

proving a point by loving professionally

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/73644941) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/73644941>.

Rating:	Not Rated
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Categories:	F/M , M/M
Fandom:	Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid
Relationship:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Ilya Rozanov , Anya Ilya Rozanov's Dog , Shane Hollander , Ottawa Centaurs Team Ensemble (Game Changers) , Zane Boodram , Evan Dykstra , Hayden Pike , Wyatt Hayes , Troy Barrett , Harris Drover
Additional Tags:	Domestic Fluff , Love , Cute
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2025-11-03 Words: 2,798 Chapters: 1/1

proving a point by loving professionally

by [h0pei5Abutterfly_08](#)

Summary

just a fic about them being cute

shane and Ilya had now been married for six months and playing together for five. They loved every second of it, the games, the chirping, the shared hotel rooms that somehow always ended with one of them stealing the other's pillow. It felt like making up for all the years they'd wasted pretending they weren't in love.

Ilya adored it. He could finally hold Shane's hand in public, talk about him in interviews, and say things like "my husband" without flinching. But there was still that tiny voice at the back of his head whispering hide. For Shane, that voice was more like a full marching band.

He was getting better, though. Slowly. He didn't flinch when Ilya grabbed his hand anymore. He only scowled a little when Ilya kissed his cheek in front of teammates. But still, the world hadn't quite caught up with them. The media preferred to call them rivals instead of married. And the ones who did acknowledge it seemed to dissect their every move like scientists studying penguin mating rituals.

Shane hated it. He'd blocked every gossip account within a ten-mile radius. He didn't see why two hockey players being in love needed to be news. Meanwhile, Ilya lived on the side of social media where people posted fan art, heart emojis, and wrote essays about how they'd "saved hockey." He saw the good. He wanted to give them more. Shane wanted to crawl into the nearest rink freezer and hide.

Still, there were always haters, the "keep hockey straight" crowd. Shane ignored them. Ilya pretended to, but sometimes the comments still stung.

They were walking hand in hand with Anya before a game, their ritual, talking about their six-month anniversary plans. Ilya was thrilled. Shane was nervous.

"I have it all planned out," Ilya announced, beaming.

Shane side-eyed him. "That's... not reassuring."

"Ah, moya lyubov, is surprise," Ilya smirked.

"That's even less reassuring."

Before Ilya could retort, a group of young hockey bros spotted them. "Rozanov! Hollander!"

Shane's shoulders tensed immediately. The guys came over, grinning, phones ready. "Can we get a photo?"

Ilya glanced at his husband, who smiled a little too tightly and nodded. Ilya squeezed his hand. "Of course."

They posed, smiled, said polite goodbyes. The fans walked away, but Shane caught the sideways look at their intertwined hands. His stomach twisted.

"Come, let's go home," Ilya said softly, tugging his hand. He didn't add before I commit a murder with a hockey stick.

At home, Shane started packing their gear while Ilya made lunch and fed Anya. His phone buzzed. It was Harris.

Harris: hey, ilya. hate to do this, but you said you wanted to know when stuff popped up. might wanna see this.

Attached was a photo of them from earlier — smiling, holding hands. Cute. Except the caption read: “Guess they’re still trying to make their ‘relationship’ look normal.”

Ilya stared at it for a full ten seconds before muttering something in Russian that probably shouldn’t be translated.

Ilya: thank you, Harris. will hide from Shane. Ilya: why can’t they just accept us? Harris: they’re idiots. don’t let it get to you. Ilya: I don’t. it’s Shane I worry about.

He sighed, shoved his phone away, and went back to making lunch. Halfway through, Shane wandered in and they got... distracted. In the way that leads to being late for warm-ups.

By the time Shane’s phone alarm went off, they were both breathless and tangled on the couch.

“...worth it,” Ilya panted.

“Completely unprofessional,” Shane muttered, buttoning his shirt. “But yes.”

As they drove to the rink, Shane scrolled through the Centaurs group chat, laughing at the chaos. He didn’t mention the photo. But something in him had snapped when he saw it. He was tired. Tired of pretending, tired of being polite, tired of hiding behind “no comment.”

So when they arrived, Shane turned to Ilya, grabbed his jersey, and kissed him. Hard. Long enough that when they pulled away, another car had pulled up beside them.

Bood leaned out his window, smirking. “Damn, your relationship gets questioned and suddenly you two go full rom-com in the parking lot.”

Shane’s face went red. “They have to see what they’re missing out on,” he shot back, to the utter shock of both Bood and Ilya.

Ilya blinked. “Who are you and what have you done with my husband?”

Inside, Bood elbowed Evan. “Hollander’s snapped. Love finally broke him.”

During warm-ups, Shane skated next to Ilya, watching him laugh. Why had he kept the two halves of his life separate for so long? Maybe the point wasn’t to prove love and hockey could coexist, maybe it was to just live it.

Then Ilya’s hair came loose from under his helmet. Shane, without thinking, pulled off his glove and fixed it. The look Ilya gave him was somewhere between shock and heart eyes.

They won 2–1. Both scored. Of course.

The Centaurs' postgame photo? Shane mid-hair-fix, both of them grinning like idiots. It went viral instantly.

🏒 @centaurs_hockey Final score: 2-1 🏆 Rozanov and Hollander with the goals that sealed the win — and maybe the cutest assist of the night 🔥

@wyatthayes12: I mean... who even plays that well while being that disgustingly in love?

@boodram97: Bro fixed his hair mid-game like it was the Stanley Cup of romance 🙌 respect.

@evandykstra44: Thought they were filming a "True Love: Hockey Edition" ad.

@centaursunofficial: The chemistry's paying off on and off the ice. Proud of you both ❤️

@fansofcentaurs: finally a W for love AND the Centaurs 😊💙

@shanehollanderhockeyplayer: ❤️

@ilyarozanovofficial (replying): ❤️ and also I still scored more than you 🙄

@shanehollander (replying): Ilya. behave

. @ilyarozanovofficial: fine. you win game. I win life.

The next morning, Ilya brought breakfast in bed. "Happy anniversary, moya lyubov." He kissed Shane's cheek and set down pancakes shaped like hockey sticks.

They spent the day playing mini golf and having a picnic. Ilya claimed victory. Shane knew he'd won.

That night, Shane posted:

@shanehollander: 6 months married to my favorite person ❤️ Thanks for the picnic, the laughs, and for being the best part of every day. BUT YOU DID NOT WIN THE GOLF.

Attached 10 photos:

1. A photo of them at the picnic
2. Ilya bent over the small golf club, looking deep in concentration
3. The breakfast in bed
4. A selfie of them at the beach house during sunset, but smiling like idiots
5. A wedding picture
6. Ilya with Anya snuggled Under a blanket
7. A selfie where Ilya is asleep on Shane's chest
8. The score card from the golf which clearly shows Shane winning
9. Picture from the game of the pair of them hugging after winning
10. A photo of the rings from their 'wedding' with the little pikes

@ilyarozanovofficial: I DID win golf, moy cherepashka 🐢🏌️ you are sore loser but I still love you 🤍❤️

@boodram97: not the mini golf discourse again 😭😭😭 @evandykstra44: blink twice if he's forcing you to say nice things, Shane 🙄

@roselandry: can we make this a series? "Love on Ice and Mini Golf."

@yunahollander: my boys 😊❤️ happiest anniversary! love you endlessly.

@harrisdrover: happy six months to the chaos duo ❤️ also, ilya, that scorecard is hanging in the locker room. for science.

@ilyarozanovofficial (replying): Harris remove or I leak karaoke video 🎤😈

@shanehollander (pinned reply): fine. you win golf. but I win life because I have you ❤️

Ilya was stood in the tunnel doing a post game interview. They had just won their game by good mile. Shane had scored 2 and ilya had scored 3, he was feeling very smug about it.

“So rozanov how do you fee this game went?”

“Come on ask better question it went well yes”

That earned him a laugh from the people around him.

“What was your favourite moment of the game?”

“Was when I scored one more goal more than Shane” ilya smirked, another laugh was awarded.

Shane doesn't really as he wants to keep work and life separate but ilya loves to sneak a reference to Shane in every time, which normally causes chaos and Shane to get annoyed at him.

“What do you think Shane would have to say about this?” The interviewer laughed.

Ilya who had spotted Shane watching him before decided to get him involved.

“Let's ask him shall we?” Ilya smiled

“HOLLANDER!” He called out, Shane didnt turn around so he tried again, this time Shane did turn around looking at ilya. Annoyed at the shout but his eyes are soft. He raises his eyebrow and doesn't move.

“What did you think about me scoring more goals that you sweetheart?” ilya calls. Shane blushes at the pet name like he alwasy does which leads ilya to feeling more proud of himself. Shane just gives him the finger and turns back around.

“Aw my husband loves me so much” ilya smiles bashfully looking back at the interviewer, who was laughing at their interaction.

Harris laughed as he edited the video and uploaded it to the centaurs page, sent a quick text by ilya to make sure it was okay once he gave it the all clear it was posted.

Caption:

Post-game interview with Rozanov after a massive 7–2 win 🧐

3 goals and 1 chirp

#CentaurWin #RozanovHollander #PowerCouple

@shanehollander: fuck off.

@ilyarozanovofficial (replying): is okay moya lyubov, you look cute when you are angry 😡

@shanehollander (replying): stop being annoying and I might not be angry at you.

@ilyarozanovofficial: but you still marry me 🧑❤️

@boodram97: he really called him sweetheart in front of everyone 😭😭😭 i'm DONE.

@evandykstra44: no one on the planet chirps their husband harder than Ilya. elite performance.

@troybarrett8: can't decide what's funnier, the "sweetheart" or Shane's reaction time.

@roselandry: Ilya out here publicly flirting and Shane's blushing like their teenagers

@haydenpike26: can't believe we lost Hollander to this chaos gremlin. world's gone mad.

@wyatthayes12: new rule: every goal interview must include at least one Hollander mention. it's tradition now.

@harrisdrover: media team's new favourite segment: "Rozanov vs. Husband." coming soon.

@scotthunter31: the chirp game between these two is undefeated.

@yunahollander: boys... please behave. (but I love you both 😊❤️)

@centauroffical: this team is held together by goals, caffeine, and whatever this relationship is 😏

@fansofcentaurs: Ilya yelling "sweetheart" while Shane flips him off is the most them thing ever 😭😭😭

@ilyarozanovofficial (replying to @haydenpike26): jealous you don't have someone to yell at you lovingly in tunnel 😏

@haydenpike26 (replying): fuck off im married and I like peace and quiet thanks.

@shanehollander (replying): He doesn't, actually. He just likes complaining.

@ilyarozanovofficial: see? perfect team work 😇

Shane is yet again sighing at his phone. He cant believe his husband.

Two weeks after the hair-fix photo practically broke the internet, the Centaurs locker room was chaos.

Every sports outlet from ESPN to BuzzFeed wanted a quote. #RozanovHollander was trending above the actual game results.

Even non-hockey fans were sharing it with captions like, "Find someone who fixes your hair like this."

Ilya found it hilarious. Shane found it horrifying.

He had spent ten minutes trying to convince the team PR rep to let Ilya do the interview alone.

It didn't work.

"You're both going," she'd said. "People love you two. Just... maybe don't yell pet names, okay?"

"I never yell," Shane grumbled.

“You yelled ‘SWEETHEART’ in a tunnel,” Ilya muttered.

“That was YOU.”

“Details,” Ilya said cheerfully.

The two sat down for the live interview with SportsTalk Now. The host, Mia Jenkins, was smiling like a cat that had cornered two very pretty, very flustered birds.

“Welcome back to SportsTalk! We’re joined today by the Centaurs’ favorite duo and the first married couple in the NHL, Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov!”

The audience cheered. Ilya waved dramatically. Shane looked like he’d rather be on the penalty kill.

“So,” Mia began, “I have to ask about the photo. You know the one—”

“Ah yes,” Ilya interrupted, grinning. “The one where I look very handsome and Shane looks very in love.”

Laughter. Shane groaned.

“I was fixing your hair,” he muttered.

“Romantically,” Ilya countered.

“Professionally,” Shane tried.

“You took off glove,” Ilya said pointedly. “Is not very professional.”

The studio laughed again. Shane pinched the bridge of his nose. “You’re impossible.”

Mia smiled. “In all seriousness, though, people have really connected with that photo. It’s been called a milestone moment for representation in hockey. How does that feel?”

For once, Ilya didn’t joke. He straightened up. “Feels good. It shows people we are here, we exist, and hockey can be for everyone. I think that’s something worth showing.”

The audience clapped softly. Shane glanced sideways at him, fond, proud, a little in awe.

Mia turned to Shane. “And what about you? You’ve been pretty private before this, what made you decide to, well show some love, even if it was only a small action?”

Everyone laughed again. Shane rubbed the back of his neck. “Honestly? I was tired. Tired of people thinking it’s fake. Tired of pretending love and hockey can’t exist in the same sentence. Ilya and I—we play hard, we chirp each other constantly, and we still go home to the same place at night. That’s... pretty normal, I think.”

Ilya smiled so big it could’ve powered the entire arena. “Is best answer you ever give.”

Shane rolled his eyes. “Don’t make it weird.”

“Too late,” Ilya said proudly.

When the clip hit social media later that night, the comments section looked like this:

 @sportstalknowofficial The Centaurs’ Rozanov & Hollander open up about that viral photo and what it means for hockey  #HockeyIsForEveryone #RozanovHollander

@fansofcentaurs: he said “love and hockey can exist in the same sentence” and i SOBBED   

@sportswithsam: i can’t believe i’m emotional over a hair-fixing photo again

@boodram97: Ilya calling himself handsome on live TV was peak Rozanov energy 

@evandykstra44: Shane’s emotional growth arc is insane. next episode: he admits he likes PDA

@haydenpike26: calling it now: “Professionally Romantic” will be the title of their biopic

@yunahollander: so proud of my boys  

@centaurs_hockey: the only assist that broke the internet  

@ilyarozanovofficial: my husband talks feelings on TV. I am so proud  

@shanehollander (replying): you bribed me with post-game pizza

@ilyarozanovofficial (replying): was worth it  

@boodram97 (replying): can confirm, pizza was involved. love won and so did carbs.

✨ Top Comment (Pinned by @sportstalknowofficial): @shanehollander: love wins. also, next time I’m wearing a hat so I don’t have to fix his hair on camera again

. @ilyarozanovofficial (replying): liar. you love fixing my hair. 

By the time Shane and Ilya made it back to the rink, the interview had already blown up. Their phones were vibrating nonstop, and the team group chat had fully descended into anarchy.

We are all just living in roz’s world 

Wyatt Hayes: WHY ARE YOU TRENDING AGAIN   

Boodram: bro said “love and hockey can exist in the same sentence” like it was a TED Talk.

Troy Barrett: nah, my guy really gave a heartfelt speech while Rozanov sat there grinning like a proud stage mom.

Evan Dykstra: also— “professionally romantic” is a phrase that will haunt me forever.

young: can confirm, that interview gave me secondhand feelings. disgusting.

Harris Drover: ok but that line about being tired of pretending? chills. straight chills.

troy Barret: Harris crying in the club rn 

Harris Drover: worth it.

They walked into the locker room to find the entire team watching the interview on the TV above the stalls.

When Shane's face appeared, Wyatt stood up and clutched his chest.
"THERE HE IS! Mister 'Love and Hockey' himself!"

The boys started clapping.
Loudly.
Dramatically.

Shane covered his face with his hands. "I hate all of you."

Boodram grinned. "No, no — say the line, Hollander. Say the line."

"What line?" Shane asked suspiciously.

Wyatt jumped in. "You know — 'Love and hockey can exist in the same sentence!'"

They all shouted it in unison, voices echoing off the lockers like a badly rehearsed choir.

Even the coach walked by, raised an eyebrow, and muttered, "Well, they're not wrong."

Ilya was thriving.
He sat on the bench, smirking, hands folded behind his head.

"See, moya lyubov?" he said, completely unfazed by the chaos. "They love your speech."

Shane glared at him. "You told Harris to post that, didn't you?"

"I would never," Ilya said innocently. "Maybe."

Wyatt leaned in. "So, uh... is the next step a joint TikTok account or what?"

Shane groaned. "Absolutely not."

"Ilya's already making one," Boodram said helpfully.

"I am," Ilya confirmed. "Username: @professionallyromantic."

The entire locker room erupted.

Shane dropped his head into his hands again. "I regret everything."

"Too late!" Ilya said cheerfully.

Shane stared at him. "You're unbelievable."

Ilya leaned down, kissed him on the head, and said softly, "Yes. But you love me anyway."

Shane smiled, gave in, and mumbled, "Yeah. Professionally."

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