

home, where my music's playing

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home, where my music's playing

by [Mathgeek12](#)

Summary

His teammates were not treating this as the hard interview Ilya imagined it. Gone were the serious "intervention" faces, replaced with the glee of anticipation. "Roz was going to tell us about his fiancée," Dykstra told Hollander.

Shane choked on his bite of Raisin Bran. "Oh?"

"Yeah, I assume you know her. Did he say anything in the car, Hazy?"

"Dude didn't say one word."

The Centaurs stage an intervention.

Notes

Title from Simon & Garfunkel's Homeward Bound

"Rozanov, this is an intervention."

Ilya whipped his head up, his hands stilling where they were lacing up his sneakers. "An intervention? Bood, I do not have a drug problem. Could not be number one hockey player."

Ilya glanced around the locker room and noticed that most of the players had already filed out. It was just him, Bood, Hayes, Dykstra, Barrett, and Haas left. He sighed. It really *was* an intervention, then.

There was a TV show he watched in hotel rooms sometimes. Late at night when he couldn't sleep, still jet lagged from a trip to Russia, or when he just didn't want to fall asleep in an empty bed yet. It always featured families and friends gathered in someone's living room, each person wanting the best for their love one on the brink of rock bottom. It was sad, maybe, but Ilya always thought that there was a lot of hope there, and love.

He had no idea what his teammates could be talking about though—certainly not a performance issue. Practice had gone well, he thought. The team had finally found their rhythm in a way they hadn't in the past. The Centaurs had been on fire the past few weeks, and Ilya thought that they had a real shot at the playoffs this year. Maybe even the Cup. He hadn't felt this momentum, this excitement, in years, and the energy had been infectious.

"Why weren't you at practice the other day?" Hayes blurted out.

Ilya had to stop himself from touching the ring around his neck. He couldn't help a small smile from playing at the corner of his lips though. "Had..." he couldn't think of an appropriate word. "Personal things."

"Yeah, that's the thing! Have you ever thought that we'd like to know—" Bood started.

"We know you're married." Hayes interrupted again.

"What?" Married?

"You miss practice—which you never do—come back wearing a very nice looking ring, and have been in a *great* mood which cannot entirely be accounted for with our winning streak or even not dying in a fiery plane crash. You got secretly married and didn't even tell us you had a girlfriend. Even Dykstra can tell something's up. C'mon man, we're your teammates. We deserve to know."

"I am not married." He let a long pause linger. "Engaged."

There were some whoops around the locker room.

"Congrats, man!"

"You gotta tell us about her."

"Yeah, seriously dude, I didn't even know you were seeing anyone. What happened to being a ladies' man?"

Ilya hesitated, looking around at the gathered faces. They had made a plan to come out this summer, and Shane had agreed that Ilya could tell his friends. These were his teammates. They cared about him. They deserved to know.

He could see the shadow of someone pass by in the hallway and hesitated. While he trusted the men on his team, the locker room was a bit...public. A few of his closest teammates? Sure. But he wasn't ready to come out to his coach yet. He steeled himself.

"Fine. For team spirit, I will tell you my secrets. Not here though, at home. And you must all carpool because everyone's cars will not fit in my driveway."

The guys were jovial as they walked out to the parking lot, joking around and playfully pushing each other. Ilya knew he should text Shane to warn him, but he couldn't risk pulling out his phone and ruining the big reveal. Better to do it somewhere private in case they *weren't* cool about it.

Shane was probably still in his own practice, anyway. He would call Shane later and tell him how it went.

Hayes and Barrett climbed into Ilya's SUV without asking for permission. The drive was mostly quiet, with Ilya running through various scenarios in his head. He couldn't just come out and say he was getting married to Shane Hollander. The shock would kill them. They didn't even know he was interested in men.

Well, Barrett knew, and he didn't care. And the team had accepted *him* being gay without question.

So getting married to a man would probably not be a problem. He would start with that, then break the "Shane" thing later.

Most of the guys knew Shane in some capacity, and knew Ilya was friends with him. The Foundation and camps had done wonders for their "rivalry," just like they planned it to. And while the team had a rivalry with Montreal, Ottawa didn't have as strong of a hatred for them that Boston did. The guys would probably come around pretty quick.

Hopefully.

What if they didn't and it ruined all of their playoff chances, *again*?

Fuck 'em, Ilya thought. *They don't deserve a Cup if they can't accept this.*

When Ilya turned the corner and opened the gate to his driveway, his heart stopped. Already parked there was a silver Jeep Cherokee. Fuck.

On occasion, they liked to surprise each other. They had been long distance for so long, and every opportunity to see each other was a gift. Ilya would never say no to seeing Shane, even if it was just for an afternoon. He couldn't say he was exactly shocked that Shane drove down

to surprise him this week—it was hard to go back to their normal schedules when they had agreed on a life together and both just wanted it to start now. But why *today*, of all days, did Shane decide to surprise him?

He pulled his car next to Shane's and turned it off. He couldn't even warn Shane to let him know they were being ambushed. Hopefully he wasn't splayed out naked in the foyer, waiting patiently for Ilya to come home.

Ilya tried to play it cool as he walked up his walkway. Nobody asked about the car with Quebec plates. There was nothing weird with a friend being in his home, he reminded himself. There were plenty of reasons why Shane would be hanging out here.

He unlocked the door. "Hollander?" he called out.

"I'm in the kitchen. You'll never believe what came in the mail to—"

"Rozy, I always forget how sweet your place is. You need to host more parties." Hazy was pulling off his shoes and looking around the foyer. Barrett was beside him, but instead of looking around like Hayes was, he was staring in the direction of Shane's voice, a single eyebrow raised. Ilya could see the rest of the guys coming up the drive.

He sighed. "Let's go to the living room."

He poked his head in the kitchen and found Shane there, eating a bowl of cereal and watching something on his iPad. Probably studying tapes from his last game. He froze with a spoon lifted partway to his mouth. "H-hey guys," he said, eyebrows shot up into his bangs.

Barrett's eyes flashed back and forth between Ilya and Shane. Ilya hoped no one would ask why Shane had a key. "Oh, hey, Hollander, fancy seeing you here. You and Roz planning for the camps today? I got Yuna's email—" Hayes started rambling as Ilya tried to telepathically communicate what was going on to Shane.

Shane's face stayed blank, as Hayes continued to chatter. Ilya hoped that Shane understood what he was trying to tell him. He was probably anxious, being discovered at Ilya's house, eating his food. Hell, *Ilya* was nervous about what that gave away.

The rest of the guys piled into the living room. Ilya sat in a recliner, turned to his teammates. Shane followed them in and stood next to Ilya, hip pressed into the arm of the chair, still eating his cereal. Ilya laced his fingers together and braced for the onslaught of questions. "Okay," he started.

But his teammates were not treating this as the hard interview Ilya imagined it. Gone were the serious "intervention" faces, replaced with the glee of anticipation. "Roz was going to tell us about his fiancée," Dykstra told Hollander.

Shane choked on his bite of Raisin Bran. "Oh?"

"Yeah, I assume you know her. Did he say anything in the car, Hazy?"

"Dude didn't say one word."

"I'm surprised he told you he's engaged. Rozanov keeps his cards close to his chest, typically. What has he told you so far?" Shane asked. Ilya had thought that Shane was nervous, having all these people see Shane and Ilya together at his house, Shane seemingly comfortable and domestic, but suddenly he could see their typical roles reverse: Shane was about to start some shit, happily needling Ilya, while Ilya was filled with anxiety about all the ways that coming out to his team could go wrong. Maybe Shane was high?

Ilya grumbled a complaint in Russian. What an asshole, encouraging them like this. He could see Shane smirk out of the corner of his eye.

"Oh we noticed he started wearing a ring a few weeks ago, and he was been in an incredible mood. Not like normal at all," Haas explained. Shane turned to look at Ilya, his eyes sparkling. *Incredible?* he mouthed as Haas continued. "So we guessed that he was married and he told us he would tell us all of his secrets now."

"Not all," Ilya grumbled. "Only some."

"So he's told you he's engaged," Shane said, "anything else? What's his fiancé like? Must not be a looker if he won't bring 'em around."

Ilya huffed, annoyed. The guys tittered, thinking this was typical Hollander-Rozanov beef. "My fiancé is very beautiful, Hollander, as you well know. The most beautiful. *I* am very beautiful and so of course would only marry another very beautiful person. We will make very beautiful babies."

That got some whoops out of the guys and a spot of color began to grow on Shane's cheeks. Ilya wondered how much he could embarrass Shane in front of everyone before he cracked. Shane raised another spoonful of cereal to his mouth, probably to cover his grin, when Ilya noticed a glint on his finger. A glint on his *ring* finger.

The fucker.

Shane had driven all the way from Montreal to show Ilya his *wedding ring* that had apparently come in the mail. Shane was wearing a ring—his ring, Ilya's ring—like they were already married, and Ilya was stuck in a room with his most annoying teammates. Maybe he could get this over with by just pulling Shane down into his lap and kissing him senseless.

"Go eat that in the kitchen," he quipped. "You will spill all over my nice furniture. This is secret team meeting."

Shane gaped and looked like he was going to object, but rolled his eyes and walked back to the kitchen. "Yeah, okay. Ask him some hard questions."

"We all know you're a ladies' man, so like, how long have you been seeing her? I don't see any pictures of her around here," Bood said, looking around the room.

There *was* art on the walls: A Serov print of the Winter Palace that had been a favorite of his mother's, a trio of sunset photos that David had taken at the cottage a few summers back, and some hockey shots from over the years. One was a still of him and Shane celebrating a goal

at an All Star game, Ilya's arm around Shane's shoulder and their helmets touching. It had been right after Shane's game-winning goal, shot after a perfect pass from Ilya. The grin splitting Ilya's face was almost blinding in its joy, but he could never look away from the bashful grin that hid on Shane's face. To most people, this would probably just be more proof of his illustrious hockey career, the best players putting aside their rivalry to play a perfect game. But to Ilya it was proof of just how happy he could be, how perfectly matched they were.

So no, there were no pictures of a mystery woman in Ilya's living room. He could start there, he figured. "Yes, I was a ladies' man, was a lot of fun, but that is over. Not for a long time. My mystery fiancé—we have been in a relationship for four years."

The room erupted in shouts.

"Four YEARS?"

"Wait, did you move here for her? Must be true love if you moved to the worst team in the league." Hayes had his head cocked to the side, watching Ilya, his eyes calculating.

Ilya shrugged. "See, you keep making assumptions. How do you even know it is a girl?" There was a long beat of silence. Then more shouts.

"Wow, Roz, you sleep with all the women in North America and had to move on to men?"

"A MAN?"

He grinned and gave another shrug. "I am bisexual, yes. Some of you notice very little."

"Man, finally," Barrett said, letting out a long breath.

"You knew?" hissed Bood.

"Yeah I've even been to a gay bar with Roz. Get on my level."

Bood and Dykstra's faces were incredulous. Barrett was relaxed, reclining back into the couch, appearing as if a large weight had been taken off his shoulders. Ilya watched him pull out his phone to text someone, probably Harris. Hayes had a growing grin on his face, and Haas was beginning to blush.

"What, Haasy, are you thinking about my poster above your bed again? Different now that you know I like men, yes?"

Haas stuttered "N-no, I was just thinking, um—" Everyone laughed as Haas continued to grow redder.

Ilya waved away the laughter. He was starting to think this team was very gay. "Is okay, Haasy. I am very happy with my man."

Dykstra blinked and nodded, as if getting his head back in the game. "Alright, your mystery *man*...."

"So he's from Ottawa?" Bood asked. Now over the shock of Ilya being into men, he was back into interrogation mode.

Ilya nodded.

"And you moved here for him?"

"Yes, we decided it would be better if I was in Canada. Closer, easier to get citizenship."

"How did you even meet?" Hayes asked.

Shane decided right then was a great time to come back into the room. This time he did perch on the arm of Ilya's chair. "Yeah Roz, how did you even meet?"

Ilya shot a glance at his infuriating fiancé. "It was very rude, see. I was outside—in the cold, because it was fucking December in Canada—minding my own business, and he comes up to me and says 'you cannot smoke here,' as if I want to move another fifteen feet away into the snow—"

Everyone laughed. "You got accosted when you were playing in Canada? What, he didn't recognize you as one of the biggest hockey players?"

"No, this was before I was in NHL. Was the Prospect Cup," he said. He was beginning to like hinting at the ultimate reveal. Ilya had always liked a little bit of risk, the rush of adrenaline that hockey or fast cars or sneaking around gave him. The anticipation was raising his heart rate just enough to give him that feeling. He hoped that Shane had control of his face. How long would it take for the guys to put it together?

Voices overlapped again.

"But that was like ten years ago—"

"So like, it was another player?"

"Wait, I think I've heard this story before—"

Shane ignored their quips. He was on a roll now. "So you know Roz is engaged to a man, who he met a bazillion years ago and moved to Ottawa for. And apparently he's handsome."

Ilya nudged his leg. "Da, very beautiful."

"Fine, *'very beautiful.'*" Shane lowered his voice and tried to poorly mimic Ilya's accent. "What else do you all want to know? What his name is? How he got Roz to settle down? Who proposed?"

"Yeah, what's his name?" Bood asked.

"Hell, what's his job?" Dykstra shouted out.

Ilya snorted. "Ah, of course you would only come up with boring things, Hollander. There are other more interesting things to tell them."

Shane laughed and reached up to comb his fingers through his hair. Ilya caught a few of the players track the movement. "Like what?"

Ilya caught Shane's expression and couldn't look away. He wasn't quite grinning, but there was a brightness in his eyes that gave away how close Shane was to bursting out into laughter. Ilya was just as giddy about the the prospect of other people *knowing*, of maybe the rest of their lives beginning *today*. Shane leaned forward towards the guys, as if he was imparting a secret.

"Has he told you that his fiancé is a better hockey player than him?"

Five pairs of eyes stared at them, mouths agape.

Ilya was no longer worried about his teammate's reactions, though. He shouted a note of disagreement and pushed Shane off the arm of his chair. "That is not true and you know it—"

"Yeah, well, who has more Cups—"

"Who has more Harts? And is the fastest skater—"

"I literally *won* the speed competition last time we both competed—"

The couple continued to bicker fondly as the Centaurs stared at them in abject shock. Barrett was the fastest to get over his surprise. He watched them with a worried look on his face. "It's a miracle that no one guessed before this. Are they always like this?"

Hayes continued to watch the couple playfully fight over the arm of the chair and spoke as if in a daze. "Yeah, the camps and All Star games are pretty much just this. Huh."

Dykstra shook his head and finally found his voice. "HOLLANDER???????"

"Surprise?" Ilya said.

"So like, is the rivalry thing fake?" Bood asked.

"No, we've always been extremely competitive. On the ice we're Hollander and Rozanov, but off the ice....we're just us." Shane smiled down at Ilya and squeezed his hand.

The guys offered their congratulations, seeming genuinely happy for their captain. Haas couldn't keep a smile off of his face, and Hayes swore that he knew that *something* was going on between them.

"Just because we know Roz likes you now doesn't mean we're going to go easy on Montreal. We're going to crush you in the playoffs," Bood said.

"I would expect nothing less," Shane said, laughing.

Later, after a few beers and many questions, Ilya closed his front door behind the last of his teammates with a promise that they would go out to celebrate with them after their next game. Shane wrapped his arms around Ilya from behind, burying his face in his neck. "So that went well."

"Mm, yes, my team loves me very much. They are supportive people."

"If only I thought my teammates were going to respond with half that amount of support."

"Ah, fuck your team. They are nothing without you. I don't want to talk about them. I want to talk about how you drove all the way here to surprise me with *this*," Ilya said, pulling Shane's left hand up so that he could ogle the dark band on his finger.

"I just couldn't wait," Shane said, gasping as Ilya began to place kisses on his finger. He groaned as Ilya sucked the finger into his mouth, rolling the ring under his tongue. "Fuck, Ilya."

They would worry about telling the rest of Ilya's team, Shane's team, the entire world about their relationship later. They had more pressing matters to attend to now.

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