calm laps around the rink.

His movements were fluid, measured, almost meditative. Sometimes he spoke quietly to Misha, sometimes he just muttered something under his breath, and sometimes he simply let the sound of the blade gliding across the ice do the trick. Misha would calm down almost immediately. His head would fall onto Luka's shoulder, his little fingers tightening in the fabric of his jersey, and his eyes would slowly lose their vigilance.

"He should write that into his contract," Troy muttered once from the bench. "The captain's baby calming function."

"Quiet," Evan replied. "Look at the way he looks at him."

Because everyone saw.

The way Luca instinctively protected the child from the cold air. The way he slowed down when Misha fidgeted. The way he reflexively held his head during sharp turns. It wasn't fake. It wasn't forced.

Ilya watched from the sidelines, leaning against the railing, his arms crossed over his chest. He didn't say anything. He just watched. And somewhere deep inside him, something that

had been tense for years was loosening, the knowledge that his son was safe, even when he wasn't in his arms.

Shane smiled to himself as he continued his warm-up on the ice.

Those laps on the rink began to morph into something more, almost imperceptibly.

First, there was one time, practice had dragged on, Luca didn't have a car, and Shane had casually thrown it.

"We'll give you a lift."

Then it happened a second time. And a third. Sometimes Shane led, sometimes Ilya, the conversations were calm, relaxed, about nothing and everything at once. About the weather in Ottawa, the differences between the leagues, the fact that Misha had just learned a new word and was now repeating it over and over. Luca listened mostly in silence, his answers short, a little tense, as if he was still afraid of saying something wrong.

And then came the evenings.

"Stay for dinner," Shane had said once, quite naturally, as if inviting a neighbor, not a twenty-year-old rookie.

"Misha won't let you leave anyway," Ilya added with amusement.

And indeed, Misha was already sitting on the carpet, staring at Luca with the concentration of a playoff final, holding two plastic discs in his hands.

At first, Luca was incredibly embarrassed.

He didn't know where to put his hands. He sat stiffly at the table, as if at a formal meeting, eating too slowly or too quickly, saying "thank you" every time someone offered him salt. He glanced at Ilya every now and then, then immediately looked away, as if he'd just been caught doing something inappropriate.

After all, it's not every day you eat dinner at the home of two of hockey's greatest legends.

And certainly not when their three-year-old son is trying to stuff a leftover carrot into your pocket, "because it's for you."

"You can breathe," Shane had once said with a faint smile, pouring him tea. "Nobody's examining you here."

"Except him," Ilya added, pointing to Misha, who was just climbing onto Luca's lap.

And though Luca still blushed, though he still felt a bit like an intruder in someone else's perfectly ordered world... he was beginning to understand that no one was forcing him out.

He played with Misha on the floor, built leaning towers with blocks, read the same book five times in a row, just because "again." He ate dinner, listened to adults' conversations, laughed

shyly, increasingly forgetting that he should be shy.

And when he returned to his apartment late at night, the silence was no longer the same.

It was... too empty.

And Luca admitted to himself for the first time that this place, their home, their table, Misha's laughter, was starting to mean much more to him than he had ever planned.

He learned to treasure and cherish these moments, but there was one in particular that he remembered and would remember forever.

Misha, like a child, had his own versions of the world. Simplified. Soft. Tailored to a three-year-old's logic and a language still in the making.

Troy was "Toy." Toy was "play." Coach Wiebe functioned as "Bee" for several weeks. And Ilya, to Shane's immense satisfaction, was "Papa."

Luca never expected to have his own name in this little, private dictionary.

That day, he stood leaning against the boards, hands tucked into his sweatshirt pockets, watching the after-hours practice. The ice was almost empty, the lights reflecting softly off the surface. Shane and Ilya knelt opposite each other, creating a makeshift obstacle course, and between them, Misha.

A little bear in a miniature helmet, his tongue sticking out in concentration.

"Knees bent," Shane said calmly.

"Keep your eyes on the puck," Ilya added, slowly backing toward the goal.

And Misha was doing really well. His movements were unsteady, but he was becoming more confident. His skates no longer slipped out from under him. He could keep his balance, push the puck, adjust his grip.

Luca watched with a warm feeling welling up in his ribs.

The puck rolled a little too far. Misha accelerated clumsily, almost stumbling, but he leveled himself. He swung.

The shot was weak. The puck moved slowly.

But it went in.

There was a second of silence, just that one, magical one, before Shane raised his hands and Ilya let out an overdramatic "GOALLLLL!"

Misha froze, as if needing a moment to comprehend what he had just done.

And then he turned. Not to his fathers. Not to the goal. Not to the world.

Only to him.

He stood in the middle of the ice, cheeks flushed, eyes shining, chest heaving with emotion.

"Lulu!" he shouted, raising his hands. "Look!"

Time slowed.

Luca felt something inside him soften, melt, spread beneath his skin like warmth after a frosty day. "Lulu." It was imperfect. Childish. Softened by a small tongue.

And absolutely perfect.

Shane looked first at his son, then at Luca. Ilya did the same. Something quiet, knowing flickered in their eyes.

Because they both knew. This wasn't a coincidence.

Misha stood still, tapping his skates lightly.

"Lulu!" he repeated impatiently, as if afraid his chosen spectator wouldn't react quickly enough.

And Luca finally moved.

He pushed off the rails and skated out onto the ice, not even feeling the cold. He crouched down in front of Misha, removing his gloves.

"I saw it," he said softly, his voice suspiciously hoarse. "That was the best goal I've seen today."

Misha grinned, his missing teeth only adding to his charm. Without warning, he lunged forward, slamming into Luka's chest with all the force of a three-year-old in skates.

Luca caught him automatically.

And somewhere behind him, Ilya murmured quietly to Shane,

"I think he's lost."

"Oh yeah. Completely." Shane smiled.

Ilya looked at his husband with a smirk that immediately displeased the Canadian.

"How about adoption?" the Russian suggested, earning him a sharp slap on the back of the head.

And Luca, holding the little boy in his arms, who had just named him, knew one thing:

If he was going to have a nickname for the rest of his life, "Lulu" would be his favorite.

End Notes

That's it for now, let me know what you think and if there's anything you'd like to see from Hollanov! Not necessarily related to this au.

Until next time!

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