In-Laws

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at https://archiveofourown.org/works/76143421.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Categories:	Gen, M/M
Fandoms:	Heated Rivalry (TV), Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid
Relationships:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov, Yuna Hollander & Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Ilya Rozanov, Shane Hollander, Yuna Hollander, David Hollander
Additional Tags:	Canon Universe, Light Angst, Ilya Rozanov Loves Shane Hollander, Set just after the hospital scene, basically Shane's parents find Ilya at the hospital and it's a little awkward, they don't know they're going to be family, POV Yuna Hollander, for the second chapter
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2025-12-21 Completed: 2025-12-24 Words: 3,092 Chapters: 2/2

In-Laws

by laferte

Summary

Ilya runs into Shane's parents in the hospital.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Chapter 1

Ilya left the hospital room with one last smile to the nurse, one last desperate prayer to God that the man he loved, grinning dopily and high out of his mind, would keep his beautiful mouth shut.

The sticky, weighted tightness in his chest had eased a little, at least, seeing Shane awake and talking. He'd been a mess of panic and worst-case scenarios from the moment he saw Marleau rushing at him, from the moment he dropped, the heavy thud of his body, limp against the ice. The complete silence of the crowd, stark and echoing the chaos of the rink.

What if Shane was seriously hurt? What if he was dead? What if he'd slammed his head so hard it knocked everything else out, and upon waking had forgotten everything, forgotten Ilya, and he'd be left completely alone as the only one who knew what they'd been to each other? Nightmare avenues of potential outcomes chased him all through the rest of the game, into the locker rooms, out of the rink and into his car to the hospital.

Lurking in hallways, eavesdropping on hushed English he couldn't make out and all the medical staff having the utmost professional fucking discretion and nobody telling him anything even once he'd worked up the nerve to ask. Avoiding any of Shane's other teammates, especially Hayden goddamn Pike, skulking the halls like a ghost demanding updates.

It wasn't abnormal for the opposition - especially the captain - to check in on an injured player. Good sportsmanship; not that Rozanov had ever been known as a particularly good sport. He could start. He'd scrolled through his phone scanning the internet for updates, ignoring every video posted online because he couldn't bear to watch it again. Watch Shane go down, watch himself float uselessly on the peripheral as his heart lay cold and unresponsive, five feet away, in the limp hand of the one who owned it.

Eventually, he'd woken up. Eventually, Ilya had tucked himself in the door as Shane's coach and his teammates and his friends filtered in and out, eyeing the door for his opening. Eventually, it had come.

Shane lit up, so bright and dazed and unlike his usual nervous, reserved self, that Ilya's heart skipped a beat then slammed into overdrive. Anybody could walk in, see the look on both their faces, and it would be game over. He'd meant to hold back. Keep himself at the door, keep professional, keep his goddamn fucking distance for both their sakes. But when had Shane ever let him stick to his plans?

He made it a few steps further down the corridor and dropped down into a waiting chair outside a door for someone else's room, sighing deeply, letting his head fall into his hands.

'*Come to my cottage*.'

He'd looked so pleased with himself. Like Ilya could just spend two weeks with him, alone, pretending they had something real, and just return to the real world after. Like it wouldn't fucking break him.

But he'd looked so pleased, so happy and proud of himself to have thought of it, Ilya couldn't deny him. He never could. So he'd said maybe, maybe we can pretend. Maybe this isn't hopeless. Knowing damn well that once Shane was lucid, he'd walk it back, and they'd go back to normal.

It didn't matter what Ilya wanted. It mattered what he could have, and two weeks alone with Shane Hollander was not one of those things.

Distantly, he heard noise floating down the fall, clacking of heels against the hospital linoleum and low, rapid voices saying things too hushed and too rapid for him to parse. The noise came closer and Ilya should really leave but all of his limbs had turned to glue and he couldn't move and-

The heels stopped clacking. The voices fell silent. Slowly, one painful muscle at a time, Ilya looked up to see none other than Yuna and David Hollander, standing right in front of him.

His hands dropped down, ran through his hair, and he shot to his feet.

‘Rozanov,’ Shane’s mother said slowly, like she was waiting for him to bolt. Or bite. Or both, ‘It’s… I didn’t think we’d see you here.’

Ilya nodded, swallowed. Fuck, ‘Yes,’ he said, grasping onto what little English he could remember over the fresh tide of panic, ‘I, uh, came to give S- Hollander my, um, wishes.’

David Hollander shifted the coat in his hands, looked between his wife and his son’s archrival, and cleared his throat, ‘You two take a minute,’ his voice was even, and he tipped his head towards the door, ‘I’ll go see how he is.’

The last time Ilya had seen Shane’s mother, he’d been in the elevator on his way to fuck her son for the first time. He wondered if she remembered it. He prayed she didn’t.

Yuna stayed rooted to the spot, eyes boring into Ilya, trying to look for some ulterior motive. Shane had joked about it before, his mother’s hatred of him, her complete belief that their rivalry carried off the ice. Ilya shrank under her stare.

‘What wishes?’ She said as soon as the door clicked shut behind her husband.

‘Good wishes,’ Ilya wrung out his hands, ‘Get well soon, hope your head is not broken, those wishes. All normal. Hockey, is, uh…’ he waved a hand around, ‘Is just a game. Marleau is sorry. Never meant to hurt him.’

‘I see.’ She pursed her lips, looked him up and down one more time, and seemed to decide something, ‘Well, thank you for coming. You didn’t have to.’

‘I did,’ he said too quickly, ‘He - Hollander - he is good player. Good man,’ Ilya chewed at the inside of his cheek, ‘Better one than me. Do not tell him that,’ he tried to laugh. It didn’t sound convincing, ‘I have, um, what is… People do not think I am nice.’

‘Reputation?’

‘*Da*, yes, that. I have my reputation. He, we- we have ours. Must hate each other, yes? But hockey is a game. I am good at it, very good. He is too. Would be less fun if he stopped playing. The others, they are not as good as us.’

‘No,’ she said, the corner of her mouth finally tipping up, ‘You two are in somewhat of a league of your own. Not many others who can keep up.’

‘Sometimes,’ he agreed. He shuffled in spot, nodded at the door, ‘But he is fine. Nothing that will not get better. I have taken your time,’ he swiped nervously at his mouth, stepped aside, ‘You should see him.’

‘Thank you,’ she moved away, resting her hand on the door, about to leave before Ilya spoke again.

‘Wait,’ he called to her back. She kept her hand on the door, but looked back over her shoulder at him, eyes back to scrutinizing. ‘He is, um,’ he tapped a finger to his temple, ‘They gave him something. Very strong. Good stuff. But he is a little, how you say, little crazy.’

‘Ahh,’ she chuckled softly, ‘All looped up, is he?’

‘Yes,’ Ilya breathed a sigh of relief, ‘Very loopy. Saying silly things, not true. Might say more silly things. Ignore it, if he does. I did.’

‘I’ll bear that in mind,’ she nodded at him, ‘Thank you for coming to see him, Rozanov. I’m sure it means a lot. He respects you.’

Ilya swallowed, sharp against the lump in his throat, ‘Always,’ he said, ‘He is not as bad as he seems.’

She chuckled once more, softer, ‘I’m sure you’re not either.’

The she opened the door, slipped in, and left. Ilya caught one final glimpse of Shane, too busy talking to his dad to notice him back, before the door clicked shut. He sighed, took one last look at the closed door, and left.

He did not wear the cross on his neck for God. But maybe God could look past that. Maybe, if he had any luck at all, Shane would not say anything reckless to his parents. And maybe, if he did, they could write it off on the meds.

Ilya turned and strode out of the hospital. Back out into the real world.

Maybe.

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Shane is on the good stuff.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Yuna left Rozanov behind in the hallway, trying to put the strange, disoriented look in his eye out of her mind, and stepped into her son's hospital room.

Hockey was a contact sport. She knew this, she'd always known it, she'd grown up watching the sport and grown older watching Shane play it. They'd watched countless players slam against the boards or each other, hit the ice like lead over the years. She'd taken her son to the rink when he was six, watched him wobble on his skates like a baby deer, knowing that hockey was a contact sport. Driven him to practise, paid for his coaching, spoken to his coaches and captains and sponsorship negotiators knowing damn well the entire time that hockey was a contact sport and players could get hurt.

Knowing it wasn't the same as feeling it. No amount of knowing, no theoretical understanding, no watching it happen to other people prepares a mother to see her son in a hospital bed.

Shane looked up lazily from where he was babbling to his father, his face lighting up in a dazed grin as he called out to her.

'Mom! Mom, mama, ma-ma-made it, helloo~' he trailed off, giggling to himself as Yuna crossed the room to his bedside, taking his hand tightly in hers, careful not to dislodge the needle taped into the back of it.

'Hi sweetie,' she smiled at him, squeezed his hand tighter, 'How're you feeling?'

‘M’fine,’ he sighed easily, letting his head sink back into the pillow, his eyes half shut, ‘All, all good. Great. M’fine, m’just,’ his brow furrowed and his lip pushed out in a pout, and she reached to stroke his forehead gently, smoothing it out, ‘Out for the playoffs. Don’t think we’ll win this year.’

‘Oh, baby,’ she soothed him, ‘That’s okay. You’re okay, you’ll get it next season.’ Trust her son to be disappointed about missing his chance for a third consecutive cup. Most hockey players would be happy to die after the first.

‘Boooo,’ he groaned, letting his free hand rise and drop limply against the sheets. His words slurred a little around the consonants, voice far more animated than it was normally, rising and dropping in pitch, ‘That’s so far away. Bored, boring, already died of boredom.’

‘Don’t be a drama queen,’ she chuckled, letting her hand fall away from his face, taking in the faint purple bruises along his nose and cheeks. Hockey was a contact sport. ‘What did the doctors say?’

‘Pshh. Concussion. Collarbone broken. Fractured, maybe. Can’t, mmn, can’t remember.’

‘That’s okay, champ,’ David patted his shoulder gently, ‘We’ll get it all sorted, keep you on your meds. Looks like they’re working, huh?’

Shane snorted, ‘Working great. Don’t even feel it, tell Marleau to come hit me again, I’ll just,’ he raised his free arm sloppily, a little unco-ordinated, ‘Bounce off ‘im. Like a ball. Bouncy ball, all bouncy,’ he snickered to himself again, dissolving into a fit of lazy giggles.

When he calmed down, he turned back to Yuna, frowning a little, ‘Thought you already asked the doctors. Dad said you were talking.’

Yuna looked up to glare daggers at her husband. David shrugged, ‘He asked where you were.’ She swallowed it with one last glare that said they would talk later, and turned back to her son.

‘Not to them, sweetie. I caught Rozanov in the hall, he said he came to see you.’

She was prepared for him to frown again. For a little playful trash talk, and for them to brush off Shane’s rival and talk about more important things. She was not prepared for her son’s complete and utter glee at hearing his rival’s name.

Shane’s face lit up like a Christmas tree, dark eyes sparkling in the gentle sun peeking through the curtains, *‘Ilya!* Did you, you saw him? Is-- is he still here, is he coming back?’ He shuffled up in his bed, David’s steady hand on his chest easing him back down as Yuna’s brain struggled to rewrite its direction.

‘No, no honey. He was just leaving. But it was nice of him to swing by, huh?’

He let his father set him down gently in the bed, smiling to himself again.

‘He is nice,’ That was news to Yuna, ‘Nice to me.’ Breaking news, in fact. She wasn’t aware they even spoke off the ice, and had never heard anything from her son to contradict the idea that the two simply hated each other. The first inkling she’d gotten was from talking to Rozanov five minutes ago.

She thought back to what Rozanov had said about his reputation, about his and Shane’s. The Boston captain certainly had an image among fans and followers of the sport; cocky, carefree, and largely apathetic to anything except winning. Shane was the opposite - his quiet, boy-next-door persona carried true to who he actually was. Competitive, yes, but what professional athlete wasn’t? Her son was calm and sweet, polite to everybody, if a little awkward. Of course everyone thought they hated each other. They had been deadly rivals for nigh on a decade. They couldn’t be more different.

Yuna Hollander pushed down her surprise and returned her focus to Shane, staring dreamily at nothing. But her curiosity got the better of her. Call it a mama bear instinct. ‘He is?’

‘Yeah,’ Shane giggled again. ‘When he’s not being an asshole,’ That was more like the Rozanov she’d heard about, ‘But he got me ginger ale. Thought I wouldn’t notice, like it was just lying around, but I know he hates it. Got it for me.’

Ah. Now it made sense, ‘I think you’re getting confused, sweetie,’ she said softly, reaching up to smooth down his hair, ‘Hayden and Jackie get ginger ale for you, when you go to dinner.’

Hayden had messaged her a few hours ago, when he’d first been in to see Shane. Rozanov had come in shortly after. Of course Shane would confuse the two right now.

She thought back to something else Rozanov had said, his eyes alight with nerves. Shane’s meds made his head foggy, and he said things that he didn’t mean, or weren’t true. Her stomach blanched, hoping her son hadn’t embarrassed himself too badly in front of the Boston captain, whether or not he was enough of an asshole to use it against him.

But Shane shook his head, frowning hard enough to squeeze his eyes shut, ‘No,’ he said petulantly, ‘Ilya got me ginger ale. And he made me a tuna melt. But you can’t tell anyone,’ his eyes flew open, locked onto hers, wild and frantic. His voice dropped into a poor attempt at whispering, ‘You can’t tell anyone, it’s a secret, shhh.’

‘Okay, honey, okay. I’m not going to tell anyone,’ she coaxed him into calming down, looking up frantically at David, just as shocked as she was.

‘You can’t tell anyone,’ he said again, but softer this time, ‘Or he’ll freak out. Won’t come to the cottage.’

Yuna blinked, ‘He’s coming to the cottage?’

Shane grinned again,evidently proud of himself, ‘Maybe. He said maybe. I hope he comes. Don’t,’ he fumbled around a bit, fidgeting his hands nervously as his grin dropped, ‘Don’t want him to go back to Russia. Just makes him sad.’

Her head was spinning a thousand miles an hour. Shane never invited anyone, save herself and David, and occasionally Hayden and his family, to the cottage. It was his private sanctuary, his safe space. But he’d apparently, all hopped up on hospital grade painkillers,

invited Rozanov? And Rozanov, probably just to placate him in his current state, had said *maybe?*

She wondered how much she'd failed to pick up on. Her son's entire friendship, however far it went, with his ten year archrival, was something she'd clearly missed. As much as she wanted to believe that it was, like Rozanov had said, just Shane being loopy, part of her couldn't. Shane didn't want Rozanov to go back to Russia because it upset him, and would rather bring the Boston captain into his home than let him go back to his own.

A million questions flit through her brain. How did he know how Rozanov felt about his country? When had they spoken about it? And, maybe most importantly, why was it such a secret?

'I'm sure he'll come,' she murmured, completely unsure, 'It's very kind of you to think about him.'

'Mm, always think about him,' he mumbled, 'How-- was he okay when you saw him? Did he seem okay?'

'He's alright,' she soothed him, 'Said he's sorry you're hurt. Glad you're okay.'

Shane hummed, letting his eyes slip shut, 'Good,' he said quietly, 'Didn't… didn't want him to worry.'

'Okay champ,' David interjected, ruffling Shane's hair, 'You'd had a lot of action recently. Why don't you go take a nap, alright? We'll go speak to the doctors, let you rest, then come back to take you home.'

'Okay dokay,' Shane went down easy, sinking into the sheets, already half asleep. Yuna looked at her husband over his gentle snores.

They'd had a few conversations, mostly before Shane briefly dated Rose Landry, about their son. As his parents, they weren't blind to the fact that he hadn't seemed as… let's say *preoccupied*, with the fairer sex as most of his teammates. Broadly, she'd swept that under the rug of his single minded obsession with the sport.

This was different, at least it seemed so. Yuna knew her son well enough to know not to bring it up when he was lucid, but this was a long way away from being too busy for girls.

'David,' she whispered, 'You, you don't think…?'

'I don't know,' he confessed, looking back over to Shane, checking he was out cold, 'Maybe.'

Whatever secrets her son was keeping, he was old enough to keep them now. As much as she hated it. As much a mother was never ready to let her baby go.

She could only pray that she's raised her son to have better taste in men than Ilya Rozanov. Even if he was secretly a nice young man that bought ginger ale and waited around outside his hospital room and said maybe when Shane invited him into his house.

Maybe.

Chapter End Notes

wow! i just wanted to say thank you for the unreal response to the first chapter, i was really not expecting so many people to enjoy it. as promised, here is the second and final part! thanks to everyone for reading xxx

End Notes

sooo this kind of just fell out of me.

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