

Buy Me a Drink First

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/76190966) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/76190966>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warnings:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings , No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Heated Rivalry (TV)
Relationship:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Shane Hollander , Ilya Rozanov , Svetlana Vetrova (mentioned) , Hayden Pike (mentioned)
Additional Tags:	First Dates , Hiking , Secret Relationship , Not Beta Read , Awkward Conversations , Flirting , Implied/Referenced Homophobia
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2025-12-24 Words: 4,561 Chapters: 1/1

Buy Me a Drink First

by [lesbianvivi](#)

Summary

It only takes eight years for Ilya to realise he and Shane have never gone on an actual date. The nature of their relationship has never really called for it, but since Hollander is looking for, admittedly, more than Ilya is able to provide at the minute, it wouldn't hurt to start *acting* like the kind of couple Hollander wants to be.

Notes

As a frame of reference, this takes place during episode 5, before the ending but after Ilya's phone call.

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

Muscle memory makes Ilya reach over to his nightstand for a cigarette, even though he knows himself that he hasn't smoked in months and hasn't kept them on his nightstand for even longer. Plus, Hollander likes to get on him for doing it in the house, even if his windows are open.

Next to him, Hollander flips over to his side to make himself comfortable, silently deciding by himself to stay for the rest of the day. Not that Ilya minds anymore, now that Hollander's decided to be honest with himself about what exactly this is supposed to be.

Still though, the label of 'boyfriend' feels a little strange on his skin, if that makes any sense. Maybe the anxiety is what makes the hairs on his skin stand up rather than the word itself. He finds that it is most unbearable whenever he thinks back to what Hollander said about this, whatever 'this' is, not just being sex anymore. Ilya is not opposed to it, adding more feelings to their arrangement, even if it will take some getting used to.

But they have been good at keeping secrets, if the last nine years have anything to say about it.

"Are you hungry?" Ilya asks. Surely Hollander is half-asleep by now, but it never hurts to ask. According to Hollander himself, of course.

He only gets a hum in response, one that the years have taught him is more noncommittal than the two of them combined, which means lunch will be a solo affair today. Cooking for two was more natural these days, and the thought of making enough for Hollander to eat later occurs to him as being more logical. He rolls out of bed, though not before pinching Hollander's cheek because he knows it irritates him.

They've never shared a proper meal together now that Ilya thinks about it, at least not one that was just for the two of them. He pulls his pants back on. They don't do much together at all, actually.

Except fuck, but for once, that is not exactly what Ilya is thinking of.

He watches as Hollander truly begins to doze off even if he's fighting with his eyelids to stay awake. Even a couple years ago, Ilya had admitted to himself that he cared about Hollander more than he did most other people. He deserves more than just sex, doesn't he? Hand on his hip, Ilya stands over his side of the bed and tries to think of a plan. He is not suggesting that they go for dinner at a candle lit restaurant, which he doubts Hollander would like anyway, but doing something together might be nice.

A... date. A date would be nice.

The only problem is that Hollander goes back to Montreal tomorrow. That means they likely will not see each other for some months, so their only option is to do it today.

Ilya crosses over to Hollander's side and shakes him awake. "Hollander."

Still committed to definitely not being asleep, Hollander shoots up into a sitting position. Ilya chooses to not comment on it. “Hmm? ‘m up, wha’s the matter?” He mutters just loud enough to be audible.

“You need to take a shower.”

Hollander slips down back into the comforter. “I’ll take one later, jus... give me a few minutes.”

“You are filthier than I remember, Hollander.” Ilya says, not exactly joking. He pushes Hollander’s hair away from where it has stuck itself to his forehead so he can rub his temple to prevent him from falling back asleep. “Get up, Hollander. I want to go out.”

That gets him to open his eyes, properly this time. He makes one of his many faces, since controlling his expressions has never been a talent of his, and this face is one of the vaguely surprised kinds. “Do you need me to leave?” Something about Hollander’s tone makes him seem like an abandoned dog, which is funny, since his sadness is self-inflicted. He pulls his hand out from where it had been buried under the comforter to push Ilya’s hand away from his face, clearly fully awake now.

“That is not what I said. I said I want to go out with you.” Ilya says. Hollander’s eyes squint, and Ilya can almost see the cogs turning in his head while he processes what Ilya really means. It is not complicated, but Hollander has always needed a couple extra seconds to understand things.

“Oh.” is all he has to say. Now Ilya is the confused one. Hollander has always been the one asking him too many personal questions, and he’s the one who wants them to be serious about each other, but a date proposition is where the line is drawn?

Canadians. He will never understand them.

“Do you have problem with that?”

Hollander shakes his head as he sits up straight, not afraid this time around. “No. Just, wouldn’t that be a date?”

Ilya shrugs his shoulders. In his own mind, he would consider it a date. But it seems that Hollander might be more talk than walk—or however it is that the phrase goes—about this relationship business. “It can be. You said you wanted more than sex, no?”

The room is silent for one too many moments. Ilya does not get embarrassed, but if he did, maybe he would say he is kind of embarrassed for asking now that Hollander is acting as if he just grew another head. Hollander runs his hand through his hair and leaves it someplace near the back.

“I did say that,” Hollander admits.

Ilya folds his arms over his chest. “Okay so what is issue? Unless you are breaking up with me, Hollander. I will be very sad if this is how it ends.” The joke made Hollander stop

pulling his strange closed off face, letting out a huffed laugh. He stops dodging Ilya's eyes too, which makes his hesitation clear enough for a blind man to see. Hollander, as he often does, mimics Ilya's pose, folding his own arms over his chest.

While the gears are still turning in Hollander's head, his fingers rap themselves against his forearms. "I'm not saying no because I don't want to, Rozanov. But where could we even go?"

Ilya sucks in a sharp breath. He had not gotten that far in his planning just yet. It is not like they can never be seen together in public, but most date ideas are not the kind of things two friends would do together. Unless it was him and Svetlana, but they do not count. But, thinking of Svetlana, he wonders what kind of thing she would suggest. She is much better with coming up with ideas than he has ever been.

Hollander does not like most things regular people do, but Ilya supposes that might be a good thing for this. He does not think a library date would be much fun, and sitting on the couch and talking is what they usually do if they are not fucking. So that covers most of Hollander's interests outside of hockey, which is not very appealing either.

Looking outside gives him an idea that his mindwandering cannot.

"We could go hiking."

Another face. Hollander likes to use his face more than words. "Hiking?" He echos, as if he has never heard the word before.

"Yes. You know what hiking is, don't you?"

Again, as if he never learned to express emotion any other way, Hollander laughs and curses Ilya's name under his breath. "I know what hiking is, you don't have to be a dick all the time."

"But it is so much fun to harass you, Hollander," Ilya whines. He smirks when Hollander pushes him away so he can get out of bed, clearly trying to create distance between the two of them so he does not have to admit that Ilya is very, very funny. When he wants to be, of course.

Without any announcement, Hollander begins to walk towards his bathroom. "I'm going to take my shower," He says over his shoulder.

"So you will come with me?" His tone makes him sound desperate, Ilya thinks. But the words have been said, so no taking them back.

Besides, Hollander does not respond anyway.

“So the silent treatment was just for dramatic effect,” Ilya thinks as he glances at Hollander who is sitting very pretty in the passenger seat. Well, sitting uncomfortably might be a better way to describe it. Hollander is fidgeting in his seat like he is trying to avoid needles at the back of it. His eyes stay firmly glued outside the window and his hand must have borrowed some of that glue, because his mouth has stayed covered since they got in the car. “Is something the matter with you?”

Hollander seems surprised by the fact that Ilya could see that something is wrong, but if he could not see that, then him being the one to drive the car would be a bigger concern. He even hesitates while shaking his head, not quite ready to spit it out.

“I showed you the trail. It will not take long, you will be home before your mother calls you for bedtime, I promise.” Hollander groans beside him, recognising the way he speaks about his Canadian friend immediately. Ilya will admit, it is nice to have someone else around who understands his jokes so quickly. Americans are much less perceptive than Hollander is, Ilya has found.

“It’s not that, I’ve just... never been hiking before.” Hollander mumbles behind his hand, ashamed to say such a thing out loud.

Sometimes the things Hollander says earnestly are funnier than his jokes, and once again, he shows off his knack for unintentional humor. It is cute how he says it like he has committed a cardinal sin.

It seems that Hollander is less amused by his laughter, “Do you always have to laugh at me, Rozanov?”

Ilya sighs. Hollander is not a sensitive man exactly, but he does not take it very well when he thinks he is being made fun of. Today is supposed to be nice, he reasons, pushing back against the part of himself that wants to make another joke out of the ordeal. He chokes out a, “Sorry.” in its stead. Hollander’s head snaps towards him quick enough to give the both of them whiplash, but he does not comment on the apology. “You are cute when you are flustered.”

Hollander nods, it is disjointed and slow, making it look like Hollander does not know what a nod is meant to look like. “Oh, okay.” He says, quietly. “Thank you?”

The car is much warmer now as an awkward silence settles between them. Coming to a full stop as they get further into the city’s traffic, Hollander searches for something to fill the space between them. Maybe a date was not the greatest idea. They are good at talking in small bursts, or during sex, but it was starting to seem like those skills were not transferable to a date where all you do is talk. The end goal of a conversation not being to fuck seems to be unsettling Hollander, and what Ilya should do about that is beyond him.

Uncomfortably, Hollander clears his throat. “So do you go hiking often?”

Traffic clears a few inches and Ilya continues to drive. “Not much anymore. Hiking is not as fun in America. But I still go, sometimes.” Hollander chuckles at that, for some reason. “Did I say something funny?”

“You seem to hate everything about America,” Hollander says, still laughing.

“I do not hate *everything*—”

“You hate most things!” He interrupts himself with his own laughter, “I don’t think I could name three things you like in America.”

Ilya opens his mouth just to close it up again. He is sure there are things he likes, a couple things do come to mind immediately, but Ilya figures Hollander would rather not hear about the types of women he likes. Again. “I like you,” is what he lands on.

Because, presumably, Hollander does not like it when Ilya experiences joy, he doesn’t get flustered by his forwardness this time around. “I don’t count, I’m not American.”

There is hardly a difference, if Ilya were to say. Canadians are not any nicer to him than Americans are, but he does not play in Canada enough to have formed an opinion of the people there outside of Hollander and the rest of his team. Ilya does not hate the Montreal Metros—at least not for their personalities—but they are a little too much in a way that feels too genuine to be genuine. “Same thing.”

Hollander scoffs, “Wow. Don’t let anyone else hear you say that, Rozanov.”

“Why? Will you not protect me, Hollander?” Taking his eyes off the road, he watches Hollander bite back a laugh and face away from him. He returns to looking out the window, ending their brief conversation.

For most of his life, Ilya has avoided pure silence. Not necessarily on purpose, life has just always been too fast for it to quietly pass him by, like it does for Hollander. He is not trying to insult him for that, at least not this time, but the stillness in the car is nicer when he shares it with Hollander than it does when he has to sit in it alone.

He considers telling him that, but he holds his tongue.

The trail is quite empty when they arrive, which is somewhat unusual for this time of year. Thankfully for the both of them, Ilya had most of the things they needed for a hike, though he did not have a first-aid kit or any pocket knives lying around, so if they die that will be unfortunate. He lets Hollander go ahead so he can familiarize himself with the trail’s map while he grabs their bags.

He slings his own bag over his shoulder and carries Hollander’s, the lighter of the two, over to him. Hollander stands in the middle of the space in front of the massive information sign, hands on his hips and studying it like somebody’s uncle. A quick “Thanks” is shot Ilya’s way when he hands him his bag, but he returns to his sign even quicker.

“The route will not change if you stare at it longer, Hollander.”

No response is given to that, instead Hollander mentions that “The length of the route is shorter than it is online.” He points, vaguely, around a twist in the path that he must have not noticed when Ilya showed him the route earlier.

“That is alternative path, Hollander. For more experienced hikers.” Ilya drags his finger along the longer path that Hollander had skipped over, stopping when their fingertips touch at the intersection of the paths. “We should take this one. It will take too long to carry you back when you fall on the other path.”

When Hollander notices Ilya’s finger against his own, he pulls his hand back, acting like he had been burned. He folds his arms, crinkling the spare jacket Ilya had given him and clearly showing that it is not his size. “That’s rude.”

Ilya taps Hollander’s shoulder to signal that they should start moving, “Not rude if it’s true.” He begins walking towards the trail’s entrance, letting Hollander catch up to him. As he had already noticed, there were only a few hikers, all alone barring a small family and a couple. So not many eyes will be on them. Though Hollander tends to think they are more famous than they really are. They are professional hockey players, not models.

Hollander joins him at his side as they pass the zero miles sign. Most of the trail is covered in forestry instead of rocks because Ilya figured that much might be a little too advanced for Hollander’s first time. The snapping twigs beneath their feet are louder than their conversation, which is not hard, since they are not speaking at all.

He is not quite sure what to say. There is little to look at yet, even if Hollander seems to enjoy being around the forestry.

The silence between them is not like how it was in the car. It is more than unpleasant, and noticing discomfort in one area makes him feel it all over his body. Suddenly his jacket is too warm and the strap of his bag is too tight. He makes no move to adjust either. “It is quiet out here,” He says, no longer content to be drowned out by the birds in the trees or the leaves that Hollander seems to be intentionally stepping on.

“Yeah. It’s nice.” It takes Ilya a moment to register what he says, as Hollander has somehow gotten a few steps ahead of him. His feet must not want people to know this is a date as much as his brain doesn’t. “Reminds me of my parents’ cabin. Kinda secluded like this.”

Ilya nods and quickens his pace so he is actually next to Hollander. “The one you built your house next to?”

“They’re not *next* to each other. I just like having them nearby.” The ground beneath them begins to elevate slightly as the hike part actually begins. If Ilya remembers properly, there is a small stream coming up soon that they need to cross. Maybe Hollander will let them take a picture together in front of it.

To their left, a young couple skirts past them. The two seem so enthralled in their own conversation that they barely even notice him and Hollander as people and not just something to get around. Holding hands on this part of the trail can be inconvenient considering its steepness, but it does not matter for them.

He is jealous, to not beat around it for once. It is not just Hollander who is refusing to be intimate with him in public. Ilya has made no move to do something intimate yet, and he does not plan to. It is a date, yes, but they're not in a position to be that other couple. They are not supermodels, no matter how attractive he finds Hollander, but recognition is not impossible even if nobody on the trail watches hockey. Hollander is everywhere. He is on billboards, in campaigns.

Not only do they have too much to lose, it is also too easy to lose it.

Hollander slows down so they are actually next to each other, and leans close enough into him for it to still seem casual, "I actually like it out here. Thanks for bringing me, Rozanov." His voice is low even though nobody else would hear him if he spoke regularly.

Ilya shrugs, "It gets nicer after the stream." He knocks their shoulders together, "Do not thank me yet." Hollander widens the gap between them, but Ilya can still see the small smile on his face in spite.

The trees block out most of the sky that is not directly above them, so the sun's rays are erratic and not as illuminating as he would like them to be, except for when they turn the bend the stream begins at. It is a short little thing that, realistically, could just be walked through, but he guesses the dampness would be unpleasant for the rest of the hike. The stream glistens like it will never get the chance to do so again, and water actually looks clean for once.

"Hollander." Ilya taps their hands together. He does not jerk his hand away again, maybe rationalising it to himself as just being to catch his attention, and raises his eyes from their hands up to Ilya's face. The sun does wonders for Hollander's eyes, bringing out the hazel undertones artificial lights never properly can. He has seen them like this a few times, he would not know they shone like that if this were the first time, but whenever the light hits him like this, it reminds him how pretty Hollander is.

Working off assumption, Hollander begins to move towards the dingy wood bridge that goes over the stream. "Hang on. Do you want to take picture before we go?"

Hollander looks back at him, for once. His eyebrow is furrowed. He is confused, more confused than necessary. He steps back to where Ilya is, though mostly to let people who are actually trying to use the bridge pass. "Of the stream?"

"Of the two of us. And the stream." He can already see Hollander gearing up to say no, "We do not have to kiss, Hollander. Just, a picture. Do not make me beg."

Saying that was a mistake. A sadistic grin spreads across Hollander's face, it would be out of character for him if he did not do this *every* time whenever Ilya messed up with his words like that. "Beg, huh?"

"Shut up, Hollander." Ilya drapes his arm over Hollander's shoulders and roots around in his pocket for his phone. Hollander's smirk is gone, and he is doing that anxious sidestep thing again. "I will not show anybody, okay?"

Hollander snorts, “You say that like we’re taking nudes.”

“Okay and you act like we are.” Ilya positions the camera in front of them, doing his best to get some of the stream in the picture. Hollander’s smile is a little lopsided, but it is cute. Ilya looks around to see if there are any more people left to pass them by. No, it seems. He pulls Hollander in a little closer before taking another photo of the two of them.

He does not let Hollander complain about being pulled closer and runs over the bridge, leaving him annoyed on the other side.

“We are not far from the top now.” Hollander is texting his work mother when they reach the last checkpoint before the peak. The sun is no longer hiding itself behind the trees, and is blinding him from this angle. It is probably petty, but Ilya wishes Hollander would let that man be lonely for a little while. Plus, that man has too many kids to be lonely any other time.

Finally, his phone gets tucked away. “Sorry. Needed to come up with a lie to tell Hayden.”

He figured that was the case, but now that Hollander says it, is it really still necessary for them to lie about hanging out? He understands it when they are fucking, but it would not be *that* strange for rivals to become friends. There have been others before them in the league, and he is sure they are not fucking.

Well maybe not sure.

“Hey, look at that.” Hollander points towards something in the trees. Whatever it is, Ilya cannot find it, until Hollander physically turns his head in its direction.

Oh, it is a family of squirrels. He knew there was wildlife on these trails, but he rarely ever saw them come out. He smiles, first at the squirrels, and then at Hollander who seems to be itching to take a photo. Of course, it will startle them if he does, so they let themselves get further behind all the other hikers again to stop and watch the small family.

“I have never seen squirrels this close.” Ilya says.

“Really? Even though you hike so much?”

He shakes his head. “No. They must hate me too.”

As always, Hollander likes his joke, even if his eyes roll. It makes him too bold, seeing Hollander enjoy his company, and the memory of the couple from earlier does not help weaken that boldness. He taps Hollander’s hand with his finger, hoping for some reciprocation. He does not find it, because just as he does, an older man—one who almost looks like his father did—passes them by. Their hands were never connected, but he can feel Hollander’s fear. Or maybe it is his own, who’s to say?

Whoever’s it is, it is strong enough to make Hollander need distance from him. The only thing they have left to climb are the steps that lead up to the very top. The whole way up, Ilya stays two steps behind.

Ilya has seen Boston from up here many times, so the view does not do much for him anymore, but the same cannot be said for Hollander who is looking out at the tree-covered city in awe. It is a fair reaction, and the look on his face reminds him of how he felt when he started hiking with his mother too many years ago. He seems proud of himself for managing to make it up here, even though it, really, is not very difficult for a man of his build. But more than that, he is getting to see Ilya's city in a way he has not before today. That much makes the view a little nicer in Ilya's own eyes. Except, it has always been more beautiful when the sun is setting, now that he is thinking of it.

Maybe he will bring Hollander up later next time.

He knocks his hand against Hollander's, testing the waters again. Anxious as ever, Hollander breaks his immersion to look over his shoulder. The only other people at the top are taking photos atop of one of the looser rocks that neither of them dare throw their lives away on. So, they are essentially alone.

Hollander knows that, as does Ilya. Even if Ilya will never say it out loud, he is nervous too. Maybe even more than Hollander is. They are both too old to still be so afraid of something so small, but logic is not always Ilya's best friend. The desire between them is unfamiliar, and it makes the hairs on his skin stand up the same way they do when he thinks about being Hollander's boyfriend.

It is not the same ache it usually is when they are around each other. A branch from the same tree, maybe, but not the same. Naming it, or trying to, is too scary. It is not the time or the place, he thinks.

Deciding to be brave in a way he knows Ilya cannot be, Hollander interlocks their pinky fingers. A small connection, but the closest Ilya has felt to Hollander in the nine years they have known each other.

"Can I ask you a question, Rozanov?" Hollander says, looking at him instead of the view they came to see.

"You do not need a lead up to the question, Hollander, you can just ask it."

Another chuckle from Hollander, but this time they are close enough for Ilya to feel it hit his skin. "Right. Would you mind calling me Shane? Instead of Hollander."

Of all the questions, that is not the one he had expected to be asked. "You will not freak out again?" Ilya hopes that the years have taught him well enough that he does not mean that as a joke.

"I'll try not to."

Ilya curls his pinkie, making the lock between them more secure. "If it will make you happy, Shane."

Shane's splitting smile is undercut, only slightly, by the tears in his eyes. Just like every other moment today, Ilya could make a joke at Shane's expense.

But he chooses not to.

End Notes

Thanks for reading! :) As a side note, I got really obsessed with making the trail descriptions as accurate to a specific trail in Boston, until I realised this is fanfiction and not a documentary.

Anyways, let me know what you thought in the comments. Here's my [twitter](#), I plan on writing more Hollanov soon. This is my first time writing for hr, so let me know if my characterisation is off.

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