it's all in the name

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by lorebearleaf

Summary

While they are at the cottage, Ilya gets his hands on Shane's phone a few times.

Ilya enjoys it a lot, to Shane's dismay, that he gets to refer to himself as Shane's lover via text messages.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Chapter 1: Rose

Rose

Rose
so you’re at the cottage, huh?
lots of jerking off to pass the time, right?
and then he’ll come over and join you there
the fuckbuddies shacking up together.
what elopement-coded bliss.
I’ll be cross with you if you don’t invite me to your wedding!

Shane
it’s not like that. can you please stop trying to guess which guy I'm seeing?
no one’s getting married.
and he’s not just a fuckbuddy.
not anymore.
we’re going to talk.
about us.

Rose
oh you’ll be talking
right. is that what we’re calling it these days.
still, I can literally read the relief in your message.
I’ll keep my fingers crossed for you.
btw, rozanov's distraught face was all over every tabloid press article.
“ROZANOV SHOCKED AFTER HOLLANDER’S FALL!”
and my personal favorite:
“BETWEEN HEAT AND HEARTBREAK!”" which sounds so much like the title of a fanfic.

Rose
he’s an idiot if he doesn’t see what a catch you are.

Shane
thank you.
I’ll pick him up in half an hour.
I won’t have much time to answer you then.
and I won’t be getting into that. could you please stop reading fanfiction about real people,
especially if it includes me?

Rose
and with that you’re just gone.
you weren’t kidding.

Rose
don’t forget all about me

while you've got your loverboy over

Rose
or under you
I don't know your preferences

Rose
oh, well. I do know.
I do know your preferences.

Rose
greetings to your arch-rival.
make sure you only arch your back and don't break it.
love and hugs and kisses.

Shane
shane is taking nap.
loverboy here.
I like that.
us, lovers.

Shane
he's busy.
we're busy.
have good day.

Shane
also the only one who gets to kiss shane is me!

Rose
what a possessively protective gentleman.
proper grammar only when it's about life and death matters (aka about his lover).
no for real, that's just what you need Shane, my dear friend.

Rose
it's been literal hours!
are you (read: your ass) still alive?
I'm not really worried though, you're professional hockey players.
if anyone's got the stamina it's probably you two.

Rose
seriously, still no reply?
SHANE! You're not denying you're with another hockey player then?! is it really rozanov?!
I was just kidding, you know. there's no way it'd be him out of all the guys you could be seeing.
but if it is him, kudos to you.
for real, once you read this:
MAKE SURE YOU'LL KEEP YOUR MAN!

Chapter 2: Hayden

Hayden

Hayden
you sure you're okay man?
you sounded a bit out of breath there.

Shane
I told you I had to ran to get a package.

Hayden
right.
a package.
you sure it's not a lady visitor?

Shane
who would I even invite here?

Hayden
I don't know.
what about Lily?
is she alright by the way?
you haven't mentioned her in a while.

Shane
we're good.
fine.
totally okay.

Hayden
man, I mean if you've broken up you can tell me about it.
you know that you can talk to me about stuff like that, right?
I'm here for you, man.

Shane
thanks, I appreciate that.
means a lot.

Hayden
Jackie says you shouldn't call your mother annoying.

Hayden
mothers are like the greatest beings on this planet.
my wife being the best one, obviously.
no offense to my mom or to yours.

Hayden
tell your parents hi from me by the way.
and Lily, even if she doesn't really know me.
she must know me though.

Shane
Lily here.
hello Hayden.
my lover won't be answering you for a while.
I hope that's okay?

Hayden
the legendary Lily is texting me!
oh my gosh, hello Lily!
it's so nice to meet you (via text)!

Hayden
Shane!
ask that girl out properly!
why is she calling you her lover after all these years!
she deserves better than that!

Hayden
okay.
first of all, sorry for kind of yelling at you via text.

Hayden
Jackie said there might be some language barrier chaos/miscommunication going on.
she said for example, in German, there's "Geliebte and Geliebter" and "Liebhaberin and Liebhaber", both means lover but one means a boyfriend or a girlfriend and the other could basically mean someone who one is having an affair with (source: Alyson)

Hayden
maybe that's what's going on with you two?
but you have told her you're in love with her, right?
come on man, you did tell your girl you're head over heels for her, right?

Shane
thank you Hayden.
it's Lily again, by the way.
Shane's in the bathroom.

Shane
no misunderstanding.
I told him I love him.
he said it back.
we are lovers now.

Hayden
I was certain you'd gone steady ages ago!
what took my guy so long to ask you properly?
or wait, you just said you did the asking.
sorry for being a bit old-fashioned there.
it's totally cool if a lady makes the first move.
you're together now.

Hayden
OH MY GOSH!
I HAVE TO TELL MY WIFE!!!

Shane
I see why Shane likes you so much, Hayden.
if you ever wanna deck someone for Shane's sake again, please know I'll support you with all my heart.
okay with most of my heart.

Shane
my heart is Shane's.

Hayden
can you please give me your number?
I need to give it to my wife.
you have to be part of the girls' groupchat asap.
they'll adore you.

Shane
they will?

Hayden
I love you nearly as much right now as I love Shane.
so yes, they will absolutely adopt you as one of their own.

Hayden
Lily, you'll fit right in as one of the girls.

Shane
yeah, right.
I've gotta go now.
Shane is done taking a shower.

Chapter 3: unknown number

unknown number

unknown number
hello Lily.
it's Jackie, Hayden's wife.

Lily
hello Jackie.

Jackie
my overeager husband tends to come on too strong sometimes.
I hope he didn't scare you with how intense he can get.
he really loves and dotes on Shane a lot.

Lily
he didn't.
I've been around hockey players all my life.
I am used to that.

Jackie
that's good to hear.
just a heads-up, you can choose which group chat or chats you want to be part of.
or you can just talk to me. tbh, it's more fun to chat with (almost) everyone.
the guys only know about the official chat, WAG (wives and girlfriends).
we've also got smaller mini chats because sometimes people break up and you know,
sometimes exes stay friends with some people in the general shared social group.

Lily
this is about Rose Landry, yes?

Jackie
I didn't want to be that direct but yes, it is.
I tend to mention her sometimes and we still talk from time to time.
don't worry, she's not part of the main group chat anymore.
you don't have to interact with her if you don't want to.

Lily
they still talk.
Shane and Rose.
but I know Shane is over her.

Jackie
good.
that's good.
I just don't want things to be weird if she gets mentioned.

Jackie
so, which groups do you want to be invited to, Lily?

Lily
the WAG one, please and thank you.
can you give me Rose's number?
I won't be mean to her. promise. she seems nice.
Shane is good judge of character.

Jackie
you must be such a strong woman to be saying that about your partner's ex.

Lily
not strong, just sure of Shane's loyalty.
and mine. I'd do anything for him.

Jackie
now I really want to meet and talk to you in person.
no pressure though. Hayden was right, everyone will adore you.
but I also know meeting up in person will be difficult.
I know you're from Boston and travel a lot due to work, just like our guys.

Lily
I'll be moving soon, to be closer to Shane.
maybe one day.

Jackie
he really did win the lottery with you, didn't he?
I'm so glad you've got each other.
it's such a shame we didn't start talking sooner.

Chapter 4: Ex's and Oh's

Ex's and Oh's

Jackie
hello and welcome to this brand new group chat made up of three people

Rose
Ex's and Oh's, seriously Jackie?
let me guess, ex partners and others (or exes and significant others)?

Jackie
you've got to admit it's clever…
you're Shane's ex but also his friend.
I'm Hayden's wife and Shane's friend.
and Lily is Shane's....
@Lily, love, what would you like to be called?

Lily
thank you for adding me to the group.
hello Rose, I'm Shane's partner.

Jackie
okay, ladies?

Jackie
I can see you're both online.

Jackie
did you really just ditch me to chat on your own?
and here I was trying to play the official.

Jackie
there better be no hair-pulling in a separate chat.
we're all adults here.

Jackie
it's been over half an hour.
Shane hasn't yet informed me about a shouting match via phone call.
honestly though, I wouldn't have asked you both if you'd be okay with talking to each other if I'd thought you'd end up fighting.

Jackie
okay and now, I'll be with my husband and kids if you don't hear from me.
I love him so much and to see Hayden while he's home.
but I'm also glad to have our bedroom all to myself from time to time.
but it's so, so freaking boring having to go through all these check-ups.

Lily
oh shit.

Lily
sorry for cursing.
I forgot you just had another baby.
I hope you're both okay.

Rose
how do you even manage to stay focused and write so much?
you literally just had a tubal ligation a few days ago.
I guess people who gave birth are just built different.

Jackie
this time it was a c-section.
childbirth is brutal. do not let anyone tell you anything else.
it's brutal but it's worth it.
still, she's the last one.
and yes, we are okay.

Rose
didn't you say that last time as well?
that it'd be your last pregnancy?

Jackie
I've got my tubes tied.
no more babies for me.

Chapter 5: Rose

Rose

Rose
when Jackie told me she'd be adding the mysterious Lily, whom Shane has been chatting with for years, to our group chat, I was curious.
but you're not a workaholic businesswoman, with an intense love for hockey, who's constantly commuting and travelling all around the world for work reasons, aren't you?

Lily
no. I'm not.

Lily
Shane knows I've got your number now.
I don't keep secrets from him.
not anymore.

Rose
don't worry.
if you're not comfortable sharing your real name with me, that's okay.
if you're worried I might out you, either one of you, I'd never do that.
I've promised Shane I won't tell anyone.

Lily
about him being with me?

Rose
so you really are together now?
you really are Shane's loverboy, right?

Lily
I have been informed that's an unkind thing to call one's lover.
I like it though, I am his lover and a boy. loverboy, makes sense.

Rose
you sound so sweet already.
and in love. and that's all I want for Shane.

Rose
I know this must be strange for you.
I've been with Shane and you are with him now.
I like him still, as a friend. there's no lingering other feelings.
I'm just glad I wasn't deeply in love with him when he told me.
it's also nice not being used as a beard without knowing about it.
I mean I'd do it, if we'd have talked about it before.

Lily
what does that mean, being used as a beard?

Rose
here, it means being with a woman to hide that you're a gay guy. it'd be the same if a lesbian were dating a male friend to hide that she's a lesbian. it's like hiding a part of oneself, like a beard would hide a good part of one's face.

Lily
does that happen often?

Rose
in general or to me? oh, honey.
I've dated a lot of gay guys.
without meaning to, of course.

Lily
I've never really dated anyone.

Lily
Shane is done making dinner.

Rose
does he forget to adapt recipes to just two people?

Lily
all the time.
we've had eight burgers in total a few days ago.

Rose
oh please, don't tell me you didn't manage to eat all of them.

Lily
he was sulking when I asked who else he had invited to the cottage.

Rose
he is so cute when he's pouting.

Lily
he is.

Chapter 6: Jane's father

Jane's father

Jane's father
Yuna and I will be there in about half an hour.

Ilya
thank you for letting us know, Mr Hollander.

Jane's father
Shane told me you have each other's contacts saved as Jane and Lily, that's a smart move.

Ilya
thank you, Mr. Hollander.

David
Make that forty to fifty minutes.
Maybe an hour. I cannot find the salad bowl.

David
Yuna said we left it at the cottage.

David
We'll be there soon.

Ilya
yes, okay, thank you for that information, Mr. Hollander.

David
Call me David.
You're my son's partner now.

Ilya
thank you, David.

David
We've arrived.
Sorry that it's been less than an hour.

David
Voice Message - 0:18
"Yuna has banned me from even trying to unload the trunk for the rest of the day. She says I'll ruin her established order of things. Just now, she went straight back there and hasn't seen you yet. I'll distract her while you get ready... You might want to switch your shirts back, boys."

Chapter 7: WAG

Chapter Notes

most of the characters in the wag group chat are ocs (and me being me, I put way too much background information into every single one of them)

WAG

Jackie
everyone, we've got a new addition to the group.
Shane is back together with Lily.

Lily
hello everyone. no need to announce it like that.
I'm not a celebrity, just Shane's partner.
we were never official, not until recently. very recently.
I'm from Boston but I was born and raised in Russia.
sorry if my English isn't always good.
I get tired of it sometimes.

Lucy
okay, I'll go first. I'm a native speaker but I get that so hard.
I'm Lucilla, yes like the character in Gladiator as Comeau brings up every time we're in the same room together. I don't care whose man he is or how big of a Gladiator fanboy he is, his repetitive jokes are as lame as his French puns (and who even eats those snacks with puns on them, they have the weirdest texture ever). It's a good thing he didn't become a comedian.

Lucy
long story short, you can call me Lucy.

Alyson
I'm Alyson and same here, sister.
English grammar rules suck!
and so do certain teams!

Alyson
@Lucy you do know you're not supposed to eat the paper wrappers of those things, right?

Vilma
oh. shots fired.
I'm Vilma, the soon-to-be-ex-girlfriend of Sorren Miitka

Lucy
quick question everyone, should i change my name back to Lucilla?

Alyson
holy smokes, Vil!
you've got to stop introducing yourself like that!

Vilma
what, you're all no fun at all.
even Mitty thinks it's hilarious when I say that.
peoples' faces just fall and they get so weird about it. it's so, so great.
Mitty has way too much fun sweeping in with adding I'll be his wife soon.

Lucy
okay, no answers are also answers somehow.
@Lily, what do you think?

Lily
I'm the new one here.
please keep your name.

Lily
also, you're horrible in a good way, @Vilma, I like you already.
congrats, you've found the right one.

Vilma
so have you, right?
after all, you're Shane's girl… again?
I've been with Mitty for ages but what is the lore here?
some of us here even thought Hollander's one true love would forever be hockey.

Lily
I don't belong to him.
if anything, his ass belongs to me (is that how you say it?)
he never said it but I know I'm his first love.
in a way, he's mine, too.
if you don't count hockey.
(for both of us.)

Alyson
where to start?
that's so many things rolled into one.
his ass is yours, that's crass but kinda cute.
you're a direct and straight-to-the-point kind of girl, aren't you?

Lily
yeah but without the straight part.

Alyson
I'm not an ally even if my name alludes to me being one.
oh shit, that sounds so not how I meant it.
same, what I meant to say is same.

Vilma
@Alyson honey, feet don't belong in mouths.
could you please stop putting yours in there?

Alyson
you sure about that?

Lucy
no kinkshaming in this house!

Jackie
okay nope, I'm out.
I'm way too post-partum and not loopy enough on pain meds to be part of this conversation.
I'll be taking a nap. again. don't wake me up any time soon.
get my husband if things get out of hand (or don't, he'll make it worse).

Vilma
now that's just a bunch of insults.
love you, too, ladies. love you, too.

Alyson
sorry, I tend to make jokes about my identity.
usually it's stuff like: I'm a triple threat - biracial, bilingual and bisexual.

Lucy
the joke here is that she speaks about six languages by now.
wait, you've got seven on your language study list, haven't you…

Vilma
anyway, so, is anyone finally going to clue Lily in on which guy happens to be dating Lucy?

Lily
let me guess, is it Comeau?

Lucy
the one and only!
I love that perfect idiot so much.

Alyson
as much as I'd love letting you guess, @Lily, I'll just tell you outright, I'm not dating any of the guys. not anymore. I'm just the Token Non-Hetero Person of the group chat and I'm too adorable to get kicked out.

Lily
you're brave to just come out like that.

Alyson
nah. you're one of the girls now.
Jackie wouldn't have asked you to join us if you weren't cool.
also, you did basically the same thing a few minutes ago.
or was that about something else?

Lily
I'm also bisexual, yes.

Lucy
you don't really say that to people, do you?
it's cool you just said it on the spur of the moment.

Lily
don't know why but you feel safe.
chaotic but safe.

Jackie
don't mind me I'm sleep-talking-writing, whatever.
like I said, welcome to the group Lily.
you're one of us now.

Vilma
@Lily, don't listen to Ally, she's a lying liar who lies.
She's not adorable, she's adorkable and we just couldn't release her back into the wild, she would be lost without us.

Alyson
yeah, okay.
I cannot even deny that.

Lily
Shane just came out of the kitchen and he is making grabby hands at me.
he taught me that word when I told him he's like a big kitten.

Lucy
he's cooking for you and he's being all cute and cuddly?!
proof, or it didn't happen!

Lily
nah, I won't send you anything any of your guys could use as chirping material against my guy.

Lily
you know what.

once is okay.
he purrs when we cuddle.

Vilma
damn, promise, we'll take that info to our graves!

Lucy
you might…

Lily
if you want your guys to chirp, talk about birds.
Russians are not used to Canadian wildlife.
stupid Canadian wolf birds.

Vilma
you're adorable. Lily, you really are the cutest. (sorry @Ally)
why hasn't Shane gotten his shit together sooner?

Lily
we were both stupid.
I confessed first.
now we're in love.
lovers. wait no, not that.
he's my boyfriend now.

Chapter 8: Hollander Family

Hollander Family

David
Hello Ilya, welcome to the chat.

Yuna
I thought adding you, @Ilya, would make it easier to get a hold of either one of you while you're at the cottage.

David
No sudden surprises for either side.

Shane
can we not do that, please, dad?

David
It's just how it is.

Shane
Ilya is still in the car, he said he needed to call a friend real quick.
I'm looking for some tuna. I mean it's better if we don't go shopping when it's just the two of us.

David
Or you'll run the risk of being seen together, right.

Yuna
Is there really no way to get in touch with Scott Hunter?
He could probably help you two out with how to hide without actually having to hide all the time.

Shane
you've seen how relentless the press was with Rose.
they haunted us and immediately knew wherever we were even if it was spontaneous outings.
I don't want Ilya to have to jump through hoops, trying to stay hidden and frankly, I'm tired of doing that all the time as well.

Yuna
You've been doing that for years, jumping through hoops, haven't you?
It must have been so difficult to hide for so long.
I'm so sorry you had to go through that. Both of you.

David
You played for the same team, would it really be that unbelievable that you two managed to

get over your yearslong rivalry and instead became friends? Okay, now that I reread that, I see how unbelievable that would seem.

Shane
that's why we came up with the charity idea Ilya mentioned. it's how we could get closer in public, by simulating a few chance meetings here and there every few weeks for, I don't know, a few months or years maybe and then, we could eventually come clean and let the world know that we've gotten close and eventually fell in love. it wouldn't be the truth but it wouldn't be a complete lie either.

Yuna
It would give all of us a lot of time to prepare for the aftermath of you two going public, which I approve of as your manager. As your mother however, it saddens me to think you'll have to hide what you are to each other for so much longer than you already did.

Shane
that's how it's going to be, I guess.
do we really have any other choice?
besides, I'm kind of used to it by now.

Shane
I'll give you a call in a bit.
I've made it back to the car.

Shane
something's wrong with Ilya.
talk to you in a bit.

David
How are you?
How is Ilya?

Yuna
I just told your father Ilya is probably just a bit overwhelmed.
Tell him he's welcome any time, with or without you.
Even in the middle of the night.

David
Especially in the middle of the night.

Shane
We're okay.
Cuddling on the couch.
I think Ilya needed a hug.
It was all a bit much lately.

Ilya
thank you for adding me to your family

Ilya
*family chat.

Yuna
Same thing.

Chapter 9: Rose

Rose

Rose
I'll be busy with work for the next couple of days.
I'm not secretly thinking badly of you and I'm not ignoring you if I don't respond immediately.
Shane tends to worry about stuff like that so maybe you're similar.
I'm just busy, not mad at either one of you.

Lily
I'm really not mad at you either.
just not used to talking to exes.
like I said, I usually don't date.
Shane is my first partner.
first boyfriend.

Rose
I'm still a bit sorry about how I asked Shane if he's maybe into men.

Rose
he completely froze and pulled up all the barriers he could.
I've never seen him so scared and looking so lost.
is it really that difficult for hockey guys to be into guys?

Lily
I thought you'd be busy.

Lily
but yeah.
I'm from a really homophobic country myself.
I don't even know if I'd be able to go back if our secret got out.

Rose
that sucks and I'm sorry that's part of your life.

Lily
did he say anything about me?

Rose
oh no.
no. absolutely not.
he clearly didn't want me to know who you are.
by now, it's clear you're some kind of public figure yourself.
to me at least. it takes one to know one, right?

I was kidding when I asked if you're a hockey player.
but where else is Shane going to meet someone. he never goes out to party if he isn't dragged away from the ice or out of the gym.

Rose
I won't bother you.
still, sorry for being nosy.

Rose
when he came out to me, Shane had this look in his eyes.
I asked if he'd ever been with another guy and he looked heartbroken but hopeful.
now, I'm sure he was thinking of you. of moments and memories you two shared.

Lily
thank you, for telling me that.
Shane told me about your talk.

Rose
sorry, btw for trying to play matchmaker for a friend

Lily
I know Miles.
he's a friend of a friend.

Rose
oh, you do?

Lily
small world

Rose
it sure is.

Chapter 10: WAG

WAG

Lily
hello?
anyone awake?
sorry, I know it's like 2am.

Alyson
are you okay?
is something wrong with Hollander?

Lily
nope, he's in bed, sleeping.
I'm sitting outside watching the water.

Alyson
oh yeah, you said you're at his family's cottage.
I've never actually been there despite the Hollanders throwing parties there sometimes.
this is not me trying to get an early invite btw.

Lily
I can't sleep and I don't want to wake Shane up.
why are you still awake?

Alyson
it's my regular time to get up.
it's my day off though.

Lily
you've got my empathy.

Alyson
thank you.
not to be a smartass but it'd be sympathy.
but close enough.

Alyson
you said you can't sleep.
do you want to talk about it?

Lily
yeah, kind of.

Alyson
do you want to move this to a private chat?

Lily
that would be nice.
thank you.

Chapter 11: Alyson

Alyson

Alyson
what do you want to talk about?
do you want me to call you?

Lily
texting is better.
I don't think I could follow if you're talking.

Lily
English is stupid language!

Alyson
for real, it is.

Lily
what do you mean lover is someone you fuck not love?
and fucker is just insult, not about fucking someone?
you love someone, you call them lover!
is simple but English is too stupid!

Alyson
I forgot again that English isn't your first language.
for real, your writing skills are totally fine. we've not talked yet but I think I'd like your accent. if you even have one. but I don't think we'd be able to understand each other if I'd answered your call in Polish.

Lily
you're Polish?

Alyson
I'm not. But I tried to learn the language for a past girlfriend.

Lily
that must have been a really special girl.

Alyson
I think I was just being really, really gay.
she wasn't gay, like not at all, but that's a different story.
what, isn't Hollander learning Russian for you?

Lily
I don't know if I'd want him to.

he wouldn't go to Russia.
not if it's not for work.

Alyson
may I ask why?
is it because you're bi?

Lily
almost every man in my family is police.
I don't want to take the risk.

Alyson
oh. okay, I get what you mean.

Lily
I still miss home.
having family.
not really the place or the people.
it's complicated.

Alyson
my family doesn't care, in a good way, that I'm queer.
but I get that's unfortunately not the case for everyone.
I'd love to be able to hug you right now.
wait, are you a hugging person?

Lily
I don't know.
with Shane and my best friend, yes.
I miss her a lot. my best friend.

Alyson
do you want to talk about her?
oh no, is she no longer with you?

Lily
she's still alive. just in Russia.
I think I cannot go back there.

Alyson
she's not an ex, right?

Lily
well

Lily
I'm not in love with Svetlana.
before you ask, I'm not using Shane as a beard.

I never cheated on her or him either.
I'd never do that to anyone.

Alyson
you're perfectly fine just the way you are.
you're bi no matter who you are with, just in case no one ever told you that.
there's no need to try to explain yourself or your identity.

Lily
thank you.

Alyson
if you need an aggressively supportive bi bestie, I'll be here for you.
I promise I won't develop a hopeless crush on you.

Alyson
if you need a distraction from whatever is worrying you, I could send you random facts, songs I think you'd like or you could send me voice messages and rant about whatever is bothering you.

Lily
the lights just went on inside
Shane must have noticed I'm gone

Alyson
warm greetings to our captain

Lily
Hello Alyson, thank you for chatting with my partner.
We'll be going back to bed now. - Shane

Lily
good morning Ally, I hope you got some sleep. Shane tried carrying me back to bed and nearly broke his back. thank you for keeping me company. I took a picture of the lake for you. I hope you think it's pretty.

Alyson
it is really, really pretty. thank you.

Alyson
always, Lily.
I told you, I'll be there.
and I have a feeling you'd be there for me, too.

Lily
I will be.

Chapter 12: WAG

WAG

Vilma
is everything alright?
my mom senses are tingling.

Lucy
@Alyson @Lily
girls, you good?

Lucy
Vil, your babies are furry beasts at best not actual babies!

Vilma
you did not just say that.
they're still my babies.

Vilma
@Lily, @Alyson, are you okay?

Jackie
Rose said Lily and Shane are having a date today.
They try not to look at their phones if it's not absolutely necessary

Lucy
wow, modern day romance isn't dead.
wait, Rose? I know she's still kind of friends with Shane.
Lily is actually okay with that?

Alyson
she is.
I think they might have become friends or something.
there's like no real jealousy at all between them from what she's told me.
or Lily is just really good at hiding her jealousy.

Jackie
I'm not sure if it's my place to say this but Rose told me if anyone asks, she respects Lily a lot and she knows that Lily was there before her and that it will be Lily who will be with Shane from now on.

Lucy
why did she, I mean Rose, want to leave the group chat then?

Jackie
Rose is not a big fan of chats blowing up her phone.

that's why she muted us most of the time.
and we're all still able to reach her if we want to.
Rose hasn't changed her number.

Vilma
fair enough.

Lucy
do you think Lily is meeting our captain's parents today, like officially?

Lily
hello everyone, we're fine.
I've already met Yuna and David.
For years Shane made me think his parents are boring.
But they're cool. They're both really cool.

Lily
We had a great date.
We went hiking.

Lucy
oh no, you're a jock in disguise and that's why Hollander loves you so much!

Lily
I'm better than him.
My stamina is better than his.

Vilma
can you stop being so cool, I want to drive over to the cottage so badly and shake your hand for managing to lock Hollander down for good.

Vilma
btw, Ally?
where's the song of the week?
I know it's your turn. but I'd like to rec something, if that's alright?

Alyson
I've got nothing.
the stage is yours, honey.

Vilma
this one's especially for Lily, our new MVP, the one who's probably going to hard carry us all (this is a joke, no pressure, dear):
song rec of the day

Lily
the beat drop is okay.
but why are they howling?
sounds like that fucking bird again.

Lily
and now Shane's laughing his ass off
if he's not careful I'll drag him into the water to recreate some scenes.

Alyson
Vilma since when are you into kpop?

Vilma
what, Mark's from LA!
I've got to support fellow Angeleno!

Lucy
Vil, you're not even American!

Vilma
do I look like I care?
I've lived there longer than I've lived in Denmark and Canada combined.

Lucy
@Lily, your personal vendetta with Canadian wildlife is fascinating.

Chapter 13: WAG

WAG

Lily
I've got solid ground under my feet again.

Alyson
nice, you've made it back down to Earth.
how was the flight?

Lily
it sucked or it sucks now.
Shane's still in Canada and I'm not.
there's so much to do in the next couple of months.
I really do want to move to Canada, permanently.

Lucy
I'd pay good money to see Hollander in the honeymoon phase you two seem to be stuck in.
don't get me wrong, after what you've shared about how it took you nearly a decade to get together, I'm so happy you're finally official.

Lily
roughly two weeks isn't enough time together.
If I could, I'd live inside him. if we were different people, I knew I'd have proposed to him the day we met. in another universe maybe I'd have done it for real.

Lucy
oh wow, that not-seeing-him-24/7-anymore is hitting hard already, huh?
how the heck did you two survive seeing each other maybe just thrice a year or so in person for so many years?

Lily
honest no-filter answer or interview-friendly answer?

Vilma
I mean we're all used to long distance relationships and the complications that come with them.

Lily
phone sex. the answer is phone sex.
lots and lots of phone sex.

Alyson
@Lily, and you're the one saying you don't watch or read spicy romance stories.

If your love story doesn't get turned into a TV series one day, I refuse to keep believing in true love.

Vilma
may I change the topic?
I'm planning a wedding here and I'm so sad you won't be able to attend @Lily.
we've only been chatting for about three weeks now but you're so dear to me already, it feels like you've been part of this group for years.

Lucy
@Vil, you're a kindergarten teacher, you basically adopt everyone and everything within seconds.

Lucy
@Lily no offense, if I'm bullying Vil (lovingly, obviously) it's got nothing to do with you.

Vilma
okay, ladies here's the topic change: any guesses for the Cosmopolitan's Hottest Man in the NHL ranking?

Lily
as the partner of last year's No. 1 Hottest Man in the NHL am I allowed to take part, or…?

Lucy
someone's confident in her man's looks for sure.

Lily
I mean Comeau's fine I guess, from a totally neutral perspective.

Lily
but Shane is smoking hot.
I bet you've not seen him in his black-framed reading glasses.
they look so damn good on him. make his freckles look even more beautiful.
weak backhand but good head. nice hair color I mean.

Jackie
that's totally what you've meant. sure.
just saying, to me Hayden's the hottest man alive.
I'm not a mother of multiple kids for nothing.

Lucy
I didn't think you'd have it in you Jackie

Jackie
I'm happy with how things are and my sex life is great, thank you very much.

Alyson
okay, from the single person here, what's the hottest attribute of your guys?

Lily
@Ally, you're really a lying liar who lies.
what about that cute ambulance driver you've mentioned?

Alyson
that would be so unprofessional.
like, imagine she's doing a patient transfer and here I come, to ask her if she's free later.
not doing that, absolutely not doing that any time soon.

Alyson
but her deep voice when she's barking at her new apprentice (who's a total dick btw).
I understand some bits and I'd never thought I'd fall for a Russian (again).
I'm so, so, so very gay. help me. girls. for real.

Lily
okay full stop.
what do you mean, again?

Lucy
I'm going to get the popcorn.
this is going to be amazing.

Jackie
please go easy on her @Lily.
we all make mistakes.

Vilma
just to give a totally unrelated example here,
mistakes like crushing on our team captain's arch-rival

Lily
WHAT?

Lily
HOLY SHIT!
for real?!

Lily
out of all those guys?
and you're into that one?

Alyson
past tense form please.

Lucy
yeah, sure.

Vilma
keep telling yourself that.

Alyson
okay I'm kidding, don't block me for this please.
but come on, he might be a rival but he's hot af.

Lily
I'm telling Shane we've got a traitor in our midst.

Lily
honestly, though?
this just made my day.

Alyson
as if Hollander wouldn't be all over Rozanov.
if he were even in the slightest bit into dudes.
Rozanov is basically the male version of you Lily.

Lily
what?

Alyson
sorry, I was trying to make a joke.
I've crossed the line with that one, didn't I?
I'm sorry.

Lily
no, it's fine.

Lily
I mean it, how am I like Rozanov?

Jackie
now that Ally mentions it I can see it, you really are a lot like him, or like how he's in interviews. nonchalant, unwilling to censor yourself. but you're also not like him at all. you're funny, witty and, I think, even unintentionally cute.

Lucy
yeah, he's brash and an asshole most of the time.
and then, totally out of nowhere, he just drops really thoughtful answers.
like about how he views success and moving forward. that's really inspirational.

Jackie
like Hayden always says, "if one guy's worth being our captain's rival it's got to be Rozanov!" and yes, I did just copy and paste that straight from our chat history.

Vilma
he's got a sharp tongue but he seems to be a kinda sweet guy. if only deep, deep down hidden under so many layers of his tough jock persona. I mean, I've started to respect him a lot ever since he was the first one by Hollander's side when he went down some time ago. he seemed so shocked to see Hollander get knocked out in the blink of an eye.

Jackie
I mean I've seen much worse incidents on the ice but that was still painful to watch.

Jackie
@Lily, honey. sorry for mentioning it.
he's our captain but you're his girlfriend and we're being insensitive, aren't we?

Alyson
oh shoot, yeah. right. sorry.

Lily
I was with Shane, that day. I saw him for a few minutes. at the hospital.

Lily
it was the first time I saw him go down that hard.

Lily
he told me he was fine. smiled, held my hand.

Lily
but when it happened.
I thought I'd lost him.

Lily
I couldn't do anything.

Lily
I mean

Lily
shit. I can't do this right now.

Lily
sorry, girls, I've got to go.

Chapter 14: Rose

Rose

Rose
the WAG chat is on fire according to Jackie.

Rose
no, don't worry, they all still know you as Lily

Rose
as Lily, their new friend, who might be having a panic attack.
everyone is worried about you and so am I.

Rose
Jackie called Shane, telling him you're not feeling well after your flights.

Rose
it's been some time.
I hope you're alright.

Rose
right now I'd really like to know what else I could call you.
Lily feels a bit strange because I know that's not your name.

Rose
I feel as if I'm talking to myself.

Rose
Shane just texted me.
he told me you've made it home.

Rose
call me if you want to talk to someone who isn't Shane, okay?
I'm here, I'll listen.

Rose
I'm not your rival.
I'm trying to be a friend, if you're okay with that?

Lily
Voice Call
24 minutes

Rose
thank you for calling me, thank you for trusting me.
I mean everything of what I've just told you.

your secret is safe with me. that's not it.
that makes it seem as if it were something shameful.
I mean, your love for Shane is safe with me.
I'm rooting for you. I really do.

Rose
I hope you're able to sleep well.
good night.

Ilya
thank you, you too.

Chapter 15: Yuna

Yuna

Ilya
Hello Yuna, may I ask you something?
Or tell you something. I don't know how to say it yet.

Yuna
Hello Ilya, are you okay, Shane told me you weren't feeling well after you've made it to Boston. Do I need to sit down for this?
You're not going to ask for Shane's hand in marriage, are you?

Ilya
Oh fuck no.

Ilya
I mean, please excuse my language.

Ilya
That's not what I'm asking.

Yuna
You're forgiven. That couldn't have been any more direct if you'd ask me.
So you wouldn't want to marry my son, not even for permanent citizenship?

Ilya
I'd marry him for love, nothing else.
Besides, our love's already illegal where I'm from.
I wouldn't want to add more crimes to that.

Yuna
Honest, direct, loyal and faithful.
You'll be my favorite son-in-law.

Ilya
I'd be your only son-in-law.

Yuna
Semantics.

Yuna
Now with that out of the way, what do you want to ask me?
Is actually everything alright like you've been saying?

Ilya
How risky would it be if I'd maybe have told someone about being with Shane?

Yuna
I know about the WAG group chat that you're a part of Ilya.
I think it's not the best idea but I trust you to be discreet.

Ilya
I wasn't.

Yuna
Okay, let me rephrase that real quick, how much damage control do I have to do?
Do I have to make some calls? How fast do any statements have to be out?

Ilya
Shane's ex knows that Shane is with me now, not Lily but Ilya Rozanov.

Yuna
Good, okay, so what you're saying is I can close all my open tabs.

Ilya
I guess so.
I didn't tell her because I wanted her to back off.
Shane trusts her so I decided to do the same.

Yuna
So this was just an update of the list of people who know.
Okay, that's good. Please don't overdo it for the time being. We really do need a plan that'll allow for the best possible outcome for both of you and your respective careers.

Ilya
thank you Yuna.
for allowing me to be with Shane.

Yuna
He'd break his own heart to make his father and me happy.
I wouldn't want that for him, not ever.

Yuna
You calmed him down and got him out of getting lost in his own thoughts and fears when he was freaking out. Ilya, you did all of that within seconds.

Yuna
You're his anchor.

Ilya
It's not that I don't want to answer.
I don't know how to answer.
It feels unreal to mean so much to someone.

Yuna
That's okay. You will get used to it.

But please, never take it for granted.
Just accept that you've been accepted.
Not just into the family chat but as Shane's partner.
He wants you to be a part of his life, so you're part of our family now.

Yuna
Call me if that's easier than texting, okay?

Ilya
I will, thank you so much ma'am.

Yuna
Just one thing.

Ilya
Yes?

Yuna
Please don't ever try to address me politely like that again. It's too weird.
You're still Ilya Rozanov, my son's biggest rival and you've been that from the start.

Ilya
Would it be better if I were his biggest fan?

Yuna
Don't get ahead of yourself, son.
Are you seriously trying to chirp right now?
You've got guts.

Ilya
I hope so, I still need them.
Preferably inside my body.

Yuna
If you ever get married to Shane, I'll screenshot this whole conversation.

Ilya
Promise or threat?

Yuna
Both, Ilya, it's both.

Chapter 16: WAG

WAG

Lily
sorry everyone for making you worry.

Jackie
what matters is that you're okay.
sending you lots and lots of love.

Alyson
thank freaking every deity in existence that you're feeling better.
I remember my first breakdown after my ex got in an accident.

Vilma
you've got nothing to apologize for, honey.
the first time I witnessed Mitty getting knocked unconscious, after we started dating, my knees just buckled and I cried until someone literally picked me off of the floor.

Vilma
it's funny in retrospect because I was having my very own soap opera moment and the camera operator thought it'd be such a good moment to capture forever on film. Mitty said he wants the clip played at our wedding, as a sign of how much we love each other.

Vilma
he can eat a puck for all I care. I love him though.
I wouldn't get married to him in less than half a year if I didn't.

Lucy
you all know the clip where I literally climbed my man like a tree after a win, right?

Lucy
yeah, that one. that one clip.
runny nose, snot everywhere, grinning like a loon.
my siblings still tease me about my impeccable supermodel look from back then.

Alyson
I bet Lily always looks like a freaking superstar even with tear tracks down her cheeks

Alyson
pretend you all didn't read that

Lily
it's okay. you can mention superstars around me.

right after Shane, Rose was actually the second one who got through to me when I was spiraling.

Lily
we promised each other we'd meet up the next time we're both in New York.

Jackie
will you meet us, too?
one day?
when you're ready?

Lily
yes. it's not that I don't want to get to know you. I'm just not ready yet.
Shane and I, we've been hiding for so long, it feels safer that way.

Lily
also, quick question, what does it mean if the mother of your boyfriend calls you son/daughter/kid?

Lucy
in what context?

Lily
I was chatting with Yuna.

Lily
wait, let me copy that answer for you.
Yuna: Don't get ahead of yourself, kid. Are you seriously trying to chirp right now? You've got guts.
Me: I hope so, I still need them. Preferably inside my body.
Yuna: If you ever get married to Shane, I'll screenshot this whole conversation.

Vilma
that. is. just. precious

Vilma
it means you've been updated to potential daughter-in-law or in short: Momager Hollander loves you and sees you as the daughter she never had.

Lily
wait, you're calling Yuna Mom-Manager?

Alyson
don't you dare try to change the topic right now, miss!
you're going to talk about your future mother in law and about how much she likes you!

Jackie
lmao, doing things the complicated way is so you.

@Lily, a screenshot would have been so much quicker.
but congrats from me, too, for having earned the Hollanders' approval.

Chapter 17: David

David

David
Hello Ilya, I know Yuna has been updating you about the statements Shane will be giving once it's made public that you're signing with Ottawa in a few weeks.

David
I just wanted to ask if you're doing alright?

Ilya
Hello David.

Ilya
you're asking if I'm still supportive of Shane's decision to come out to his teammates some time this year, yes?

David
No, that's not what I'm asking.
You've been talking about this for months.
Yuna has been making plans for just as long.
I trust your judgement that everything will turn out alright.

Ilya
I won't be doing the same any time soon.
I mean, I won't come out to anyone else yet.

David
That's okay. It's your decision to make.

Ilya
I don't know my new team that well yet.
There's some familiar faces of course.
But other than that, new turf.

David
Who has been teaching you new slang recently? Svetlana?
Please say hello to her from Yuna and me. Will she be coming with you next time?

Ilya
What, it's the wrong word?

Ilya
She's in Boston, yes.
Feed up with that guy she's been seeing.

David
I understand what you're saying.
Ottawa, for you it's still unfamiliar territory.

Ilya
Yeah, that.

David
Why don't you introduce her to the significant others group chat?

Ilya
the WAGs?

David
You're one of them and have been for over a year now.
I wouldn't call you a wife or a girlfriend. You're a boyfriend.
What about a new name, like WAP, for wives and partners?

Ilya
David, no. Just no.
Please don't look up what that means.

Ilya
I'll maybe ask Svetlana if she'd want to come along next time?

David
Yuna will be so happy to finally meet her in person.

Ilya
And you?

David
Of course. She's like a sister to you, isn't she?

David
It's like meeting someone from your family.

Ilya
Yes.

Ilya
That's why it's so hard to tell her.
She knows I'm also into men.
She wouldn't out us.
It's hard to explain.

Ilya
I don't think I can tell her about being with Shane yet.

David
Son, it's fine. Whenever you're ready.
It's harder to come out to family than it is to friends.

David
That's what they said in a documentary I've watched with Yuna.
Do you want me to send it to you?

Ilya
Yes, that would be great, thanks David.

Ilya
While Shane and I are still at the cottage, do you want me to put the leftover solyanka in the freezer? We've got way too many leftovers again.

David
Yes, please.

David
Speaking of, the next barbecue.
Could you make that fur coat salad again?
I forgot what it's called.

Ilya
the one with the salted hering?
herring under a fur coat salad?
selyodka pod shuboy?

David
Yes, that one.

Chapter 18: Vilma

Vilma

Vilma
can you believe that there's rumours online about Rose Landry having been seen at the same club as Rozanov? I mean, it wouldn't be the first time but still, wouldn't it be wild if they actually became a thing?

Vilma
you might wonder why I'm talking about that out of nowhere, I just remembered I've got some Vodka I've wanted to give to you at home.

Lily
random thought transitions are your thing, aren't they?

Vilma
neurospicy minds, am I right?

Lily
neuro-what?

Vilma
I'm on the spectrum

Lily
congrats for coming out. thanks for trusting me with that. I support you.

Lily
wait, you're not gonna ditch your soon-to-be hubby?
I mean, I'd drive the getaway car if you want to leave him at the altar. for dramatic effect. I don't know. I'd do it, no questions asked if you need me to. but that's a bit sudden, no?

Vilma
really, you'd be willing to ditch an obligatory work event for that? nothing else?

Vilma
I'm touched and no, that's not meant to be sarcastic. I'd always thought of you as a ride-or-die kind of person anyway.

Vilma
Lily, I'm on the neurodivergent spectrum, I'm autistic and I've got ADHD.
that's why I decided to become a special needs education teacher in the first place.

Vilma
so, thanks for not treating me as if I'm weird.

Lily
why would I?
you're just being you.

Vilma
thank you, dear.

Vilma
now back to the previous topic.
or I'll sit here and sob about how great you are.

Lily
You're also great and kind and you accept me.
Shane says it's okay to cry, to let it all out if you have to.

Vilma
If you cannot make it to the wedding, how about having a barbecue together this summer?
Just us two girls and our lovers.

Vilma
btw, you were really onto something there. lovers really is such a good way to describe one's partner yet unfortunately English natives think it's gross. love shouldn't be seen as gross.

Lily
maybe, thanks for asking.

Lily
lovers is a good word.

Vilma
oh no, I've changed the topic again.
You can stop me from doing that if you want.

Lily
nah, I like talking to you.
it doesn't bother me.

Vilma
thanks and anyways, I bought a bottle for Alyson as a gag gift last year, that's still kind of an actual gift. I've got a second bottle this year, just in case, do you want me to hold onto that one for you?

Lily
how is it a gag gift?

Vilma
it was a limited Pride edition Vodka bottle, rainbow flag all over it and all.
it's not even Danish or Russian Vodka but Swedish. I never had it before, is it any good?

Lily
thank you for thinking of me.
but Shane's parents already gifted us a bottle.
so did Rose and Svetlana. separately, of course.

Vilma
they all know you're bi?

Lily
yeah and they're supportive.

Vilma
that is so, so sweet.
I'm happy for you that you've found such a supportive social network.

Lily
big kindergarten teacher words again?

Vilma
oh, piss off.

Lily
hugs and kisses.

Vilma
go eat a puck. or a dick. I don't care.

Lily
trust me on that, I will.

Vilma
Hollander is such a lucky bastard to have you.

Lily
he is.
so am I.

Chapter 19: Hollander Family

Hollander Family

Yuna
So, here's the game plan and please don't get intimidated by the amount of attachments. I'll send the rest via email. If you've got any kind of questions, please let me know.

Shane
Thank you, mom.

Ilya
Thank you, Yuna.

Ilya
Ottawa is great by the way.

David
You don't have to try to score points.
We already like you.

Ilya
It's the truth.

Shane
I just read the bullet points for what to avoid during the coming out speech.

Shane
I'm still scared they're going to want a list.

Ilya
Shane, they won't be asking for a list.

Yuna
A list?

David
A ranking of how hot Shane thinks his teammates are.

Yuna
Huh. Men.

Ilya
Yeah. Men.

Ilya
You can tell them you think I'm the hottest.

They'll leave you alone after that.

Ilya
I'm in the gym's locker room, I've got to go soon, one of my teammates wants to go grab a beer later.

Yuna
No drinking and driving, okay?

Shane
Don't smoke.

David
Same time stamp.

Ilya
Yes, I'll behave.
I'll be a good boy.

Shane
You better be.

Ilya
Love you.

Ilya
Sorry, that was meant for the private chat with Shane.

David
Love you, too, son.

Yuna
We love you, too, boys.

Shane
I love all three of you.

Ilya
You okay?

Shane
I will be once you're back home.

Ilya
Mine or yours?

David
Still the wrong group chat.

Shane
I don’t care.

Shane
@Ilya, I don’t care.

Chapter 20: WAG

WAG

Lucy
I never thought I'd be saying this one day but HECK YES, GO ROZANOV!

Alyson
that was so subtle and so smooth, we need more players who dare to roast those old white cishet dudes for being bigots! especially during Pride month!

Jackie
it's that time of the year again. time flies.

Lucy
as an ally, happy 2018 Pride everyone!

Vilma
Voice Message - 0: 30
"Gudfader i skuret, fucking homophobic piece of shit, trash-talking dickhead reporter! He can get fucked or go fuck himself with a hockey stick, no lube and all! I mean we all know so many of these guys are like that but this one really takes the cake!"

Alyson
if tomorrow there's dozens upon dozens of fan-edited pictures of Rozanov with pride flags all over them I'll be sending them to all my queer friends.

Lily
with a hockey stick, huh?
no lube, that's brutal.

Lily
Vilma, you're really creative with words.

Lily
I've got to take some notes for chirping purposes now.

Jackie
you all know as well as I do that Rozanov would get so much shit if that happened. I mean him being linked in any way, shape or form to all the rainbow flags all over social media. he might be kind of cool with queer folks and even dare to talk about it but he's still Russian.

Jackie
not everyone is as lucky as Scott Hunter is with his team and the backup from his management.

Lily
Shane cringed so hard when he saw the interview.
But he agrees with Rozanov.

Lily
I mean talk shit get hit.

Lily
Yuna would have kicked Shane's ass (verbally), if he'd pulled such a stunt. Her own words.

Vilma
I just insta-stalked Rozanov a bit.

Lucy
you're snooping in enemy territory now?

Vilma
I sure as heck do.
he posted a picture of a crossroad at sunset and captioned it with "tell me which way to go" recently.

Vilma
not to be a baby bird about it but you know…
he is totally quoting song lyrics here.

Lily
you noticed it, too?
but why baby bird?

Vilma
that's what Ahgase means in English.
as in my favorite group's fandom name.

Vilma
wait, Lily? am I getting this right?
are you telling me you've actually gotten into GOT7?!
what an honor to have been the one who introduced you to their music.

Lily
I mean, that Jinyoung guy is a good singer, good actor.
nice smile. beautiful dark eyes.

Lucy
I just looked him up.
@Lily, you've got a type, honey.

Alyson
don't get too deep into it or you'll end up on the rpf side of Rozanov's fandom.
I didn't mean to but I've come across a post where some fans were analyzing the picturesque

scenery, including lakeside areas and more especially that the video was shot in Japan. and it got gay really fast.

Alyson
it's public knowledge that Rozanov has made comments about Shane's cottage.
and well, some creative minds took that one info and combined it with the other.

Lily
@Alyson, if you call it our love nest one more time, I'll block you.

Alyson
no, you won't.
you love me.

Lily
well, yeah.

Lily
what is rpf?

Jackie
as the mom of the friend group I've got to put a stop to this!

Lucy
why? there's some really funny fics about my man out there. it's all make-believe anyway.

Vilma
@Lily it stands for real person fiction, it's when people write fan fiction or made up stories (mostly porn but also other things) about the celebrities they like.

Vilma
as an Ahgase I must say the MV is pretty queercoded if you want to see it that way. there's two guys on a road trip in a pickup truck, being uncertain of the here and now, of the future. maybe their shared one. they're both reading books about mental health and finding one's way and purpose in life (The Catcher in The Rye and Veronika Decides to Die). and then, of course, they're at a place that could be a cottage.

Lucy
@Lucy, long story short, people want your man and Rozanov to bone each other raw!

Lily
@Vilma and you're so good at describing all this because you've got practice writing your students' development reports or do you want to tell us something?

Vilma
I have a past I won't be talking about.

Alyson
please, as if you're not still writing.

her otp is her bias duo jjp.

Lily
I don't know what any of these words mean

Alyson
otp = one true pairing, aka the fictional relationship you like the most
jjp = it's the name of the fictional relationship of the two guys from got7
bias duo = in kpop, people call their favorite artist bias and Vilma loves both of them, so they're her bias duo

Lily
okay, why not.
that's like a whole different language.

Lily
and you two read (write?) stories about those singers?

Alyson
I should not have mentioned that part.

Lily
it's fictional. not real. make-believe, no?

Lily
too late. I'm thinking about it.

Lily
@Alyson, you were into Rozanov, yes?

Alyson
I won't be answering that. not in this context.

Vilma
Lily, you're kind of scaring me.
I swear there was no reading of fics involving both Hollander and Rozanov.
Our captain is not my type, like there's negative attraction right there.

Lily
so you did read them.
or did you write them yourself?

Lily
links?

Jackie
I just scanned through the last couple of messages and oh no.

Lucy
how did we get from Rozanov maybe being an ally to and speaking up for the queer

community to him getting railed by Hollander?

Lily
let's be real, Rozanov would top.

Alyson
OH WOW! WTF LILY?!
I LOVE YOU FOR THAT!

Vilma
Queen behavior for real.

Lily
@Alyson I mean, only because of that?

Jackie
oh gosh, girls.
for real?

Jackie
Hayden just asked why I'm almost crying with laughter.
quick, what do I tell him?

Chapter 21: Jackie

Jackie

Lily
thank you for inviting Shane and me over to have dinner.

Jackie
you're not getting cold feet about meeting up in person?

Jackie
okay, sorry.
that was mean.
and unfair to you.

Jackie
hi, btw, I hope you're doing well.
I've been rewriting this message again and again.
I'll just write what comes to mind.

Jackie
first of all, sorry for having dropped that invitation on you.
you haven't answered to anything in so long.

Jackie
the last couple of days have been such an absolute mess.
but I guess it's been about the same for you and Shane.
I mean Shane came out as gay to the guys and here you are, as Lily and you've got to stay hidden for both of your sakes.

Jackie
To be honest, I didn't contact you much because I didn't know how to talk to you.
so right now, I'm talking as your friend, who loves and cares about you.
Please don't forget that we've known each other for over a year now.
I may not know you fully yet but I know the parts of you which you decided to share with us.

Jackie
It's been roughly a week since Shane Hollander came out as gay to the rest of his team. that's his side of your relationship. how about you?

Jackie
in the WAG chat, there's been radio silence from you, not as the captain's but as Shane's boyfriend for several weeks now. it doesn't matter that you kept your gender a secret from us.
we just want to know you're alright.

Jackie
it's actually been closer to a month now since you've talked to me, or rather to any of us. we all know you tend to get really busy with work sometimes and we respect that. but that's not the reason this time.

Jackie
if it weren't for Rose and Shane telling me you're fine, I'd think Shane and you had silently agreed to break up and that you're scared of breaking the news to anyone else. but it's about who you are. the man you really are, isn't it? Shane said you've met during your rookie season. you're a hockey player. that makes you one of us, one of our group, even more.

Jackie
no one is angry. no one hates you. we just want to know if you're okay, so are you okay?
every WAG, current or former, is worried about you pulling away from us.
you might not be one of the girls but you're still one of us.

Lily
Jackie, I mean if you know who I am, you'll maybe not like me anymore.
I am a hockey player. yes. that part is true.

Lily
world junior hockey championships back in December 2008
that's where I met Shane for the first time. he told me smoking's bad for me.
we started hooking up, met every few months and it grew into something else.
now here we are. I didn't want to lie to you but you were so nice to me.

Lily
can you still be nice to me, even if there's not many Boston-based Russian players around?

Jackie
honey, it's okay. I won't force it out of you.
it's just a name. names carry a lot of weight.
it doesn't matter who you are. Vilma, our dear writer friend describes it as you having allowed us to see your heart instead of your face. she's got a point.
to me you're someone who loves Shane Hollander.
you don't have to love him in silence anymore.

Lily
Hello Jackie, it's Shane. I'm reading this out aloud for him.

Jackie
hug him from me, will you?

Lily
Of course, Jackie. I'm already doing that.

Lily
He says he'd really like to tell you, all of you, in person, face to face.

Jackie
I've talked to all the others, Ally refuses to say who she thinks you are and you know how good she is at deep diving into theories aka you know about her incredible online stalking skills. But Ally swears up and down she'd never used them against you.

Jackie
Vilma says she'd like to remind you that she'll be responsible for the getaway car if you'll ever need it.

Jackie
Lucy is trying to wrap her head around the idea that you could maybe be Marleau. I, for one, doubt you're Cliff Marleau. Shane's got better taste than that.

Jackie
If you don't want to talk to me, that's fine. But please talk to at least one of us. For your sake, not ours (or not just ours), okay, honey?

Lily
He says thank you and that he appreciates you not kicking him out of the group.

Lily
(Marleau?! I wouldn't even touch him with a barge pole. No way!)

Jackie
thanks for your input Shane. I hope it made him laugh a little.

Jackie
love, we'd never do that. oh, I just noticed I'm still calling you all these names.
Can I still call you that? Are pet names still okay?

Lily
me again, not Shane. the names are fine, made me think of you as sisters.

Jackie
if you're okay with it, we'd still like to be that for you.

Chapter 22: Alyson

Alyson

Alyson
hello Shane’s boyfriend.

Alyson
yeah, no, it's still weird using our captain's first name.
I’ve got to get used to thinking of him as Shane.

Alyson
the thing is I know you much better than I know Hollander.

Alyson
this is awkward.

Alyson
potentially embarrassing and totally mortifying as well.

Alyson
for me, not for you.

Lily
it is a little mortifying.

Lily
for me.

Lily
Alyson, should I call you?

Alyson
no. if it’s okay for you then please don’t, I’d like to figure out if my guess is correct first.

Lily
okay. you’re making me nervous.

Alyson
it’s okay. you’re good.

Alyson
So, you’re a male hockey player.

Alyson
Russian.

Alyson
like the not-so Russian Pride vodka bottles Vilma got for both of us.
which you and Hollander received as gifts as well from other people.

Alyson
On-and-off-again secret hookups for years.

Alyson
You live in and are loyal to Boston.

Alyson
Gosh, I was stupid to not notice that's the freaking line that's connecting everything.

Alyson
Boston!

Lily
You're not stupid.
I lied. Fooled you.
All of you.

Alyson
The clues were there all along. We just didn't notice.

Alyson
You aren't just the female version of Rozanov.

Lily
No, I'm not.

Alyson
I just scrolled all the way back to when you first introduced yourself to the WAGs.

Alyson
you basically came out within the first couple of messages we've exchanged, saying you're bi and that Hollander's ass belongs to you. that was a queer joke made by a queer guy about the guy he's with and it's so obvious now, to me at least.

Alyson
I didn't read it that way back then.

Lily
I didn't mean it that way back then. not completely.

Alyson
I mean, do I really have to spell out your name?

Lily
I don't think so, no.

Alyson
even when Hollander answered for you, he always said partner.
he never once called you his girlfriend. we all just assumed that's what you are.

Alyson
also the things you're into, your interests. the hobbies you share?

Alyson
I mean it'd be admirable if more cishetero couples did that but you two go on gym and hiking dates. you are both obsessed with sports. we should have all guessed it so much sooner, maybe not that Hollander is dating a man but that he's dating a fellow hockey player.

Lily
maybe?
maybe not?

Alyson
I am internally screaming right now. I mean I've basically told you I used to have a crush on you!

Lily
You did. I'm honored.

Lily
How else was I supposed to react back then?

Lily
I couldn't have just said thank you or whatever.

Alyson
I know too much about our captain's sex life now.

Lily
sorry?

Alyson
I mean we did have that conversation about dick size and girth and how that doesn't matter compared to how one uses the body parts they've got.

Lily
I don't remember having been part of that conversation.

Alyson
okay, moving on.

Lily
oh, yeah. right.

Lily
you asked about those wands. I think they're loud af and not discrete at all.

Alyson
they were not for you.

Alyson
hold on, Hollander was not seriously trying to get those things through airport security?

Lily
he wasn't.

Lily
I was.

Alyson
see, it is so easy to fall right back into these topics and conversations.
but I know who you are and that makes it just a little bit weird.

Alyson
I mean, that is kind of freaking me out. but you're also still you.
and you're someone I like talking to, someone who is a friend.

Lily
back then, when you mentioned me, my name I mean, you all insulted me but you were right.

Lily
that's how I act on camera. that's how I want to be seen. by people who don't know me.

Lily
it's better people see me as the smartass Russian jock than as the bi guy who is in love with and fucks Shane Hollander.

Lily
but you do know me.
you know who I am now.

Alyson
in my opinion, Vilma, with her talent for observation, said it best: it's a persona. a mask.

Lily
it is. it's what keeps Shane and I safe.

Lily
fuck, I mean I haven't even told Svetlana about us yet.
she's my oldest friend and she doesn't even know who I'm in love with.

Alyson
maybe that's what makes it so hard to face her.
how I see it, considering you've told me about your strained relationship with your family, Svetlana is probably the closest thing to a link to your shared home country. I think you're afraid of her rejecting maybe not you but your love and especially who you love.

Alyson
the thing is you don't have to pretend to be someone else.
you don't have to wear a mask around us anymore.
we'll try to help you. one day, you'll get to tell your childhood best friend, too.

Alyson
for now, Hollander and you, you can both be yourselves when it's just us.
the girls and our two boys. our two captains (don't tell anyone I said that, I'm still loyal to one team only obviously… yeah, I just thought about that and I'll send it to you phrased just like that anyway, as the one of plays for both teams.)

Alyson
I don't want you to ever be alone again or to think there's no one there if Hollander is not okay or if you're not okay. You've got us now. All of your fellow WAGs, okay? Tell me when and how you want to tell the others and I'll be there. I'll try to help if I can, or if you want me to.

Lily
Okay. Thank you.

Lily
Love you, Ally.

Alyson
Love you, too, Ilya.

Lily
does it feel weird?

Alyson
the sentiment? no.
the name? yes. a little. I'll get used to it.

Chapter 23: The Pikes and The Hollanders

The Pikes and The Hollanders

Jackie
sorry for allowing Hayden to name the group chat

Lily
as if I'd ever take Hollander's last name.
no offense to Yuna and David.

Jackie
I love how you're openly trashtalking now.
you're chirping like a pro these days.

Hayden
he's Shane's man, he's learnt from the best.

Shane
great. that's just great.
I'm being trashtalked by my own teammates.

Jackie
does this weekend still work for both of you?
@Lily, thanks for taking the time to give all of us WAGs a call. the others probably forgot to tell you they're happy to finally have heard and seen you.

Lily
I'll never agree to a video call with the entire group at once again, I swear.
that was way more chaotic than walking into the wrong team's locker room.

Hayden
now that you mention chaos, we've got a babysitter ready if you think a first meeting would be too chaotic with the kids around.

Hayden
see I told you all those months ago they'll adore you Lily

Lily
but you are aware my name isn't actually Lily, are you?

Hayden
of course I am.

Lily
then, if you don't mind, turn the letters around a bit.

Hayden
my wife is giving me a certain look right now.

Hayden
and now she's left the living room.

Hayden
what am I supposed to do here?

Hayden
ylil? illy? ylil? illy?

Shane
you've almost got it. you can do it, man.
now add a vowel to the last one.

Hayden
Ailly?

Hayden
Illya?

Hayden
?!

Hayden
Shane pick up your damn fucking phone right now!

Lily
please don't take this the wrong way, @ Jackie, you're married to an overgrown toddler! he's throwing a tantrum again, isn't he?

Hayden
*to Shane Hollander's biggest fan

Rozanov
what a cheap shot… I'm pretty sure I've known him longer than you have, Pike.

Hayden
you better join your boyfriend's and my wife's phone call! I dare you to say that to my face, Rozanov!

Rozanov
with pleasure.

Chapter 24: WAG

Chapter Notes

thank you so much to everyone who read this, send comments and/or left kudos while I was working on, writing and editing this story. I love this writing format a lot and chat fics are just a lot of fun to write. hereby thank you to the friend of mine who is reading this without any prior knowledge regarding this series or the characters - you messaging me about this story meant (and still means) a lot to me.

I am blown away by how this story, as an unfinished wip, has gotten so much support and so much feedback. I mean, I wrote this in under a week and in that short amount of time, this fic has become my most read story of the entire year.

so this last chapter, I hope you'll like it and in a way, it's my gift to you. perhaps as an early new year's present. - I hope you all have a wonderful year and that you'll be happy in the new year 2026.

(and yes, there are a few more kpop references in this fic, even the word count which was kind of unintentional... I kind of want to write a fic from both of their fans' pov as well and of them being really protective and starting to work together once a certain video gets posted, similar to my fic keysmash)

WAG

Lily
@Jackie, I've been wanting to ask this for a while now, so Amber was actually born long before Shane and I were at the cottage last year. Why were you talking as if you were at the hospital?

Jackie
because I was.
checkups during the postnatal period are really important!

Jackie
@Lily, but you wouldn't know that since, you know, Shane's not pregnant yet.

Alyson
as the nurse friend: there's different ways to have kids. there's so many kids in need of good and loving homes.

Alyson
as your friend: I believe in you, @Lily, just keep trying or whatever.

Vilma
the humor in this group keeps nosediving right into the gutter every single time.

Lily
Dear Miss Teacher, you're the worst one out of all of us!

Vilma
almost Mrs Teacher, if you please!

Vilma
nah, kidding, as if. I'll keep my own name after marriage.

Lucy
can we stop with the "Hollander is going to get impregnated" jokes? I cannot look at this chat during my lunch breaks anymore.

Lucy
one of these days, I'll eventually have to explain to my coworkers the absolute deranged humor of my friend group just because I'm giggling so hard or because I've actually inhaled my food or drink the wrong way

Jackie
just mute us during work hours, that's what Rose is doing.
it's actually fun having her join the group conversations once in a while again.

Alyson
@Lily I thought you'd caught onto the on-going joke or that you actually knew when Amber was born. it's an inside joke.

Alyson
Jackie makes these kinds of post-pregnancy jokes for at least half a year after each new baby.

Jackie
Amber is still the last one.
everyone, feel free to babysit my kids any time.
especially @Lily because you kind of owe me for that confession of what you did to Shane while he was on the phone with my hubby all those months ago.

Lily
no thanks, I'll pass. for now.

Lucy
scandalous.

Vilma
we should have known.

of course you did.
you were the first one who mentioned phone sex.

Lily
it was so worth it.

Vilma
okay back to more wholesome topics (not that your sex life updates aren't fun), is there anything else we should bring to your place later, @Jackie?

Lily
please no surprise gifts this time

Alyson
oh shut it, you loved it.

Lily
you got us a camera

Lucy
not just any camera, a polaroid.

Alyson
didn't you say you and Shane don't really have pictures together?
and that you're scared of taking any in case they got leaked?

Jackie
it wasn't expensive at all.
everyone chipped in, it's a group gift.
you better accept it. no take-backs.

Lucy
I know I'm like the least talkative person out of all of us but @Lily, you'll always be one of us. We might all know who you are now but that won't change who you are to us.

Lucy
we'll protect your identity and your relationship with Hollander inside our phones and outside, when we're meeting up in person or whenever we're talking about you with our partners. You'll be the guy Shane is seeing. Or we won't mention you at all. it's up to you, it's your choice.

Vilma
promise, as long as you and Hollander don't want any of the other guys to know about you being Hollander's boyfriend we'll keep our mouths shut.

Jackie
who said it? the thing about sisterhood being a state of mind and not something that's got to do with one's body parts and one's anatomy?

Lily
that would have been you, tipsy on the Vodka I told you was shit anyway.

Alyson
also, speaking of sisterhood, @Lily, you still owe me a shopping trip with Rose.

Vilma
not the point, Ally. nor the time.

Alyson
I'd also take a date but I know she doesn't swing that way.
do you happen to have any other beautiful and intelligent and strong-minded female friends who might or might not be into ladies?

Lily
really?

Lily
you really are the annoying sisters I never asked for.

Lucy
but you've got us anyway.

Vilma
you won't be getting rid of us any time soon.

Jackie
you're an honorary WAG.

Jackie
but no more package deliveries during phone calls, okay?

Lily
yes, of course, I'll behave, mom friend.

Jackie
you do know that we love you, don't you?

Lily
I do know that.
I very much do know that.
love you, too, my fellow WAGs.

End Notes

If you want to talk to me about any of my fics, you can find me on here bsky, twitter and tumblr

Kudos and comments are always appreciated.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!