

## GingerAle24

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# GingerAle24

by [paperwhitepen](#), [phoebefanforever](#)

## Summary

Shane Hollander is a famous hockey player. Ilya Rozanov is a Twitch streamer on the rise with a very one-sided beef with the Montreal Metros' captain.

Under the username GingerAle24, Shane becomes a regular in Ilya's streams. Ilya has no idea he's talking to the very same player he's always losing against.

## Notes

Hope you enjoy!

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

After a particularly hard game, where the Montreal Metros had barely beaten the Boston Raiders, only saved by a last minute goal from Shane, Hayden mentioned that he had started watching people play video games on a website called Twitch. He said it was kind of relaxing after a long day. After this particular match, Shane was more tired than usual.

He was cautious about taking Hayden's advice since at times it could be unhinged, but he decided to give it a try. Back at the hotel room, he pulled out his laptop and typed Twitch into Google. He clicked the first link and saw a few recommended streams and clicked the first one.

It was a woman in her early 20s playing a game that Twitch called Call of Duty. After a few seconds of watching her shoot at some people, Shane got bored and left. He scrolled down and saw a few streams that seemed a little more interesting, as they were under the Hockey tag.

Shane clicked the first one, which had about 200 viewers, and was immediately in awe of the man on his screen. His facecam was kind of blurry and he looked to be filming in a dark room, but Shane could still make out his beautiful blond curls and his sharp jawline. He looked like he could be a model.

A small voice in his head whispered that he was exactly Shane's type, which he ignored. He could appreciate another guy's good looks without it being gay, thank you very much.

The man was quiet, seemingly focused on the match. He was playing some sort of hockey game.

"Why is this guy always where I'm not?! Damn Hollander, I swear I hate playing him."

At hearing his name, Shane jumped. He looked around his hotel room and then at his laptop. He felt a pit in his stomach. Was his webcam on? How did the guy know Shane was watching? He was very confused. The guy's accented voice was doing things to Shane, though, especially when he said his name.

"Yes chat, I'm trying to replay today's game so the Raiders win. Hollander keeps scoring no matter how I play."

Shane sighed out in relief. The guy had no idea he was watching. He was just playing some stupid hockey game, where apparently Shane was really good. Shane looked at the guy's profile and saw his name was Roz81. He also saw the game's cover and realized he was in it.

He remembered his mom having mentioned Shane being chosen for a hockey game cover, and the photoshoot, but had forgotten about it. He didn't really have time for playing video games when he was already so busy playing real hockey.

"Come on, I need the Metros to go home crying tonight."

Shane went to comment, to try to defend himself and his team, but the website asked him to make an account. A minute later, he commented:

**GingerAle24:** *skill issue, hollander just reads the ice better ;)*

“Oh we have a metros fan in the chat tonight! Watch me destroy your team in this game right now.” Roz81 grinned and went back to focusing on the game. The chat only had a few active people, so it was easy for Roz81 to spot his comment.

Over the next few minutes, Shane watched himself completely destroy Roz81 on the ice. The Metros were on fire that night, even more so than in person. He laughed at Roz81’s increasingly apparent frustration at being unable to score.

After a while of hearing him swear in what he assumed to be Russian, Shane found himself getting increasingly more sleepy. Although Roz81 had done nothing but insult him all night, Shane felt more at ease now that he had all week. Hayden was right, watching people play video games was fun.

He looked at the time and saw that it was already past his bedtime. Before he could talk himself out of it he decided to thank Roz81 in the best way he could.

**GingerAle24 donated \$100:** *Better luck next time ;)*

He saw Roz81’s eyes widen and before he could hear what the man had to say, Shane left the stream. He fell asleep quickly that night.

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Two days later, Shane was on his way to training when his mom called. Shane’s mother was very involved in her son’s life, especially considering that she managed most of his sponsors and media responsibilities.

“Hey honey, how's your morning?” The voice of Yuna Hollander cut through the car.

“I’m on my way to practice right now, are you guys still coming to Montreal next week?” Shane was happy about seeing his parents, but he felt bad keeping such a big secret from them. He knew they would probably support him, but it still felt hard.

“Of course! It's a home game, we wouldn’t miss it!”

They talked for a few more minutes until Shane remembered Roz81’s stream.

“Mom, did you know I was on the cover of the NHL video game?!”

“Well of course! I set up that photoshoot, I think I even drove you there that day. You looked so handsome. What about it?”

“Nothing. Someone mentioned it during the game.” Shane made the mental note to buy the game sometime throughout the week.

Later that day, after an intense practice, Shane ended up at Hayden’s house. Jackie, as always, was insistent on making Shane anything he wanted so she kicked them out of the kitchen until she required their presence again.

While they waited, Shane asked Hayden about the NHL video game.

“Yeah, man, I’m still jealous you’re on it solo. I’ve been playing it a lot, not gonna lie.”

“Wait, you have it?”

“Yeah, bro, do you wanna play? I didn’t know you liked video games.”

Shane nodded, excited.

Hayden stood up and turned on the TV and the PlayStation. He grabbed two controllers and handed one to Shane.

“Dont feel bad when I beat you, I’ve been playing a lot and I’ve gotten pretty good.” Hayden bragged as he started up the game.

“I always play as the metros so I guess you’re going to have to choose another.” Hayden added.

“As if I’m not the captain.” Shane said, “I guess I can play as the Admirals. I’m gonna destroy us.”

Fifteen minutes later, when Jackie called them to go eat, Shane had beaten Hayden 7-0. Hayden was so bad he’d even scored an autogoal. Not even the so-called overpowered Hollander in the video game could help him.

Shane thought that it truly wasn't that difficult to beat his video game version, if you actually played the game intelligently.

When the time ran out and the game ended, Hayden turned to Shane and just stared in shock.

“Man, you destroyed me. Are you sure you haven’t played this shit before? For my dignity, please say you have.”

“Nah man, I think maybe hockey isn’t your thing.”

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By the end of the week, Shane had developed a routine. Every night, he would go on his laptop and watch Roz81 until he fell asleep. Roz81 didn’t always play hockey, he played a lot of different games, which Shane enjoyed, but he especially loved it when he played hockey.

Shane told himself he was there for the game. For the strategy. He was absolutely not there for the accent. Or the way Roz81’s whole face lit up when he smiled.

Shane had become a fixture in the chat. He would comment on something Roz81 would say and wait to be acknowledged. He absolutely did not blush when Roz81 read his chats and retorted back.

Tonight, he laughed as Roz81 lost his patience with the AI versions of the metros' center line, which he had spent various streams trying to beat.

"Why is he always there? I pass, he interjects. I shoot, he blocks. It's actually unfair."

Shane cracked a smile. He had realized that if he wanted Roz81 to see a message while he was engrossed in the game, he had to donate money.

**GingerAle24 donated \$24:** "You're forcing plays. Slow down."

Roz81 paused mid game.

"Okay?" He paused, "First of all, thanks for the donation. Second of all, rude. You think you can play better than me?"

He tried it anyway. It worked.

Roz81 sat back and looked at the screen.

"I hate that you're right." He said, "Chat, I think Ginger actually knows hockey."

**GingerAle24 donated \$100:** "I told you ;)"

Roz81 laughed, surprised.

Shane went to bed with a smile on his face that night.

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When Shane woke up, he realized that he had fallen asleep with his laptop open.

The screen was still open on Roz81's ended stream. He went to shut it when he saw he had a few new messages.

**Roz81:** hey ginger!

**Roz81:** i just wanted to thank u for ur support on the channel,

**Roz81:** i really appreciate it.

The messages were dated to last night. Shane felt bad that he hadn't responded, but he'd been asleep. He decided to just reply now.

**GingerAle24:** Hey Roz81!

**GingerAle24:** Thank u for your videos! I love them so much...

Shane got a reply two minutes later. He was brushing his teeth when he heard his laptop ping.

**Roz81:** just wait for my stream tn. I'm going to have to start playing dirty against Hollander.

**GingerAle24:** At this point, you just might have to kill him. Only way you can win is by cheating.

**Roz81:** hahaha ur right.

**Roz81:** my name's Ilya btw :)

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Over the next few months, Ilya's account grew rapidly. He was now getting around 5000 viewers per stream. Shane wasn't surprised, since the man was naturally charming and a pleasure to watch. He could make any game the most entertaining thing in the entire world. Shane was so happy when Ilya upgraded his webcam and showed off a new desk set up. He could see his beautiful curls even more clearly now.

They'd also started chatting privately every once in a while, especially on the days where Shane was too busy to catch the stream. Ilya would always thank Shane for his generous donations. Shane would blush to himself and tell him it was nothing. He was a pro hockey player, he had more money than he would ever need.

As the season advanced Shane's team got closer and closer to the playoffs. Wins were more important than ever, so he was forced to miss many of Ilya's streams.

**Roz81:** missed you during stream tn

**Roz81:** chat was asking for u

**GingerAle24:** I'm so sad I missed it. Work is killing me. I have a project due soon and the whole team is working together for it.

**Roz81:** sounds serious ginger

**Roz81:** you okay?

**GingerAle24:** I'm kinda the team captain so i feel a lot of pressure. I don't want to let the team down

**Roz81:** u could never let anyone down

Shane stared at the message longer than he meant to.

**GingerAle24:** Feels like I could.

**GingerAle24:** If I mess up it's not just on me, you know?

The typing bubble appeared almost immediately.

**Roz81:** for what its worth

**Roz81:** you've always shown up for me :)

Shane let his head fall back into the pillow. His chest felt tight in a way that had nothing to do with hockey. He smiled to himself. Small and private.

**GingerAle24:** Thanks, I think I needed to hear that.

**Roz81:** anytime captain ;)

Shane's heart skipped a beat.

He shut his computer and stared at the ceiling, thinking about how easy it felt to open up to Ilya.

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The Metro's playoff dreams ended a week later. In the first minutes of a game against the New York Admirals, one of the players crashed into Shane and sent him flying into the boards. The impact knocked the air from his lungs. All he could hear was the whistle of the referee and the crowd screaming somewhere far away.

He tried to stand, but the medics were suddenly there, hands on his shoulders, telling him to stay down.

He was out of it as they loaded him onto the stretcher and carried him off the ice. The diagnosis came quickly; he had a concussion and a dislocated shoulder. The doctor said he'd have to be off the ice for at least a month.

Shane had never had so much free time in his life.

The first night back in his apartment had been unbearable. His parents had flown out ready to take Shane back home and nurse him back to health for the month, but Shane insisted on staying in Montreal. They stayed for the first few days, but then had to go back to Ottawa.

He was bored out of his mind. He'd never spent so much time off the ice. Out of habit, he opened his laptop.

Ilya was live.

Shane hadn't even realized how much he missed it until the sound of Ilya's voice filled the room. He settled back into the couch and let himself relax as he watched the stream.

He decided not to make his presence known just yet. He wanted to just enjoy Ilya's voice for a bit. Most times, since he always donated and Ilya always bantered with his comments, the chat had started to recognize him. GingerAle24 was a pillar of the Roz81 fandom.

He was slowly falling asleep when he heard Ilya mention his name. His real name.

“Yeah, it's sad that Hollander's out.” He was speaking directly to the chat. “I don't like him but that was a dirty move.”

Shane felt as though he were watching the scene from afar. He stayed frozen while Ilya continued to unknowingly talk about his biggest fan.

**HOLLANDERFAN24 donated \$10:** He's sexy tho isn't he? ;)

“Is he hot? Well yeah I guess I can't deny that.” Ilya spoke with easy confidence as if he wasn't delivering earth-shattering news to Shane.

Shane blushed and again looked around the room to see if anyone could see him. He was at home, shut inside his room, but he still felt exposed. As if he were being watched.

After a few moments, Shane got himself back together. If Ilya could flirt that boldly, then so could he.

Shane decided to make his presence known.

**GingerAle24 donated \$15:** Finally get to watch a full stream

Ilya's head snapped toward the screen.

“Oh?” he said, smiling. “Look who decided to show up.”

Shane's chest felt warm at the reaction.

**GingerAle24:** Work gave me a break.

It wasn't really the truth but it was as close as he was gonna get.

Ilya hummed, seemingly pleased at Shane's presence.

“Well,” he said, leaning closer to the mic, “good timing. I'm about to play Montreal”

Shane laughed quietly to himself.

“You should be scared Ginger,” Ilya announced. “Because I've been studying Hollander. I doubt he'll get past me now.”

**GingerAle24 donated \$15:** as long as you don't do any dirty hits. We saw what happened...

Admittedly, Shane was very upset by the injury, especially since it had destroyed Montreal's chances at the playoffs.

Ilya frowned, before saying, “I think I said a few streams ago that I would start playing dirty because I couldn't beat Hollander but I would never do that. I respect the game too much.”

**GingerAle24 donated \$10:** Well, I guess we know how this game's gonna end then ;) Ilya goes to bed crying tonight..."

"You know what?" He said, "If I beat them tonight you owe me Ginger"

**GingerAle24 donated \$10:** Owe you what?

Ilya smirked.

"A voice call."

Shane blushed. He looked at the chat and it was going crazy. They loved his banter with Ilya. For a second it made him wonder what it would be like if they knew who he really was. In a way, being so free on the internet felt relieving. Maybe some day he'd be able to tell his own fans the truth about himself.

Ilya started up the game and chose the Boston Raiders. He showed everyone that the difficulty level was set to the hardest one.

The first period went badly for Ilya.

"Oh, come on," Ilya groaned, "why is he like this? He's everywhere!"

**GingerAle24 donated \$24:** you have to pay attention to his teammates. Don't just focus on him. Go after Pike.

"That's not helpful." Ilya said, but, after a few more moments of failing to score, he tried it and succeeded.

"Nice advice Ginger. Surprised you're helping me beat Hollander."

**GingerAle24 donated \$10:** It's more fun when you have actual competition to go against.

The second period went better. Not amazing, but for Ilya's track record, there was definite growth.

"See! Improvement!" Ilya shouted, pointing at the screen, after he scored once more. Shane laughed at his excitement. Ilya was so entertaining to watch. He could barely feel his headache or his sore shoulder.

Near the end of the game, Ilya was tied with the Metros. He was leaning forward on his chair, "Okay, Okay! Don't mess this up please."

AI Hollander was moving towards the net.

Shane's fingers hovered above the keyboard and before even thinking about it he typed out:

**GingerAle24 donated \$50:** HE'S GONNA GO LEFT.

The Twitch voice read it and Ilya didn't even question it. He adjusted instantly and went right. He scored.

"I DID IT! I DID IT!"

Ilya had finally beaten the Metros. He then turned to face the camera directly and said "Ginger, are you stalking Hollander? How did you know he was going to do that?"

Shane laughed, but then questioned whether he was exposing himself. How would someone, that wasn't Shane, know AI Shane was going to do that? What could he say to explain himself?

The chat was going absolutely feral.

**@Rozanovisthebest:** DOES THAT MEAN YOU GET THE VOICE CALL? I'M SCREAMING RN!!!!

**@Ilove2game:** KISS! PLEASE!

**@GamerPat:** #RozGinger

The chat started spamming #RozGinger. It was everywhere.

Ilya leaned toward the camera, eyes bright.

"Chat, you guys are crazy but Ginger... you do owe me a call."

Ilya winked. Shane blushed a deep shade of red.

**GingerAle24 donated \$81:** I always pay my debts ;)

Ilya's grin softened, just a little.

"I'll be waiting."

Ilya started up a new game, and Shane left the stream. He had started to freak out as soon as he had last donated. How would he voice call Ilya when his voice was so recognizably Shane Hollander's? Ilya would know immediately. Deep down, Shane knew Ilya would never tell anyone, but he wasn't ready. He wasn't ready for anyone to know he had a crush on a random hockey streamer. One person knowing was too much.

He freaked out even more when, a few minutes later, he got a text from Ilya.

**Roz81:** u up for the call?

Shane closed his laptop.

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It had been exactly three days since Shane had ignored Ilya's message. He hadn't watched a single stream, and he was bored out of his mind. Shane also felt horrible for having ignored Ilya, who seemed so excited to finally talk to GingerAle24.

Shane could almost picture Ilya's sad eyes and he hated himself just a little bit for dimming his smile.

Ilya had sent a few more texts over the next few days, but had given up after Shane hadn't even opened them.

**Roz81:** did something happen?

**Roz81:** are u ok?

**Roz81:** did i do something wrong?

**Roz81:** i'm sorry

**Roz81:** chat missed u during stream today

**Roz81:** just come back pls?

**Roz81:** ur being unfair ginger.

**Roz81:** fine, be that way.

He didn't know what to do. They couldn't just go back to the way things were because Ilya deserved more than some half assed excuse. Shane realized that he would lose Ilya if he didn't meet him halfway. Shane would have to be brave. If he didn't try, he would lose the best thing he had outside hockey.

The idea came to him later that same day, as he was doing his physical therapy.

"Mom, how would you feel about helping me organize an E-Sports Hockey event? Wouldn't the studio love for the cover star to host something?"

Yuna basically screamed at Shane's initiative. This was a side to her son she hadn't seen in a while. She threw herself into planning the event, leaving little for Shane to help her with. Shane did, however, ensure that the list of streamers they invited included one Roz81.

The night after the invitations got sent out, Shane couldn't help himself and opened Ilya's stream. He made sure to stay off the radar, so that he wouldn't be noticed.

When Shane first heard Ilya's voice, he felt a weight lift off his shoulders. It had been two weeks since he had last watched a stream, and he hadn't realized how much he missed Ilya. It was as if he could finally see clearly again.

After a while Ilya finally began to talk about the event.

“GUYS! I almost forgot to mention! I’M GOING TO MEET SHANE HOLLANDER LIKE IN PERSON.” Ilya seemed way too excited for someone who was constantly insulting the player but his smile made Shane happy. It felt good to know that it had been him that put that smile there.

He kept talking to his chat about the event. They were equally excited.

“... and you know I was actually so surprised I got chosen. The smallest creator after me has like one million subscribers.”

Shane hadn’t even considered the possibility of how that would appear, but for once in his life he shrugged it off. It was done, and he wouldn’t let himself regret something that made Ilya so happy.

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The day of the event came quickly. Shane was practically pissing himself with nerves. Yuna had never seen her boy so nervous. Not even before his draft or the Olympics.

The studio had set up two desks, filled with everything they would need, for the streamers to play against Shane and each other. Other pro hockey players would also be participating. Shane had basically forced Hayden to be a part of the event, despite him being so bad at it. He needed moral support, even if Hayden had no idea of what was going on.

Shane walked in and was introduced to some of the streamers. He immediately looked to see where Ilya was, and caught his breath. Ilya was even more handsome in person. He couldn’t look away. He greeted some of the streamers half-heartedly, politely but it was hard for him to fake niceties with people he didn’t know.

When he was face to face with Ilya, however, he didn’t know what to say. Ilya smiled and filled the silence with his voice.

“It is nice to meet you, Hollander. I’m a big fan.”

Shane couldn’t stop the laugh that left his lips. Ilya raised a brow.

“Why is that funny?”

Shane didn’t respond. He couldn’t stop laughing.

Through laughs, he finally managed to get out “No no I’m sorry, it’s been a long day and I haven’t been playing hockey lately. I’m nervous you guys are going to destroy me at the game.”

As they sat down in front of the game, Shane ended up going against Ilya first. Ilya whispered to him “I’ve been waiting for this. You owe me about twenty mental breakdowns.”

Shane laughed, but acted confused, playing as if he didn't know what Ilya meant. Ilya explained that he could almost never beat the Metros when he played in his streams. Shane laughed again and assured him he would probably redeem himself today.

They sat at their respective desks and waited as some producers loaded it up and began to set up the frame. The event would be livestreamed on the studio's channel.

The game loaded and they began. Shane would be playing as the Montreal Metros, obviously, while Ilya had chosen his trusted team, the Boston Raiders.

"Why are you always where I'm not?" Ilya said, exactly like on stream.

Shane bit back a smile.

The first goal went to Shane.

Ilya looked at him with those piercing eyes as he leaned back in his seat. "Unbelievable."

"Lucky." was all Shane could get out.

"No, you're not lucky. You're annoyingly good at this."

As they moved onto the next period, Shane continued to show how his skill in hockey also translated to online versions.

When Ilya scored once, and then again, he was basically jumping. "Yes!" he said pointing at the screen, "that's for my sanity!"

That's not to say he was winning. Shane had too good of an understanding of hockey for anyone to beat him. He hadn't led his team to two Stanley Cups without some impressive skill.

Shane won the game in the end and as it closed Ilya spoke to him directly.

"Way to show a guy no mercy, Hollander."

Shane smiled softly, "Wouldn't dream of it, Ilya."

Ilya frowned at that and Shane realized his mistake. He'd just called Ilya by his first name when he'd barely said it during his streams, when he'd introduced himself to Shane that morning, he'd called himself Roz81.

Shane stood up and thanked the producers, ending the stream. He walked away and into the hallway, which was completely empty. He didn't notice Ilya following him until they were face to face.

"How did you know my name? Are you a fan of the streams?"

Shane blushed at his close proximity with Ilya. If he tilted his head forward just a bit, they would be kissing.

“Errr... my friend watches your streams.” Shane said breathlessly.

“Oh!” he seemed slightly disappointed at this, “Would I recognize their handle?”

Shane debated his answer in his head for a small moment before blurting out, “they go by GingerAle24 on twitch?”

Ilya’s face went through dozens of emotions in the span of a few seconds. He seemed at once excited, sad, and confused. His eyes finally softened.

Then, in the saddest voice Shane had ever heard, Ilya commented, “Ginger isn’t a fan anymore, though. He doesn’t come to my streams.”

Before he knew what he was saying, “He is! He’s your biggest fan I promise. He talks about you all the time.”

“Then why won’t he answer my messages?”

“He is scared! Very scared of what would happen if you really knew him.”

That made Ilya pause, as if he didn’t know what to say.

“Can you tell him I miss him? Please?”

Shane decided to be brave. He’d do anything to make Ilya smile again.

“I miss you too, Ilya.”

Ilya’s eyes shot open in shock. He was speechless.

Shane was scared he had upset Ilya. He would never forgive himself for how he had treated him.

“I’m so sorry I didn’t call you when you said. I—”

Ilya cut him off. “Ginger, is it really you?”

Shane just nodded, not knowing what to say. His eyes were tearing up.

Before he knew it he felt the warmth of Ilya’s body hugging him. He let himself breathe for a moment. If he had Ilya, everything would be alright.

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The chat had been very excited at the return of GingerAle24. Shane had returned to his role as the most active donor the first stream after the event. When some people in the chat had asked where he’d been or how the voice call had gone, since Ilya had refused to talk about it before during streams, he only donated and said:

**GingerAle24 donated \$15:** oh? Rozy didn't tell you?

**GingerAle24 donated \$10:** he confessed his undying love for me obviously

Ilya's eyes widened at that and he snorted out a laugh. The chat had gone crazy, and he couldn't get them to calm down.

"He's obviously joking, guys, don't believe Ginger. I met Hollander the other day, he has my heart."

Shane blushed upon hearing Ilya mention his name and their first meeting. No one would believe what Ilya was saying, obviously, but he knew the truth and his heart skipped a beat.

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As the months continued to pass, their routine stayed the same, only with the small exception that they were dating. Sometimes, Shane would watch Ilya's streams from their shared living room. Since Ilya could stream anywhere, he'd taken to following Shane whenever he had a game. Shane loved being able to have someone he loved root for him in the stands, even if it was in secret.

Ilya's viewers knew that he was dating GingerAle24, they just didn't know who Ginger actually was. Still, they loved their relationship and their bantering. Their easy acceptance of them sometimes made Shane wonder what it would be like for his own fans to find out about it.

In the end, they didn't get to plan out a big reveal for GingerAle24, since it came unexpectedly. Ilya had stayed home during a game with a slight cold, and decided to stream through his sickness seeing as he was home alone and bored out of his mind.

He was in the middle of playing Minecraft when he heard his door open. He turned back to look at who it was, only to be greeted with the beautiful, smiling face of his boyfriend.

"Ilya, hey!" Shane greeted him happily, clearly delighted to see him. He was getting closer and was now in frame.

"WAIT! SHANE I'M LIVE!" Ilya immediately jumped and, without thinking, tackled Shane off screen. He then crawled to unplug his computer under the desk. It was too late, though. People had obviously seen Shane.

Under the desk, Ilya turned to Shane and looked at him, in shock. Shane was equally in shock. They just looked at each other for a few seconds, before bursting out into laughter.

"Well, I guess the secret's out."

“You want to go live again?”

And so they went back online and came clean about their relationship. Mostly the fans were just surprised that Shane and GingerAle24 were the same person.

**The end.**

## End Notes

Quick disclaimer: this is set in a very idealistic world where the Metros aren't as bad to Shane when he comes out.

Hope you liked it!!

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