

Rookie Error

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Rookie Error

by [bchxrlie](#)

Summary

“You’re contracting me to join FanMail?” Shane Hollander stares at his Coach in disbelief, “FanMail.”

“It’s a new initiative to have all of you interacting more with fan spaces,” Coach Wiebe sighs, “it’s not just you, it’s the whole team. Something a little more personalised for the fans and you get a little money on the side too. Can’t be so bad, eh?”

Or;

Shane Hollander has joined the Centaurs and is told he has to start a FanMail page to make video requests for fans. What could go wrong?

Notes

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

“You’re contracting me to join FanMail?” Shane Hollander stares at his Coach in disbelief, “*FanMail*.”

“It’s a new initiative to have all of you interacting more with fan spaces,” Coach Wiebe sighs, “it’s not just you, it’s the whole team. Something a little more personalised for the fans and you get a little money on the side too. Can’t be so bad, eh?”

Shane stares at him for a moment before shaking his head, “I don’t need extra money and I prefer my fan interactions to stay where they’re at. I like my privacy Coach; you know this.”

“I’m sorry Shane, it’s in the contract and you’ve already signed. Just try it, you might have fun!”

Shane has been with the Centaurs for six months, a trade that no one saw coming aside from his long term, now-official boyfriend Ilya Rozanov. Both had grown tired of the ongoing distance between them; never having enough time together unless it was summer break and constantly driving the four hour round trip between their cities for the last two years. Until Shane had finally overheard one too many homophobic comments from his Coaches in Montreal and requested a trade to Ottawa.

To his friends, it made no sense. To the fans, it made even less.

His new team have been wonderful, maybe slightly hostile at first given that Shane had been on their rival team but ultimately they’ve accepted his presence well. He’s found new friends in Troy and Wyatt, both of whom he’d heard wonderful things about from Ilya.

Yet Shane still doesn’t feel entirely ready to announce his sexuality to the team, let alone his and Ilya’s relationship. The comments from his previous coaches still ring in his ears when he considers taking Ilya’s hand in public; he shies away from being near Ilya in the team changing rooms despite being unable to tear his eyes from the chiselled pecs and abs that display themselves every time Ilya removes his shirt.

He’s aware that insisting they drive separate cars to and from practice is extreme. He’s also aware that pretending to have moved back in with his parents instead of owning up to the fact that he’s actively living with Ilya is ridiculous. He just really likes the little bubble they’ve created together, for now anyway, it’ll change at some point.

Maybe.

Shane stewes on the idea of starting a FanMail account the entire drive home, thinking of every single excuse he possibly can to try and get out of it. It's not that he doesn't want to interact with his fans, per se. It's just that he's always been so, well, quiet online. He has a twitter and an Instagram, both under the username **@ShaneHollanderHockeyPlayer** but he's never posted on them. Anything big that's been shared in his socials has always come from his manager, Shane's not even entirely sure he knows the passwords to either account.

He's so out of it that when he enters the house and puts his bag down, that he startles when Ilya's arms wrap around his waist from behind.

"You are in your head, moya lyubov." The Russian drawls in Shane's ear, "How can we fix that?"

Shane leans his head back into Ilya's shoulder as his partner starts dropping light kisses from his ear and down the side of his neck. He takes a deep breath through his nose and slowly releases it, allowing his body to melt into Ilya's hold.

"I've been propositioned by Coach." He explains.

"Propositioned? I thought that was my job, no?" Ilya continues trailing kisses along Shane's neck and shoulder before burying his face into Shane's neck, taking the weight that Shane is dropping into his arms with ease.

Shane smiles and turns around so he can wrap his arms around his boyfriend's shoulders, hands coming up to bury themselves into the messy blonde curls and gently tugging Ilya's head up from his neck to press a slow kiss to his lips.

He allows himself a few moments of solace, losing himself in Ilya's embrace and enjoying the warmth of the hands roaming his back. Shane leans his head away to speak and Ilya chases after him, nipping softly at Shane's bottom lip and coaxing him back into another syrupy, slow kiss.

"Okay, okay!" Shane laughs, placing his hands on Ilya's chest and stepping slightly out of his arms. "It's nothing that deep, I promise. Coach says I have to— we have to all sign up to FanMail. Something about "connecting with fans" or something. I just... it's just not my thing, that's all."

"You are so caught up in your thinking because of FanMail?" Ilya looks genuinely surprised at the admission, "There is nothing to worry about. Is fun! I can show you."

Shane watches Ilya pad into the kitchen to find his phone and quickly takes off his shoes before following. Ilya leans against the worktop, tapping idly on his phone and then turns it to show Shane.

"People send their message, with names and things they want you to say. You make short video, can try a few times until you think it's right and then you send. Make a few dollars and people will get a nice birthday present or something from me." Ilya extends his phone out to Shane so he can scroll through the messages of people that have made requests from Ilya.

“How did I not know you were doing this before?” He asks as he reads the screen, “I’ve never seen you make one?”

“I only switch on a couple times a year for few weeks,” Ilya shrugs, “Is not something you need to do always, just every now and then to keep fans happy. Some of them are fun.”

Ilya steps up to read over Shane’s shoulder, “Look, I can do this one right now.” He points to a message requesting a birthday message for someone’s Father.

Shane watches as Ilya takes his phone, scans the message a few times and then switches to a video of himself; Ilya stands in front of one of the large windows in the hallway, quickly checks around him for nothing that could be deemed as ‘inappropriate’ or would give much of anything away about his home, then presses the record button.

“Hello Steven, your daughter Caroline wanted me to wish you Happy 60th Birthday and that we are very thankful that you have been a fan of the Centaurs for last 40 years. I hope you have a great birthday and we see you at the next game!” Ilya stops recording with a cheeky smile on his face and rewatches the video a few times before turning to Shane.

“See? Easy. Just have to look interested and remember what the message is and you do it. I think the underwear shoots are much harder, have to be boring and serious all the time. This is quick and more entertaining.” Ilya shrugs and turns back to his phone, quickly submitting the video and putting the device away.

“Now, where were we?” Ilya asks, the cheeky grin returning to his face as he sweeps Shane into his arms and carries him down the hall.

@ShaneHollanderHockeyPlayer: *I am now on FanMail! Send all your wonderful (not weird) requests, link in bio!*

Turns out Shane Hollander is quite popular on FanMail, getting hundreds of requests at a time and having to close his inbox after several hours just to start working through them all.

Most of them are pretty generic; birthday wishes, anniversary gifts, get well soon messages and the like, but there are the occasional ones that are so wild they make Shane giggle as he reads them.

“Come look at this one,” he laughs, turning his phone to Ilya, “They want me to tell their Mom they’re really sorry for drinking all her expensive vodka at a house party when they were 17.”

Ilya grins as he reads the message, “Told you some of them were fun.”

Shane nods and turns his phone back to read the message again, “Let me film this one and we’ll have lunch after?”

“Sure thing, Hollander.” Ilya sidles away to start prepping the food while Shane points the camera at his own face.

He films the video quickly, checks it to make sure it doesn’t give anything away about his location in the windows at the back and sends it. He doesn’t think any more of it than he does the other ones he films, he locks his phone and slides it into his back pocket before helping Ilya make their lunch.

@TheBiggestH0ckeyFan: *Anyone else noticed that Rozanov and Hollander have the exact same floors?*

[Screenshot] [Screenshot]

@C3nt4ursFollower: *@TheBiggestH0ckeyFan newsflash “2 guys have heard of floorboards”*

@IlyaRozIsMyBestie: *@TheBiggestH0ckeyFan Omg no bc I thought this the other day too??!! Shane did a FanMail for my Dad’s birthday and I swear the art in the back is the same as the one Ilya did for @ILuvIceDrama?!*

[Screenshot]

@ILuvIceDrama: *@IlyaRozIsMyBestie @TheBiggestH0ckeyFan lmao literally the exact same art?! Maybe they just shoot them in the same place at work tho???*

[Screenshot]

@TheBiggestH0ckeyFan: *@ILoveIceDrama would have thought the other guys on the team would have the same backgrounds then? but they don’t? omg omg omg are Ilya and Shane literally in the same house?!*

@ILoveIceDrama: *@TheBiggestH0ckeyFan that’s what I’m saying!!!!*

It’s several days before either of them realise that something isn’t quite right in the social media world. Mandatory Christmas break means the two of them are finally celebrating their first holiday season together in the same house. They’re too wrapped up in watching movies in front of the fire, having lazy sex in the mornings and cooking meals together, to be hugely bothered by what’s being said online.

Both Shane and Ilya have made a few FanMail videos during their time off but they’re too interested in each other to really pay much attention to them. It’s their holiday, they deserve a break.

It's Shane's phone that starts ringing first, he puts it on silent without even checking to see who's calling, too busy caught up in the arms of his boyfriend to care about taking a call right now. He's happy where he is, tucked away safely on Ilya's plush couch.

When Ilya's phone then cuts through the cosy silence they were cuddled up in, Ilya sighs and checks the caller ID.

"Is Farah?" Ilya says in surprise.

Shane sits up suddenly at the mention of their manager's name, Ilya gives him a quick look before answering the call on speaker.

"Oh thank god you picked up. Be honest with me, is Shane Hollander with you right now?" Farah asks, she doesn't sound angry, just incredibly stressed.

"Why would Hollander be with me?" Ilya responds, staring at Shane throughout.

"Don't bullshit me Rozanov, not now. Is he with you or not?"

"I- yeah. Yeah Farah, I'm here." Shane says quietly, "What's happened?"

There's a moment of stunned silence on the phone before a small groan makes its way out of the speaker.

"Were you planning on telling anyone about this?" Farah asks, Shane can almost hear the hand scrubbing at her face in frustration.

"Telling anyone about-?" Ilya says slowly, face going pale as his hand grips the phone.

"I need you to be really, really honest with me. You're not in trouble, I just want the truth."

"Starting to sound like my Mom here Farah," Shane attempts to joke, "What's going on?"

There's a muffled sigh and some keyboard taps on the other end of the phone for a few seconds before Farah delivers the final blow.

"People on Twitter have been...analysing the FanMail videos the two of you have been sending. They have screenshots and everything, they've somehow pieced together that you're both sending the videos from the same house. It seems that PopCrave have picked up the story and they're saying you're having a torrid love affair."

Shane feels the blood drain from his face as he stares at Ilya in horror, his heart starts beating double time and his hands start shaking.

"*What?*", he wheezes, trying desperately to stop his thoughts racing through his mind, to try and make sense of what he was hearing.

"I just-," Farah sighs again, "I just need to know if it's true. It's okay if it is, there's nothing bad about it. I just need your permission to confirm or deny the rumour and to write a statement."

Shane can't breathe, his hands clutch at his chest while tears suddenly pour down his cheeks, blurring his vision. He's half aware of Ilya talking to him and setting his phone to the side to bring Shane into his embrace. He can hear the soothing tones of Russian filling his ears with words he can't understand, while hands stroke gently through his hair and up and down his back.

"Breathe with me, Shane." Ilya takes a deep breath through his nose, holds it for a second and slowly exhales.

Shane can't quite catch his breath, stuttering through the action like he's just run a thousand miles sprint. Ilya catches one of Shane's hands and brings it up to his chest, allowing Shane to feel his breaths so that he can follow them by himself.

It's several minutes before he's able to calm down, a small broken sob escapes him as he looks up at his partner.

Ilya is pale, eyes swimming with tears and chewing on his bottom lip so hard that it's bleeding. He pays no notice as he swipes his tongue over the blood, eyes fixed on Shane.

Shane gives him a small nod, looking over at the phone resting on the coffee table in front of him

"Is real, Farah." Ilya says quietly, "I am unfamiliar with the term ah, 'torrid love affair', but Shane is my boyfriend. We have been seeing each other in private for the last eleven years. He lives with me now."

"I moved back to Ottawa for him," Shane pipes up shakily, "I couldn't handle the distance anymore. I told the Centaurs management I'd moved back in with my parents. I wanted to keep it quiet for a little while longer. I wasn't... I wasn't ready to say anything yet."

There's stunned silence down the phone until Farah's voice echoes through the room.

"I am so proud of you both. I'm so sorry that this choice has been taken away from you, the best thing we can do is either confirm or deny the statement PopCrave has released. It would be my advice to go with the story, though I appreciate this isn't how you wished for the world to be told."

"Can you draft a statement to confirm? Something short and to the point?" Ilya asks, still gently running his hands up and down Shane's back, in a gesture that seems to be soothing for them both at this point.

"I certainly can, would you like to put any photos or anything out with it?"

"No," Shane says, "I think we can do that on our own."

Ilya nods slowly, a small smile on his face as he reaches up to blot some of Shane's tears.

"Yes, we can do that together. Thank you Farah."

They wait for Farah to say her goodbyes before Ilya grabs his phone and settles back into the couch. Shane crawls into his lap and they both watch the phone screen as Ilya taps into a folder of photos that remain locked behind a password.

“Let’s post something together, along with the statement, yes?” Ilya asks as he scrolls through eleven years worth of sneakily taken selfies of the two of them.

Shane nods, extending a hand to click on the photo of them both presenting the NHL awards.

“This one for sure.”

@ShaneHollanderHockeyPlayer and **@IlyaRozanovOfficial**:

It only took 11 years for you to figure it out. #LoveWins

[7 photos of Ilya and Shane over the last decade, documenting their relationship]

@TheBiggestH0ckeyFan: *omg I fuckin knew it*

@ILuvIceDrama: *SCREAMING, CRYING, THROWING UP*

@IlyaRozIsMyBestie: *Does this mean I have to change my username lmao, I guess Ilya is actually Shane’s bestie?*

@ShaneHollanderHockeyPlayer: **@IlyaRozIsMyBestie** *it does, yes <3*

End Notes

Thank you so much for reading this silly little short fic that was bouncing around my brain all day. I've just really fallen in love with these boys and when I initially read the books, I thought they would out themselves!

Kudos and comments always welcome!

You can find me on tiktok: bethandherfandoms
Or on tumblr: bethforthe game



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