

Ilya Rozanov, Fanmail's Worst Nightmare

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Ilya Rozanov, Fanmail's Worst Nightmare

by [wangxian_234](#)

Summary

Troy convinces Ilya to launch a Fanmail account..... chaos ensues.

Or 5 times Ilya Rozanov goes viral for a ridiculous Fanmail, and 1 time he goes viral for being the absolute soft hearted sap that he is

Notes

After reading The Long Game and learning about Fanmail, I couldn't get the idea of Ilya just having an absolute blast sending ridiculous videos to people..... and this fic happened.

I also have plans for a 5+1 (or probably +2 since I can't decide between two ideas for the last one) but if people have suggestions, I'm probably open to keep adding on just for the fun of it.

Also, I've read all the Game Changers series, and this is set in a hand wavey time before the long game/at the beginning of the long game

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

Chapter 1: How hard could it be?

"Who were you talking to? Everyone you talk to is here. Did you make new friends?" Ilya asks as Troy Barrett gets hangs up his phone and gets out of his car. Troy looks at him, looking like he's not sure if he wants to be insulted or not. The fact is, it's true, Troy isn't the most social person, he definitely isn't still talking to his old crowd, and Harris is standing near the entrance waiting for them with Chiron. Troy seems to decide he's going to take Ilya at his best, most lovable asshole self today and lets out a little huff of a laugh.

"If you must know, I was doing a Fanmail." He pauses and looks at Ilya for a moment. "You do know what Fanmail is don't you?" Ilya gives a non committal head bobble.

"Is.... some stupid famous person thing, yes?" Ilya says. He has no idea how to describe it other than that. He knows Shane has mentioned Hayden doing them before, but he's never quite understood the point. Troy lets out a more substantial laugh at that.

"It's more than that..." Troy pauses, not exactly sure how to explain that since he's come out, it's been a lot more than that. He is about to keep going when he realizes that he's completely lost Ilya's attention. He's crouched down and Chiron is wagging his tail so hard his entire body is wiggling. He is jumping, paws on Ilya's shoulders to lick his face while Ilya showers him with all kinds of praise and terms of endearment in soft Russian. "Harris, explain Fanmail to Ilya." Troy says to Harris who's watching Chiron and Ilya with the kind of fond look on his face that's usually reserved for him. He also watches when Harris whips out his phone and snaps a few pictures. He'd feel jealous if he wasn't very aware of how well the many pictures of the supposed bad boy of hockey looking like a total sap with a puppy does any time they're posted on the Centaurs official Instagram page.

"Oh, it's great. People pay for you to say things to them. A lot of time people are buying them for someone else who's a fan." Harris tells him, only half sure that Ilya is listening. He's progressed to being half on the ground, with Chiron in his arms and getting endless belly rubs.

"Things? What kind of things?" Ilya asks from the ground, having stopped devoting all of his attention to Chiron, who is taking it badly and trying very hard to climb into his lap to attack his face with kisses again. Harris shrugs.

"All kinds of things. Birthday wishes, good luck, cheering someone up. Things like that." Ilya looks at him skeptically.

"My English is.... is ok now, but I don't think that would be good job for me," he says. Harris smiles at him and pulls Chiron off of him as his trainer is walking through the parking lot. When she gets to the door, Harris hands her his leash and she gives a quick sharp "Chiron, down," which has him immediately sitting next to her, tail wagging and looking up at her adoringly.

Ilya gives the trainer a bit of a glare. He knows that it's a good thing, important even for Chiron's safety in the locker room and on the ice, for him to be very well trained, but he's still

not completely convinced she gives the puppy nearly enough treats. They head into the stadium and Harris claps a hand on Ilya's shoulder.

"Half the time they give you a script to follow. Also, Ilya, I think you maybe think your English is worse than it is, we've never had any kind of problem understanding you-

"- You definitely give a hell of a pregame pep talk," Troy confirms which makes Ilya smile.

".... and people go absolutely feral over your accent." Harris continues. Ilya's eyebrow's come together.

"Feral... what is feral?" He asks, throwing his hands up in frustration at how well he's proving his own point right now. Harris stops and looks through the little window in the stadium door they'd just come through. "Feral.... like wild dogs. The ladies love you almost as much as Chiron loves you." Harris says with a playful shove.

"But is for money, yes? I have money." Ilya says, again waving his hand to wave away the idea.

"You definitely don't have to do it Rozy," Barrett says as they enter the locker room. "Plenty of guys don't..."

"What?" Ilya says. He can tell there's something more Barrett is trying to tell him that he's not understanding.

"You've been open about some of your," he makes a hand wavey gesture in Ilya's direction, "mental health stuff. I think there are people... I think there are people out there that would really appreciate getting a message from you. And, since you apparently don't need anymore money, Mr. Captain," Ilya gives him a 'fuck you' from where he's starting to change. "you could always donate everything to the Irina Foundation."

Ilya nods to himself. He doesn't need any more money, especially now that he and Shane have been almost living together and have combined finances, between the two of them, they have more than enough. But the foundation? He's always happy to put more money into it, to expand their reach, to help more people.

"Harris would help me with this?" Ilya asks.

"Absolutely.... I mean, it's Harris. He'll be genuinely excited to help you." Ilya nods, it's true. Harris will in fact be more than happy to set this up for Ilya. Troy smiles at him in a way that feels far more significant than what he seems to be telling Ilya. Ilya pursed his lips and nodded.

"I will try it," he says.

How hard could it be?

Chapter 2: Ilya, Drop that Glute Routine

Chapter Summary

"Drop that glute routine?" Ilya says. Harris nods excitedly. He runs through the rolodex of vocabulary in his head for a moment before it clicks. "Harris, I do not do specific ass workout."

Harris does in fact help Ilya set up his Fanmail account. He talks a lot about finding the "ideal price point," a balance between not being so expensive that people are going to expect something very elaborate or long but not so low that he's going to have to do too many of them. Ilya thinks that maybe this is a terrible idea. He can't decide if it would be worse if no one does it, since he does like the idea of being able to give more money to the charity and also being able to potentially expand the camp into more places and expand the grants they can write or if he's suddenly required to spend all of his spare time making stupid videos.

Harris also helps him filter out requests. He's promised that he wouldn't make Ilya do anything he wasn't comfortable with. Ilya also talked to Harris about the fact that he was fairly nervous about not having the vocabulary to express himself the way he wanted. Harris promised to ease him into the experience and would happily help him practice or help him write a script if he needed.

When Harris comes him with a print out in hand, Ilya feels far more apprehension than excitement, but Harris's bright grin eases his nerves. He trusts Harris to not make him look like an idiot.... or at least not to look like an idiot in a way that won't make him endearing. He's not sure he doesn't look like an idiot with the Chiron and the variety of other puppies he's been helping the shelter highlight on off days, but at least it is the kind that seems to make people seem to like him more.... Not that he cares about being liked exactly.

Harris beams and hands over the paper.

"I feel like this is a perfect way to ease into it. You can totally do this," he says. Ilya looks it over and just looks at Harris with an eyebrow raised.

"Drop that glute routine?" he says. Harris nods excitedly. He runs through the rolodex of vocabulary in his head for a moment before it clicks. "Harris, I do not do specific ass workout."

"No, but you do have a very specific ass. Just run through some of the exercises that target your ass. I figure if you want, I can film you doing some of the exercises, and you can just say something quick at the beginning and the end." Ilya nods. It seems easy enough. He's just gotten out of the shower after practice, his hair still a bit damp and he's just in a pair of track pants and a t shirt.

"Is this ok? Is there? Should I?" He doesn't quite get the words out but Harris just smiles at him again and puts his hand on his shoulder.

"Honestly, this is perfect... Just run them through what you guys usually do on leg day."

So Ilya does. He even still has a tripod in the bottom of his gym bag. He just doesn't tell anyone why he has the habit of taking one around with him so frequently, even if the memory of times he's used it when traveling made him smirk to himself. He demonstrates some squats, cable pull kick backs, the abductor machine, then a couple of extra things that only require dumb bells that he does at home where there aren't the array of machines available. He recruits Harris to help him finish up on the ice.

"So these are the exercises I do for my ass. But.... you need to remember, ass is genetic. Unless you're a Russian hockey god like me, you will likely not have this ass." Harris laughs, which ruins the take and he has Ilya say it again, after Harris assures him that it's perfect. "And don't forget to stretch, or after these moves, you will not be able to walk." He then demonstrates the standard stretches most of the players do before games, in his pads this time. Harris gets a little red when he's watching the footage back.

"Good. I'm going to edit these together and I'll show you it before I send it out. Sound good?" Ilya nods and Harris heads back to his office and Ilya shrugs, figuring that's going to take a minute and gets changed to head home.

He calls Shane on his way home.

"I made my first Fanmail today. Harris helped." Shane lets out a huff. They'd talked about the idea and initially Shane had been concerned, the idea of cameras, recordings, another social media type app. Shane barely used his social media accounts as it is, constantly paranoid that he was going to accidentally post something that would reveal their relationship. Ilya had suggested not keeping any pictures he wouldn't be ok with ending up on Instagram on his phone, but Shane had been completely unable to delete what Ilya had learned were multiple locked folders of every kind of nude, sex shot, and couples shot that they'd ever taken or exchanged over the entire course of their relationship. Ilya had reminded Shane that he'd been much much more active on his own social media and hadn't slipped yet. Ilya thinks in the end Shane had seen that the the idea of doing something more direct, more individually to raise money for the Irina Foundation meant a lot to him, so him and Yuna, as the head of the foundation had given their blessings.

"So how was it?" Shane asks. Ilya shrugs, then realizes he is going to have to say something.

"I don't know. It was ok. It was weird."

"So what did you do for it?" Shane asks.

"They asked me to 'drop my glute routine,'" Ilya says

"So did you?"

"Hmm. I did some exercises and stretches." Ilya says. Shane makes some noises of agreement. "I did also say that ass is genetic, so you know, maybe it won't work." At this, Shane laughs hard enough that he holds his phone away from himself for a moment.

"Honestly, your ass is pretty aspirational." he pauses before clarifying "it makes sense that everyone would want it... and they only get to see it in clothes."

"Ahh, so you are extra lucky to get to see it naked?" Ilya says, smirking to himself. The fact is Ilya considers himself to be insanely lucky to get to see Shane naked, and is very much in love with getting to see, touch, kiss every inch of his body. He also can't deny that Shane's ass is absolutely one of his favorite parts, so it warms his heart to hear Shane express the same. Shane's voice gets soft and sweet and Ilya can hear the smile in it.

"The fucking luckiest." he says. "I can't wait to see you in two days." Two days. It's so short. Ilya knows that they spent so many years spending months between meetings that two days is nothing. They see each other more in a year now than they would over years before, but having Shane closer only makes the time apart sharper, more desperate.

"Too long," he says and Shane sighs over the phone.

"Yeah, too long, I miss you." Shane says. Ilya's immediate response is to dismiss him, to wave it away with a joke about how much Shane misses his dick. Shane would let him and would laugh it away and know that Ilya feels the same way, but he's trying to be more straightforward and honest.

"I miss you too, moya lyubov." Shane sighs again but this time it sounds less frustrated and more dreamy. Ilya knows that he's gotten that big eyed look that he loves, and loves to put on his knees.

"I've got to head out for the game tonight. I love you." Shane says.

"I love you, too. I will be watching the game tonight with your parents. I will tell your mom you said hi."

Shane groans.

"Could you put that in a way that sounds any grosser?" he complains. Ilya cackles. "fuck you," Shane says. There's a pause and Ilya assumes he's about to be hung up on, but instead Shane says. "Bye Ilya, I'll talk to you after the game."

"Talk to you later." Shane hangs up and Ilya is grateful that he's stopped at a red light because he takes a moment to close his eyes and take a deep breath, to just let himself appreciate this moment he never thought he would have, before he focuses back on the road with a small smile on his face.

"Ilya...." Harris comes to him a few days later. "I wanted to talk to you.... um.... about the Fanmail."

"It is finished?" Ilya asks. Harris nods his head slowly.

"Would you mind looking at it in my office?" he asks. Ilya nods his head, giving his hair one last rub with a towel before heading into Harris's office. He's sitting in front of his computer and waves Ilya over. He shows Ilya the few minute video with his exercises cut together with his little message at the end. Ilya nods along, looks good to him, but when he looks at Harris, he looks like he wants to say something.

"Is something wrong with it? I can do it again if you need." Ilya says. Harris opens his mouth then closes it again. He does it another couple times. Ilya looks at the screen again, he's still not sure what happened. He raises his eyebrows at Harris.

"Ilya.... the vibe... it's...." Harris is very rarely at a loss for words. Harris is rarely at a loss for words. He waves his hand around trying to express something but Ilya's forehead just creases as he watches. Harris huffs out a sigh. "Are you familiar with the phrase 'thirst trap?'" Ahhh, now he understands. Ilya smirks.

"Yes."

"Were you aware of the fact that you were making a thirst trap?" he asks. Ilya shrugs.

"Was not intentional."

"Are you comfortable sending out a thirst trap?" Harris asks. Ilya shrugs again.

"It is.... on brand, yes?" he asks. Harris laughs and makes a face.

"I mean.... yeah, kind of. I just wanted to make sure that you were aware.... or that you were ok with it."

"It is ok." Ilya confirms. Harris just nods and starts clicking.

oOo

When Shane walks through the door a few days later, there for only a night but both of them have been looking forward to it for days. Ilya had cooked some macrobiotic bullshit meal from Shane's dietitian, he'd picked out a movie for them to watch, and he's so ready to curl together on the couch.

When Shane walks in, he's glued to his phone with a cute little frown on his face and a wrinkle between his eyebrows. Ilya greets him at the door and kisses that wrinkle, but that only makes Shane aim his grumpy face in his direction.

"Ilya.... have you seen this?" He's holding out his phone and Ilya is trying to gauge from his tone of voice where on the scale from some news that effects either of their teams chances for the cup to life threatening illness Shane's anxiety is currently sitting. He takes Shane's phone and looks down. On the screen is the video of him doing squats with some woman super imposed on top with wide eyes making grabby hands. He scrolls up and finds a video of a woman talking about how she wants to paint herself to look like the walls of the Centaurs locker room.

"What is this?" Ilya asks. Shane leans forward and buries his face in his shoulder.

"Your ass went viral." he says with a sigh. Ilya lights up.

"Really?" he searches and laughs. "I am popular. This makes sense. You love my ass."

"Ilya, these shots are insane!" He shows Ilya his phone again, currently showing Ilya's track pants stretching across his butt while he's doing squats.

"Harris said they are thirst trap." Ilya says with a little too much pride. Shane narrows his eyes at him. Ilya gives him his most shit eating grin. "So.... Hollander.... are you thirsty?" Shane steps up to him and crashes their lips together. Ilya kisses him as best he can while smiling and laughing. Shane pushes him back against the wall, sucking down his neck. "So I'll take that as a yes," he says, flipping them so Shane is caged against the wall. Shane laughs before Ilya pulls him up the stairs, abandoning their cooling dinner for now.

Ottawa Center Ilya Rozanov drops viral glute routine.

Our experts agree that the exercises are effective, but that's hardly what's captured the public's attention...

Chapter 3: Ilya, How Do I Impress A Russian Girl??

Chapter Summary

"Ilya! I have another Fanmail for you if you're up for it!" Harris comes to him again with a printed piece of paper. "I thought you might have fun with it."

Ilya looks down at the prompt. "There's an international student at my college from Russia and I think she's the coolest, smartest girl I've ever seen. Can you give me advice on how to impress her?" He reads. He smirks which makes Harris take a step back.

Chapter Notes

I love the Ilya and Svetlana dynamic in the show and I'm here for their friendship.

Any italics means something is in Russian

"Ilya! I have another Fanmail for you if you're up for it!" Harris comes to him again with a printed piece of paper. "I thought you might have fun with it."

Ilya looks down at the prompt. "There's an international student at my college from Russia and I think she's the coolest, smartest girl I've ever seen. Can you give me advice on how to impress her?" He reads. He smirks which makes Harris take a step back.

"Ahh.... so you want me to go viral again?" Ilya asks with a smirk. Harris just shakes his head at him.

"Send it to me before you send it out.... unless you won't need my help to edit?" he says. He pauses for a moment. Then gives another look at Ilya and narrows his eyes. "Please god send it to me before you send it out." Ilya laughs and assures him he will.

Later that night when he's on a video call with Shane, he broaches the topic. He's intentional about it. The Metros had won tonight, Shane himself having scores a goal and had two assists. They'd already had phone sex; the need for it so pressing when they'd started talking that nothing else seemed relevant. So they'd gotten to the part of the night where they were just talking, trading the mundane details that made up a life. Ilya would never admit this, but sometimes just hearing Shane complain about traffic, or tell him about a particularly good salad he'd had that afternoon, were some of his favorite moments they shared. They were so inconsequential, so everyday, and so much more than Ilya ever thought he would be able to have with Shane.

"I have an idea. And I want you to think about it before you say no." Ilya says. Shane laughs at him.

"Ilya, I love you, but I don't think I have it in me for another round tonight." He says.

"No, no.... it's not that.... But are you sure?" He asks raising an eyebrow. When Shane just laughs again and shakes his head, he shrugs and continues. "I got a new Fanmail request asking for advice on how to impress a Russian girl." Shane nods his head. "I am thinking, maybe I do this video with Svetlana. She will have good advice, and it would..." he trails off, sure there's a half dozen saying for the concept but not being able to come up with any of them at the moment. Shane starts to get that look where his eyebrows get low and his mouth gets tight, so Ilya intervenes. "I would say she is friend. Is true, she is my oldest friend. But we say she is my friend, and people make assumptions." He shrugs. "Maybe we let them."

Ilya watches a number of different emotions cross Shane's face before he takes a deep breath and pushes his face into the pillow next to him. The fact is Svetlana is a good friend, always has been, and since Ilya finally told her about him and Shane, has been very supportive. She travels often and is always bringing Ilya his favorite hard to find Russian treats and vodka. She's been to the cottage a couple of times and Shane has actually grown to like her quite a bit. At the very least, he no longer automatically gets huffy whenever her name is mentioned, which is a massive improvement.

"I hate this. I hate that it has to be like this..." he says around the pillow, but he does take another breath and says. "but I have to admit that's not a bad idea. I hate it, but it's not actually bad." Shane nods like he's trying to convince himself. Ilya beams at him.

"Perfect. I'll ask her if she has time when I am in Boston next week.... or I can see if she's willing to travel? We could all have dinner together after?" He suggests. Shane looks at him and Ilya can see it in his eyes, he tries, he really does, even giving the smallest, not at all convincing attempt at a smile.

"Maybe next time." Before Ilya can say anything back, Shane continues. "I like her. You know I like her. I just don't know that I can pretend not to have a lot of feelings about it. I don't want to be mad at her when I know she's been so great for you. We should schedule time for a dinner though, she promised me plenty of embarrassing pictures of 'baby Ilyushka'" Shane says. Ilya huffs a laugh at him.

"Impossible. There is no such thing. I have always been adorable." Ilya says, expecting a laugh from Shane, but instead his eyes gets soft and fond.

"I believe it." he say simply.

"You should," Ilya responds. "Now take off your clothes." Shane may roll his eyes, but he is already pulling his shirt over his head while he does.

oOo

"You sure you're ok with this? You don't have to. You can just help me plan some things." Ilya asks. Svetlana just laughs and shoves his shoulder. *"It will probably make it harder, if you're looking to settle down."* he says. He knows that they've had conversations about this before. A number of times. Ilya would never tell Shane, but Svetlana had been the one to offer to marry him first. It made so much sense on paper, she had reasoned, they might as well. Both of them had been more than happy with the arrangement as it had always been. Ilya knew Svetlana had men in most of the places she traveled, and she knew she was not the only one for him. It had suited them both. But Ilya now, years out from that first conversation, more than a year into the current experience of actually having the relationship he never let himself dream of, realizes that the arrangement had been an easy way to keep himself from the fear of what could happen if he wanted more. He wonders if the same might be true of her.

He expects her to just dismiss the thought, like they always have. But Svetlana is Svetlana, and she's been his best friend since before he can remember, and can read him better than anyone but Shane. Her face gets soft and fond. She puts her hand on his chest, right over his heart.

"Ilyushka, you do not need to worry about me. You have always had a soft heart. I have always known this. I've always known that what we had would not be right for you." She smacks her hand on his shoulder again. *"I just had to wait for you to get your head out of your ass and realize it too."* He laughs at her and she smiles at him. *"But I'm not like you, I do not have such a heart. Maybe I will find a man to marry one day. Maybe not. But if I do, he will be rich and he will worship me."* She says.

"As you deserve," he tells her. She laughs again, smacking a kiss onto his cheek then wiping off the lipstick with her thumb.

"Damn right," she says, in English, making Ilya laugh again. He misses her. He's sad that he was so scared of telling her, of letting their friendship be what it had always been. He wishes she had any reason to come to Ottawa regularly. "Ok, you ready?" she asks him. He nods and they set up his phone.

"Hello Brian! I heard that you were looking for advice on how to win over a beautiful Russian woman. So, while I have plenty of experience with beautiful Russian women, I brought my favorite beautiful Russian woman to help me." He gestures to Svetlana standing next to her who smiles and waves, "This is Svetlana. She is very old friend and we will be giving you advice together." She looks over at him.

"When you say it like that, it sounds like I am very old. I am not. I am young and beautiful." Svetlana says with a hair shake and a wink. Ilya laughs and shrugs at the camera.

"She is right. But anyway.... advice to win over Russian girl. First, you need to know that Russian girls will not be drinking..." he looks over at Svetlana. *"what do they call that, all the terrible liquor in a bowl?"* he asks her.

"Punch... or jungle juice." She says.

"Right, she will not be drinking mystery bad alcohol. You must get good Russian vodka..." he says, reaching off to the side and depositing three different bottles on the counter. He points

to each. "This one, this one is the best. If you need to impress her father, come to house with this bottle. Silver on the label, not red. It is the best, but is expensive. This one, this is good, not very expensive. But, if you are college student, my guess is maybe you don't have much money. This one is best you will get for not much money. It is not good, but not good Russian vodka is much better than any other vodka." Svetlana has been nodding along and as Ilya finishes the explanation she leans over the bottles.

"This is assuming you are old enough to drink." She says with a glare in Ilya's direction.

"Yes, yes, if you are old enough to drink," he says dismissively. "Also, Russian woman will expect the best. You must treat your Russian woman like princess"

"Because we deserve it." Svetlana says. Ilya looks at her fondly and smiles.

"Because they deserve it," he agrees. "This includes the best compliments. Do not just complement girls on being pretty." Svetlana opens her mouth but he cuts in before she can say that. "Yes, tell girl she is pretty. Obviously, but compliments should be specific and..." he looks over at Svetlana. They'd talked through all their points before the video, but had done it in Russian. Svetlana had actually studied English in school and university, and had a better vocabulary than he did.

"Effort focused" Svetlana says.

"Yes, that. The girl knows she is pretty, she was born pretty. Maybe she is wearing a nice dress, maybe she has done her hair nice. Those are things she does. Tell her she is smart, or she is funny."

"Tell her she's boring." Svetlana cuts in giving Ilya a shit eating grin. He has to hide his grin behind his hand.

"No, do not tell her she is boring. That only works in special case. But see things she does or she chooses. She will have a million men telling her she is pretty. You need to tell her more than that."

"And, if you really want to win her over. You should cook her a good Russian meal," Svetlana says. She slides a plate into view, piled high with large oblong fried buns. "Peroshki, not perogi, make sure you get it right." Ilya's eyebrows go up and he looks over at her.

"*Where did these even come from?*" he asks her.

"I made them," she says smiling at the camera. Ilya looks at her skeptically, grabs one and takes a bite. He makes a noise that is borderline pornographic as he chews. He side eyes Svetlana standing next to him.

"You did not make these. You are liar." He says and she just laughs and shrugs again.

"And, assuming you are remotely capable," Svetlana says, turning and rooting around in her cabinets before grabbing a half empty bag and plunking it on the counter, "and your Russian

girl has stayed the night. There's something that will absolutely win her heart in the morning."

"Kasha, is perfect Russian breakfast food. You can buy it in Slavic grocery store."

"Or on Amazon," Svetlana says. Ilya rolls his eyes.

"Or on Amazon if you must. You will make this in the morning. The package will say use water, this is wrong, you must use milk. Whole milk, none of this," he turns to Svetlana and makes a face before asking "*the watery milk, what is that called?*"

"Skim," she supplies.

"Skim shit. Than you can treat it like oatmeal, sugar, honey, syrup... but if you want to impress her, you make it with Varennye-" Svetlana roots around in her fridge before placing a jar next to the bag of kasha.

"Sour cherry jam" Svetlana interjects.

"Is perfect Russian breakfast." He says. She nods along.

"We'll include links to everything!" She adds, resting her head on Ilya's shoulder before reaching forward and turning off the camera.

oOo

Shane watches the video, because the person who Ilya sent it to put it on the internet, because of course he did. He'd expected to be jealous, and there's just a little rumbling of wishing for the ability to do something even though he knows in reality he would hate it and he would look awkward and weird. But when he watches the video, it's sweet. It's nice to see his boyfriend share such an easy report with someone. And when he watches it, he sees sibling energy, the back and forth that comes with knowing someone so well, for so long. It makes him smile. He sees that boring reference and silently thanks Svetlana since he knows she made it as an acknowledgement, no matter how secret, to him and their relationship. It's sweet.

Ottawa Center Ilya Rozanov soft launching a girlfriend??? And she's hockey royalty???

Ilya Rozanov recently made a Fanmail, complete with his Russian vodka recommendations and surprisingly good advice about how to give compliments, all filmed with a mysterious woman, who obviously is very close to the hockey star, identified only as "Svetlana." TMZ has confirmed that this is Svetlana Vetrova, daughter of legendary Russian hockey star Sergei Vetrova, former gold medalist for the USSR hockey team. Sources report....

Chapter 4: Ilya, Wish My Friend a Happy Birthday

Chapter Summary

"Hello Stephanie, your friend Alison asked me to wish you a happy birthday. She sent me a list of things she would like me to tell you." he holds up the paper in front of him. "Stephanie, you are a beautiful and sexy mermaid with the best hair that doesn't get sad and flat when wet. You are a siren, able to lure men to their doom with just the sound of your voice. You are a force of nature and never change." He says, reading through the script.

Or the one where Ilya learns about mermaid porn

Chapter Notes

I spent so much time in a Russian folklore rabbit hole writing this chapter..... also more time they I want to admit having to look up titles of Mermaid smut books.

By now when Harris comes to him with a piece of paper, Ilya is a little excited. He's been enjoying himself making the videos. He's heard that apparently he puts more effort and makes longer videos than most people do, but what else does he have to do now, since he stopped going out, getting drunk and fucking random women? His nights are boring on the days he and Shane don't overlap, and it gives him something to fill the time. Once the team found out that he had joined, most of them had as well. They've also been donating a least a portion of what they make to the Irina Foundation, which is so much more than Ilya expected and is exactly the kind of people his teammates are. More than once he's recruited some of them to help him make or plan videos, which they've been happy to do. Harris hands him a print out as he's sitting there pulling on his shoes.

"This one has pretty much an exact script that they're asking you to read, so it should be really easy." He hands over the paper and walks away. Ilya starts reading through the script and stops.

"Harris," he calls. "Siren?" he asks. He holds his hand up, opening and closing it, trying to convey his understanding of the loud blaring fire alarms he's used to. Harris comes back nodding.

"Ah, same word, different meaning. Sirens are mythological." Ilya just looks at him with a hint of irritation. "Like in stories. Dragons, magic, fairies, that kind of thing."

"Ahhh, yes, ok. So not real. What is a siren?" he asks. He pauses. "Is it like *sirin*, like bird woman?"

"Ummm, maybe they're different? I feel like sirens are usually closer to mermaids. But they sing to make sailors go off course and drown in ship wrecks." Ilya nods, looking thoughtful. What Harris doesn't realize is that he goes home and ends up deep in a mythology rabbit hole, ending up on a Russian youtuber's channel that focuses on traditional mythology. By the time he sets up the camera to film the actual Fanmail he's 6 hours deep into their videos.

"Hello Stephanie, your friend Alison asked me to wish you a happy birthday. She sent me a list of things she would like me to tell you." he holds up the paper in front of him. "Stephanie, you are a beautiful and sexy mermaid with the best hair that doesn't get sad and flat when wet. You are a siren, able to lure men to their doom with just the sound of your voice. You are a force of nature and never change." He says, reading through the script.

"I also wanted to tell you that this message has sent me down.... what is it called.... rabbit hole of things about different kinds of magic things. I wanted to make some Russian suggestions as well... because, you know, everything is better when it is Russian." he says as he winks and smirks at the camera. "First, *sirin*, they are beautiful bird women. Their call brings people to the afterlife.... or they can bring bad men," he looks down "as you say, 'to their doom.'"

"There is also rusalki, they are closest to mermaids, but they are just women, not half women, half fish." He tilts his head, and stares off into the distance for a moment. "Ok.... if mermaids are half fish, how do sexy mermaids have sex? They have no..." he remembers just in time that Harris would kill him, actually probably get Troy to kill him if he says the word pussy on this video. He waves his hand around in a vague gesture. "It seems very complicated. Though rusalki are usually virgins who have died, so maybe if mermaids are similar, they they don't want to." He shrugs with a smile.

"But anyway, have a happy birthday Stephanie, your friend Alison gives the best gifts, obviously, and I hope you lead many men to their doom.... just maybe, not me, yes?" He smirks again at the camera.

Harris looks at the screen at Ilya's face where he's smiling at the camera. He knows this is going to go viral.... again. He can't imagine that Stephanie isn't going to post a contemplative Ilya wondering about the mechanics of mermaid sex. Frankly, he would. Ilya seems so genuinely curious. He wonders what kind of pandora's box they're going to open with this, though if there's anyone who can take the amount of ridiculous sexual content that is likely coming their way, it's Ilya Rozanov.

Shane is already at the house in Ottawa when Ilya gets home and he couldn't be more delighted. He carries a box into the house and drops it at Shane's feet.

"Look! Shane! Look what I have!" He opens the box and it's full of books. Shane looks down at it in confusion. Ilya isn't much of a reader, his spoken English has been consistently good, and getting better all the time, but written English novels are still pretty hard for him. Just a glance in the box tells him all these are in English. "You must read them to me!" Ilya says. Shane picks up a pile of them and pulls them onto his lap. He flips through each of them.

"Ilya.... Jesus, where did you get these?" Shane asks him.

"The fans, they sent them because I had questions about mermaid sex. I will be able to learn the answer!" Ilya looks absolutely delighted by this fact, but when Shane looks down at the book, he doesn't know that he shares the excitement.

"Blood Lust, Mermaid's Wicked Decision, Claimed by the Deep, Mermaid's Lessons: A Reverse Harem Story..." Shane reads off the titles. "Ilya, I don't know that I want to read these to you." He opens the top one to a page at random and Ilya watches as his eyebrows shoot up and his mouth drops open. "Ilya, I would not be able to read these out loud to you." Ilya just looks over at him.

"Why not?" he asks.

"Ilya, it's porn!"

"I know! Mermaid porn!" Ilya says to him, a huge grin on his face. Shane looks at him, back down to the books in his lap and back up at his boyfriend, who is still grinning at him. He waves a hand at Shane. "Fine I will get them on audio book and read along. Maybe it will improve my vocabulary, eh?" he says.

"God I hope not," Shane mutters to himself as he puts the books back in the box.

Ottawa's Ilya Rozanov Goes Viral Again for Ranking Mermaid Smut

After a previous viral video musing about the practicalities of mermaid intercourse, the star center has revealed that the team has been inundated with books featuring mermaids. He released a video on his Instagram this Tuesday revealing that he has spent the past few weeks reading the books and gave thorough reviews of each, thanking the fans for giving them to him. Social media manager Harris Dover reports even more books being delivered in the days since the video was uploaded.

Chapter 5: Ilya, Give My Kid Some Pointers

Chapter Summary

"Ilya, what are you doing in Tulsa?" Shane says on the phone as soon as Ilya answers.

"I just need to meet with a coach. I should be back tonight," he says.

"Ilya.... are you doing something stupid?" Shane asks, like Ilya doesn't do stupid things regularly.

"No... maybe... possibly.... probably yes. But it is for good cause, I swear." Ilya says. Shane just sighs.

"Please don't punch anyone. That's not allowed off the ice." he says.

"I will try." Ilya says.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

When Harris approaches him next, Ilya puts his hands up pleading.

"Please Harris, no more books. I still have so many to listen to and even I reach my limit on how much porn I want." He says. Harris laughs at him. Ilya narrows his eyes at him. "They sent me giant spider man porn, Harris. Do not laugh or I will tell the women online that you are wanting monster porn."

Harris puts his hands up in surrender. Instead he holds out a piece of paper.

"It's not that. You have another Fanmail request." he hands over the piece of paper. "I think this one is less likely to result in an office full of porn books this time."

Ilya looks at the paper. Apparently some American businessman has paid what is frankly an absurd amount of money for his kid, Tanner, to have a twenty minute video hockey lesson with Ilya. He looks up at Harris, his face scrunched in annoyance.

"I didn't know hockey lessons were an option." He huffs.

"They usually aren't but, Ilya, he paid a lot of money towards the Irina Foundation and that seemed more important." Ilya huffs again but nods.

He comes to the rink early a few days later after arranging times with the family. Every time he gets a message back from the dad, full of rich person entitlement, he reminds himself that

the man had single handedly funded a half dozen kids being able to attend the camps for free.

He starts the video call on the ice, having borrowed Harris's adjustable tripod. The dad is there, and he calls over his son, a burly fifteen year old who is no where close to growing into himself yet. He waves at the camera but doesn't really seem all that excited about the idea. His dad has him run through a few drills. The kid is obviously comfortable on skates, Ilya has to give him that, but his stick handling is fair at best. His father keeps yelling at him from right off the ice and the kid just nods and tries to make the corrections stated, even when the dad isn't actually give him good advice.

Ilya is relieved when inevitably, the man's phone rings and he wanders away, yelling instead at some underling and not his kid. As soon as Ilya hears a door close, the kid sends some kind of signal to someone out in the stands and suddenly there's another kid stepping onto the ice. Tanner had been comfortable on skates in that way of kids who have learned from very young, but this kid, this kid moves like they were made to skate. They dart across the ice in a way that seems like it is just part of their nature. It makes Ilya think of the way Shane moves on the ice. Tanner waves the kid over to the phone.

"Hi! OMG, you're my favorite player! This is so amazing!" Now that she's closer, Ilya can see this is a young girl, maybe a year or two younger than Tanner. He leans over her and speaks to the camera.

"I'm sorry, Mr Rozanov. My dad wouldn't get this for CJ, so I told him that I really wanted hockey lessons." He says with an embarrassed blush on his cheeks.

"Ah, so Tanner, you are maybe not so interested in hockey?" Ilya asks. Tanner nods. Ilya nods back, appreciating the honesty.

"But CJ, she loves it. But dad won't help, like at all. There isn't even a girl's team at our high school and they're being assholes about her playing on the boy's team." Tanner says. His eyes dart over to the door. "My dad won't be back for a while. Do you think it would be ok if you gave CJ the lesson instead? I'm sure she'd be a much better student." Ilya laughs, delighted. For a moment they both look defeated and he realizes that with the little he knows, there's a distinct possibility people have laughed at CJ before.

"No, no, I am not laughing at you. I am happy to give CJ lesson! Run through those same drills, let me see what you've got."

What follows is some of the most fun Ilya has had in weeks. CJ is fantastic, in a way that says if she's this good now, she may be helping America compete for gold in a few years. Ilya gives her tweaks to her form that she lights up when hearing, immediately being able to adjust her moves. Tanner happily plays his assistant, setting up cones, sometimes taking the phone and skating along so Ilya can get a better view of something close up. Soon enough, she skates back up to the phone and immediately flushes to find herself with an audience of half a dozen professional hockey players. Ilya has gone well over time and the team has started to trickle out onto the ice. They all give her big smiles and waves and shower her with praise. She stands with her hands behind her back and nods.

"Thanks," she says. Tanner comes over and when he sees everyone he beams. He nudges CJ's shoulder.

"I told you you were good." he says. He looks over at the camera. "She didn't make the hockey try outs. I think the coach just didn't want to deal with having a girl on the team, but they told her it was because she couldn't compete with the guys on the team." Ilya purses his lips in disapproval.

"Can you put Tanner into the boards, CJ?" he asks. She barely nods, but Tanner again beams at them.

"Has been able to since she was 10. She's a fucking beast." he says. CJ hisses something low at him for cursing but Ilya just laughs again. He looks over at the teams, thoughtful for a moment.

"Bood!" he calls.

"Yeah, Cap?" he skates up, giving the kids a wave.

"You are America, yes?"

"Yeah?" Bood says with a raised eyebrow.

"Not letting girl play on boys team when there is no girls team. Is this allowed? This would be allowed in Russia, but there, is not allowed right?" Ilya asks. Bood looks thoughtful for a moment.

"I'm pretty sure that falls under Title 9, so yeah, that's not allowed." he says.

"Cj," Ilya looks at her through the screen. "Do you want to play for the boys team?" he asks, his voice serious. CJ just looks at the ground.

"I don't want to make trouble," she says.

"It's bullshit, Mr Rozanov. They know she would be the best player on the team by far. And she can't play on the regional team, the practices are two and half hours away." Ilya nods again.

"Don't you worry CJ, I'll make trouble for you. I love trouble." He gets a bit more information from them before Ilya hears the door open again and Tanner and CJ give the camera a panicked look, wave and rush to get CJ off the ice. The father comes back in.

"So Mr Rozanov, I trust you've given my son some insight into how to improve his hockey game?" He says.

"I'm sure your kid will have plenty to think about. We are over time, I have practice." he says and ends the call. It's rude, but he doesn't care at all.

oOo

"Bixby High School Athletics department," the man on the phone answers and Ilya is already annoyed. He reminds himself that he is going to be nice for this call.... at least at first.

"Hello, I want to speak to the hockey coach." Ilya says.

"I'm the hockey coach, Chad Pierson. Can I help you with something." The man's voice is already on edge and part of Ilya wants this to go badly just so he can make this man feel stupid, but when he'd explained to Shane his plan, Shane had told him that it would be better to approach the situation delicately. Ilya does guess he does want to make sure that CJ doesn't get worse treatment because he pissed off the coach.

"Why was CJ Bartel cut during tryouts? She is good hockey player." Ilya says. Maybe there's some actual reason that this couch could give him to justify passing up such a good player. Maybe this team is already elite, though he would be surprised.

"CJ? I don't know that I know that name.... oh do you mean Cassandra? She did try out, but she just couldn't keep up with our very physical team." Chad says. Ilya takes a deep breath.

"I have seen her skate and reviewed tape of her games from last year, as well as tapes from your team's games last year. It seems to me she would be more than able to keep up." Ilya says. It's true, Tanner had sent him a number of links to CJ's games with her old team. The girl was, in fact, a beast.

"Look, I have no idea who you think you are, but I'm the hockey coach here and I have plenty of experience. I played on the U of M Regional Championship team. I think I know better than-" Ilya has had enough and he cuts him off.

"I thought the accent would make it obvious, but I am Ilya Rozanov. I have two Stanley Cups and multiple NHL MVP trophies. I know hockey better than almost anyone else in the WORLD, Mr Pierson. I think you did not want CJ on your team because you did not want a girl on your team. Maybe you are worried you don't know how to set up team so she can change and have showers. Maybe you are worried that other teams will make fun of you for having girl. Maybe you are asshole who thinks girls can not play better hockey than boys. I. Do. Not. Care. She should be on your team." Ilya says. He knows his English gets worse when he gets angry, but he's pretty sure he's made his point.

"Yeah right. Like Ilya Rozanov cares what goes on in high school hockey. I don't know who you are, but fuck off and don't think you can tell me how to run my team." Chad says and hangs up. Ilya stares at his phone in shock.

oOo

"Ilya, what are you doing in Tulsa?" Shane says on the phone as soon as Ilya answers. He winces. He was hoping to fly under the radar, but either he's been spotted and it's on social media or Shane got lonely and checked his GPS.

"I just need to meet with a coach. I should be back tonight," he says. Shane has a game later and they have almost two days together after that and Ilya had scheduled to make sure he would be home before Shane got there.

"You're flying to Tulsa and back in one day?" Shane asks.

"Yes," Ilya says, not giving any extra info hoping that Shane won't ask.

"Ilya.... are you doing something stupid?" Shane asks, like Ilya doesn't do stupid things regularly.

"No... maybe... possibly.... probably yes. But it is for good cause, I swear." Ilya says. Shane just sighs.

"Please don't punch anyone. That's not allowed off the ice." he says.

"I will try." Ilya says.

Ilya Rozanov - Women In Sports Advocate?

In the Crease has gotten word that Ottawa's most valuable player made an appearance at Bixby High School, a suburb of Tulsa, Oklahoma to advocate for a female player to join the school's male hockey team. The school does not have a female team and reportedly the player had attended and not made standard tryouts. How Rozanov became familiar with the player is unknown, but he is said to have gone to the school administration after unsuccessfully being able to convince the school's coach of the girl's ability. When contacted for comment, Rozanov only stated. "I will be back to watch when she takes the team to Nationals."

Chapter End Notes

I finished this fic last night, so expect the next few updates to be daily until we're done!

Chapter 6: Ilya, Break Up With My Boyfriend for Me

Chapter Summary

When Harris walks up to him this time, Ilya is ready for him, hand out.

"Honestly, Roz, I think you're going to love this one." He hands over the paper. Ilya reads it and immediately starts laughing.

"You are right. I am going to love this one. Is perfect." He says.

"Please God send it to me before you send it out." Harris says.... "But at the same time, don't fucking hold back either, this guy sounds like an asshole." Ilya smirks at him and Harris has never been so glad to have never made Ilya make that face.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

When Harris walks up to him this time, Ilya is ready for him, hand out.

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"Please God send it to me before you send it out." Harris says.... "But at the same time, don't fucking hold back either, this guy sounds like an asshole." Ilya smirks at him and Harris has never been so glad to have never made Ilya make that face.

Ilya puts his phone on the tripod and sets it up before sitting on the couch with a list of notes that he wrote out, with some input from Svetlana and Shane.

"Hello Steve. I'm sending you this on behalf of Natalie. She said that I am your favorite player in all of the NHL. That is unfortunate.... since it sounds like you are a-" he consults his paper. He needs specific vocabulary for this. "fucking manchild and a terrible boyfriend."

"Natalie told me that she has tried to break up with you many times and that you keep refusing. This is ridiculous. Relationships are two person... agreement. If one person does not want relationship anymore, you do not have relationship, even if that is not what you want. You cannot make someone want to date you. Are you a child?"

"She has also sent me a list of reasons why you have been terrible boyfriend. This is unacceptable. If you are going to be a fan of mine, you need to be a good boyfriend.... or I guess girlfriend, I do not mind either way. This is simple." Ilya shrugs into the camera.

"First, you would go to your family's house and fall asleep and miss plans with your girlfriend. Who does this? Are you baby who can't control when you sleep and when you wake up? Do you not put plans in calendar, set alarms if you can't stop falling sleep? Do you want to be adult with a girlfriend? Or do you want to be small child who only has his mommy and daddy?"

"Second, she says you give terrible gifts. She said last birthday you gave her Legos. She said Christmas you gave her my hockey jersey. Natalie, if you want me to sign jersey so you can sell it and buy something you actually want, you let me know....would make the gift actually useful yes?" He smirks at the camera for a moment before schooling his expression back to displeasure again. "Natalie says that she likes hockey now, but when she got those things, she didn't say anything that would make you think she likes Legos or hockey.

"This is not how you give gifts. You think about what the other person would like. Does she like flowers or jewelry? What does she do with her time? It doesn't matter if you don't like those things, you are not buying the present for you. You are buying things for your girlfriend. It doesn't matter if she has boring hobby like reading, if you are good boyfriend you take her to the bookstore for her to get whatever books she wants. If she likes baseball, even though it is the most boring game in the world, you take her to baseball game. You buy her jersey for her favorite player, not your favorite player. It is simple.

"She says that you would not go down on her but would request blowjobs frequently. This is worst thing on this list in my opinion. If you want to be a good boyfriend, you have to make sure that your partner is pleased with the sex you are having. You can not demand to be pleased without being willing to do the same thing. Sucking dick is hard work. If you do not deserve such hard work, you should not ask for it. If you are not willing to go down on your partner, you do not deserve to fuck her. This is simple.

"So, Steve, I wanted to let you know that you are no longer welcome to be my fan. You are also no longer welcome to be Natalie's boyfriend, and there is not room for... negotiation. You are an asshole. Goodbye."

oOo

When his phone rings two days later, a few hours after the video has made it's way around the internet, Ilya smiles as he sees 'Jane' come up on his screen. When he answers, Shane's face fills the screen and he doesn't even say hello.

"Sucking dick is hard work?" He asks. Ilya laughs.

"Do you not agree?" he asks. Shane huffs. God, Ilya loves it when he's annoyed. He wishes he were able to reach through the camera and poke the little wrinkle between his eyebrows.

"You tell me to suck your dick all the time." He hisses at Ilya. Ilya laughs again. He's not wrong. Telling Shane to suck his dick is in fact one of Ilya's favorite things.

"I also suck your dick all the time," Ilya reasons. This is also true. Sucking Shane's dick is one of his other favorite things. "I eat you out whenever you want. All you have to do is ask." He tells Shane. Shane gets delightfully pink and he mumbles something that Ilya doesn't quite catch.

"Hollander, what was that? I can't hear. Do you have something to tell me?" he asks.

"No," Shane says, his mouth all small and tight. He pauses and admits, "I said you have always been really good about that." Ilya beams at him.

"Like I said in video, that man is bad boyfriend. I am much better boyfriend than that."

"You sure about that?" Shane challenges, a little lopsided smile on his face. Ilya just grins at him.

"Yes. I eat ass. I suck dick. I make sure my partner enjoys the sex we have..." He says. Shane laughs.

"Ilya, there's more to being a good boyfriend than that."

"There is?"

"Yes!" Shane says, still laughing. His face gets soft and fond. "You're good at those things too. You took me to the bookstore last time I was there so I could get more books even though they didn't even have anything in Russian."

"Hmm... yes, Hollander, tell me more about all the ways I am best boyfriend."

"Fuck off." Shane says. "I have to head out."

"I love you," Ilya says, both because it's true and because no matter that they've said it so many times, Shane still looks a little delighted and stunned every time.

"I love you too," He says. "Good night, I'll talk to you tonight."

Ilya Rozanov - Advocate for Women's Pleasure?

Ilya Rozanov's Fanmail account has been the social media gift that keeps on giving. In his most recent video, Rozanov has outlined his criteria for being a good significant other. One of those criteria has been making quite the splash. He advocates for reciprocity in the bedroom. This has lead to plenty of speculation about the Ottawa star's experience and if he lives up to his own standards... as well as a number of previous paramours attesting to it's veracity. Speculation continues as the former playboy has not been seen frequenting the nightlife scene in the past year despite no rumors of any current relationships. Has the bad boy of hockey finally decided to settle down?

Chapter End Notes

Did I take suggestions from my best friend about the ways her last boyfriend was a douche? Yes, yes I did.

Chapter 7: Ilya, Tell Me To Take Care of Myself

Chapter Summary

When Harris comes to him a couple days later, new print out in hand, Ilya feels more prepared for it. He follows Harris back to his office and they sit down. Harris walks him through all the instructions from the treatment team. Ilya knows he does this because he's aware that Ilya is less confident in his written English than he is in his spoken English. And more than anything Harris knows that Ilya wants to get this right. They had also included a note, explaining that this specific patient had responded really well to their blunt, no nonsense therapist, and had a dark sense of humor. They'd expressed that they saw a lot of Ilya himself in them.

"So, what do you think? Are you up for it? I can tell them that you can't do it, and you can send something. I checked and they didn't tell the kid just in case." Ilya feels gutted.

"Of course I will do it. How could I not?" Ilya says.

Chapter Notes

So this chapter and the next are a little less goofy/more serious than the previous chapters, but I hope people still enjoy themselves.

Just note that there's discussion of mental health issues and the results of those struggles. Nothing more graphic than canon compliant discussions.

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

Harris calls for Ilya as he's making his way out of the locker room one day. Ilya pops his head in, curious. Usually Harris just comes out to him in the locker room. When he waves Ilya into the office and tells him to close the door, Ilya is concerned. Since when do they have anything that needs to be discussed behind closed doors?

"Hey Ilya, sorry for all the..." he waves his hand to encompass the desk he's behind, the office, everything, "formality, but I had a Fanmail request I wanted to talk to you about." Ilya feels a little apprehensive, but he nods. "Before I ask, you know that you can say no to any request. I don't want you to feel obligated to do anything you're not comfortable with-"

"-Harris, I know this. I don't know what you are asking, but all of this is making me more nervous, probably more than I need, yes?" Ilya says and at the statement, he can see the tension leave Harris shoulders.

"We got this request for you. It's.... well it's from the friends of a teen who is just getting out of a residential treatment facility." Ilya furrow's his brow. He holds up his hand.

"Harris, I don't know this thing. What does this mean?" he asks.

"Ilya, a few months ago, this kid... well he tried to overdose." Harris can hear the sharp intake of breath Ilya gives. " He's been staying at a place for treatment since then. He's doing a lot better now and is coming home this week. His friends and family made the ask to get a message from you." He says.

"I don't know, Harris.... Is it ok? What if I do something wrong? What if I say the wrong thing? Could make it worse, no? I know sometimes people try to say something nice to me, but it makes me feel worse, and I am more sad instead." Ilya feels this sense of dread, of rising panic.

"Ilya, his treatment team agreed that this was an ok thing to do, the parents asked. I can message them to ask the treatment team for more guidance if you want? Would that be helpful?" Harris asks. Ilya nods.

"Yeah, I'll do that. I'll get back to you." Ilya nods again, his nerves calmed for the moment. "But Ilya, I just wanted to tell you. I know this kind of freaked you out a bit, but I think sometimes people just want to hear that there's life after things like that. The idea that someone who experiences these things came out on the other side. And is happy. Are you happy, Ilya?" Harris asks... and that's a complicated question, and not something he thinks he's ready to get into right now.

"I have a life now I didn't think was possible when I was younger," Ilya says and he knows by the look on Harris's face that he clocks that Ilya didn't actually answer the question. He pauses for a moment but Harris must decide to give him space because he just nods as Ilya heads out the door, out of the locker rooms, and home to bury his thoughts in rooting for his boyfriend on tv and maybe some of the good Russian vodka. He touches his fingers to the cross around his neck and takes a deep breath.

Ilya doesn't know if he believes in God, or Heaven, or any of that, but the idea that his mom is looking down on him, maybe can see the life he's built and is proud of it, it brings him comfort.

When Harris comes back to him a couple days later, new print out in hand, Ilya feels more prepared for it. He follows Harris back to his office and they sit down. Harris walks him through all the instructions from the treatment team. Ilya knows he does this because he's aware that Ilya is less confident in his written English than he is in his spoken English. And more than anything Harris knows that Ilya wants to get this right. They had also included a note, explaining that this specific patient had responded really well to their blunt, no nonsense therapist, and had a dark sense of humor. They'd expressed that they saw a lot of Ilya himself in them.

"So, what do you think? Are you up for it? I can tell them that you can't do it, and you can send something. I checked and they didn't tell the kid just in case." Ilya feels gutted.

"Of course I will do it. How could I not?" Ilya says. He takes the paper with him and thanks Harris, promising to get him the video soon. He talks it over with Shane. He talks it over with his therapist. She talks him through the idea of self disclosure, of the fact that sometimes knowing that yes, sometimes it's still hard, but in the end it is worth it, is meaningful, of explaining to Ilya that no one expects him to be perfect, that many of the best therapists are those who have their own experiences of mental illness. She reminds him of her own story, that Ilya knows that she has depression and anxiety, that she has her own meds, and that he's still found her helpful in his own journey. "I'm assuming," she adds with a smirk, knowing full well that Ilya credits her with helping him through a lot of his past trauma. She helps him come up with talking points, and reminds him that no one person is responsible for anyone's mental health than themselves and that, sure there are ways to mess this up, but he knows better than to do those.

Ilya sets up his camera and sits on his couch.

"Hello Quinn," he says into the camera. He smiles and takes a deep breath. "I will tell you I am nervous, because sometimes for things that are complicated, I worry my English is not enough to say what I want to say. But a lot of people who care about you reached out to me to say that you had been having a tough time, and that you are coming home soon. I know that they are so excited to see you. Maybe they are also a bit worried. Maybe you are also a bit worried.

"I know you probably already know, but my mother," he looks off to the side for a moment. "She is where I get my depression from. She was smart, and funny, and so sad sometimes. I am funny,... maybe not as smart as her if it is not hockey," he lets himself the relief of a self deprecating huff of laughter, "I am also so sad sometimes. Sometimes there are bad days, and when those happen, it can be hard to remember what good days feel like. But, *Kent*, the good days are so so good, and there are so many of them ahead.

"I have a life that I could not imagine when I was young, and not for the obvious reasons. Sure, being a sexy hockey god is great," he gives his hair a sarcastic flip with a smirk, "but I was lonely for a long time. I did not think there would be people I could tell about my bad days. I thought maybe no one would want me, would love me, that no one would care. Now I have friends, I have someone I love, I have people who were not born my family who are now my family who know these things and still care about me, who show that they will stick around.

"When Shane and I started the Irina foundation, we did it because it was something we cared about, but... I did not plan to let anyone know why I cared other than it was just...." he pauses "common sense.... of course it is important. I thought my teammates, the fans, the world... I thought they would not want me anymore if they knew. But I thought about how long I just let myself feel so bad because I didn't know. I didn't know that not everyone felt this way. I didn't know that there was anything that would help, I thought that it would just be true that I would end up like my mother. So I thought maybe if I said what I had felt, that I had gotten help, in a place where no one talks about things like that... That maybe if 'star hockey player

Ilya Rozanov" he adds the affect of the hundreds of journalists who say his name like it's a title and not a person, "goes to therapy, other people would be ok going to therapy too.

"I know sometimes it feels like maybe you don't have things to be proud of, but you are still here, so I am proud of you. Maybe you do not fit in or think other people do not understand you. Maybe this is true. It was true for me sometimes. But trust me, Quinn, there is a world for you out there. With people who will see you and love you for who you are. All you need to do is find us."

Ilya takes a deep breath, and wipes the heels of his hands over his eyes. He would think about trying again, but he can't imagine a world where he makes it through what he wants to say without crying, so fuck it.

"So now it's up to you. You have to go to your appointments, and tell your people the truth, even if it is hard. You have to take your meds, even if you don't want to. You need to go outside sometimes, even when all you want to do is lay in bed with your dog," he scratches Anya's ears where she's put her head in his lap. "You need to know that I am rooting for you, and if I am ever playing in your city, all you need to do is ask and there is a ticket waiting for you."

POV: Ilya Fucking Rozanov sends you a cheer up message when you get out of the psych ward and it's.... weirdly good?

Guys, you're never going to believe. You might know I like hockey, which I do, I also like the very hot men who play hockey. Apparently while I was in treatment all my friends got together and got me a Fanmail from Ilya Rozanov (Stanley cup winning, MVP trophy holding, Cover of the NHL game last year, certified hottie, Ilya Rozanov) and y'all, it made me cry! Look at this man! I love him!

(play video)

Also, I pulled up some pictures of him, because he's like a notorious rage baiter/shit talker and I made these!

(Pictures of a number of printed photos of Ilya Rozanov with one eyebrow raised, looking judgemental. They have word balloons taped to them to say things like 'You must take your meds today', 'therapy is bad? Is lie. Liar told you that', and 'You need to go outside sometimes, even if all you want to do is lay in bed with your dog.')

"Ilya," Yuna starts one night when he's over for dinner. He looks up from where he has absolutely demolished a plate of pasta. He raises his eyebrows as he swallows. "Have you see the memes of you going around?" she asks.

"I mean, there is always something." he says waving his hand in dismissal. Some of the ways his picture has been used over the years has been hilarious, other times.... not so much.

"These are different." She says, pulling something up on her phone and handing it over. Suddenly Ilya is scrolling through dozens of pictures of himself telling people to do things to take care of themselves. They're usually kind of snarky and mean, just like him.

"People find these helpful?" Ilya asks. Yuna nods at him. He nods. "It looks like there was a kid who got a Fanmail from you who started it?" she says.

"Maybe we can make more, if people want."

Which is how Ilya finds himself, a month later producing a Ilya Rozanov self care calendar with him doing things like downing a glass of water (that also happens to soak his shirt) or running on a treadmill (in a pair of very small shorts) to take care of himself. It sells out immediately.

Soon enough the Irina Foundation's annual self care calendar featuring the hockey camp coaches becomes a highly anticipated and anchor fundraising event.

Chapter End Notes

So the word Kent was listed as being a term of endearment, specifically for someone you have shared hard times with. I felt like it was fitting.

Chapter 8: Ilya, I Got Outed :(

Chapter Notes

Is this realistic? No

Is this completely self indulgent? Yes

Do I hope you enjoy it anyway? Also Yes

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

Finally, Harris walks into the room one day and gets Ilya's attention.

"This one is perfect for you." he says and hands over the paper. Ilya takes it, reads it over, and at first his eyebrows come down and together, before his face clears and he grins.

"I will need help for this one, I think." he says looking over at Shane who just raises an eyebrow at him. "I will send you to edit before I send it out," Ilya assures him before heading out, Shane in tow.

Shane doesn't actually know what's going on, he just knows that Ilya spends the next few days talking to Harris and making a number of phone calls. Shane even hears Ilya say 'please' once, which is something he doesn't think he's ever heard outside of the most extreme of circumstances. Honestly he would be genuinely worried about what was going on if he didn't see the way that Ilya is grinning and bouncing around their house like Christmas came early when he isn't working. He doesn't know what his boyfriend has in mind, but it's obvious that either it's going to be amazing or they're going to get in so so much trouble.

"So do I get to find out what exactly it is you've been scheming about or am I not special anymore?" Shane says to Ilya one day after almost a week of doing his best to not be annoyed at not knowing what's going on. He wants to think that he's not pouting, but if the way that Ilya pulls down his lower lip with his thumb is any indication, he is unsuccessful.

"Awww, is my anxious boyfriend being anxious?" Ilya says, there's a hint of mocking in his tone, but under that is genuine concern. The fact is Ilya loves to get under Shane's skin, he always has, he always will. Shane will always be frustrated by it but thrilled by the experience of being so known and seen by Ilya, being the the sole focus of Ilya's attention. But on top of all of that is the fact that Ilya doesn't ever... at least anymore, actually cause Shane distress. He knows that Shane will worry, and he knows that Shane and he are really trying to be up front and honest with each other. He also knows that Shane is working on communicating what he needs to manage his anxiety, and that just telling him isn't actually that helpful.

"It's... just promise it's not going to get us in trouble." Shane says. Ilya grabs his chest in mock hurt.

"You think I would do that to you? Mr Shane Hollander, Golden Boy of Canadian Hockey?" he asks.

"Honestly no, but that doesn't mean that seeing you run around being all secretive doesn't make me worry that you might decide to." Shane says. "Sorry, I know it's stupid." Ilya leans in and kisses him.

"It is not stupid. I understand. But I promise, I will not be getting you in trouble." Ilya says. "Probably not. Possibly not. I don't think so. Maybe not."

"Ilya, you're not exactly inspiring confidence in me." Shane says. Ilya leans in, brushing their noses together with a smirk.

"Shane Hollander, you love trouble." He says, smug. Shane rolls his eyes.

"I love you. You are trouble. That's different." he says. Ilya just grins at him.

"You love me."

"Of course I do, you menace," Shane says. Ilya leans down and hooks his hands under Shane's thighs, hoisting him up and carrying him to the couch, Shane laughing the whole way.

oOo

Ilya holds his camera out and starts the video. His face fills the screen and he grins at the camera. He's on the ice with his teammates stepping out onto the ice for the start of practice.

"Hello Jason, your sister told me that you recently were outed and that people in your hockey league have had plenty to say about it. I'm Ilya Rozanov -"

"-Rozy, I'm pretty sure they already fucking know that!" Young calls from somewhere off camera. Ilya grimaces.

"Can we manage to not curse in a video for a high school student??" Wyatt calls in the background. Ilya looks past the camera to him and grimaces again. Wyatt clocks it and says, "Ilya, what did you do?" Ilya grins again.

"Nothing! Nothing! Not yet." He says before focusing back on the camera again. "I am sorry you are dealing with assholes who think who you kiss has anything to do with how well you play hockey. I am the best hockey player." There are various snorts off camera that Ilya waves off. "I kiss boys all the time.... well, really only one boy." He reaches over and pulls Shane into the frame. Shane is already starting to get red. He's not really looking at the camera and is biting his lower lip. "And look at that! The boy I kiss all the time-"

"And trust us.... it's ALL THE TIME!" Bood calls from the sideline. Ilya just grins while Shane glares.

"The boy I kiss all the time is the second best hockey player, Shane Hollander." Shane's blush gets impossibly redder.

"Seriously, Ilya..." Shane mutters, but when Ilya looks over at him and leans in, Shane lets him close the distance and kiss him. It's nothing much, not anything deep and very obviously not going anywhere, but it's also not a peck, something sanitized for others' comfort. It's the first time Ilya and Shane have kissed in anyway publicly since their disastrous outing. Ilya pulls away and neither of them rush to reset, letting themselves continue to make heart eyes at each other, before Ilya looks back over at the camera.

"I also kiss..." and you can tell that he takes off across the ice, coming to a stop next to a wide-eyed Wyatt Hayes. "the goalie who had the most amazing glove side save last night." The team whoops behind him as he looks over at Wyatt with an eyebrow raised and when Wyatt just sighs, closes his eyes and puffs out his cheek in preparation, plants a loud kiss on his cheek. He then scans past the camera with a weird combination of delight and predatory precision. He takes off again and there is laughter from off screen.

Ilya hands the phone off to a laughing Harris who's standing at the boards and proceeds to chase every one of his teammates down, pull them in front of Harris, compliment something about their game, and kiss each and every one of them.

"I love you," he says to them before pushing them away. The most grumpy is Troy, who rolls his eyes and wipes his cheek off immediately after, but even he has a twinkle in his eye, full of wonder of being on a team this good, and a team this kind. The least grumpy is Luca who although he tries hard to get away, as soon as he is caught turns so red he's almost purple. Ilya waxes poetic about a goal he made last game and smacks a kiss on his cheek, only to pull him in for a second on the other cheek, 'since you are European!' Luca laughs with his hand over his face and skates away.

"Hey cap! That's not fair! I want another one!" Young, another one of the rookies who still has more than a little idol worship for both Ilya and Shane but has a bit more daring than the rest. He skates up to Ilya, looks at Harris with the phone and says.

"I get to kiss the best captain in the league! Who is the second best player in the league," he says before grabbing Ilya's face and kissing his cheek with a loud 'mwah.' The others laugh and Shane can be heard chirping 'you know that's right' from the background. Soon enough the video devolves into the team chasing Ilya around the ring to try to kiss him as well. Everyone is laughing and Harris can't stop smiling. He thinks about telling his teenaged self about this.... or what Ilya or Shane of their rookie year would say to know that this is who they are now, this is the team that has embraced them. When things settle down, Ilya skates up to Harris, looks at him.

"Is that it, do you need to record an ending?" He asks. Ilya grins at him.

"There is much more. I will send it to you," he says and winks at him. Harris is honestly just a little bit concerned.

When he starts to go through the footage that Ilya has sent him, he realizes that there's clips from dozens of different people being forwarded to him. He opens the first and Scott Hunter's

face appears on the screen.

"I'm Scott Hunter, Stanley cup winner, leader scorer in the league two year in a row, and two time MVP and I kiss," and at this he pulls Carter Vaughn into the frame, "Carter Vaughn, Stanley Cup winning Captain of the team and the man who got a hat trick last night." He gives Vaughn a little peck on the cheek. He laughs and gives Hunter side eye. "Ugh, that's all you got? I'm Carter Vaughn and I get to kiss this legend." He grabs Hunter's chin and gives him a much more substantial kiss. He then turns, and the camera spans over the team, giving kisses down a line and pointing out the achievements of the person next to them.

The next video is of Hayden Pike kissing JJ Boiziau. The next is the entire Tampa Bay team. There's so many more. There's at least one player from every team. Some teams *cough* Metros *cough* only have two players exchanging kisses. A surprising amount have the whole, or almost the whole team. There's even an additional video sent from San Jose of one of their rookies who had been sick insisting on kissing every one of his teammates since he was "so mad you did it without me!" There's the MVP winners for the last 10 years. It helps that both Shane and Ilya have earned that title in that time. There's every Rookie of the Year but one.

Harris has been happily out for a while. He has been in the locker room for the Centaurs for years and has been able to see first hand out accepting and sweet these big, burly men can be. He still finds himself wiping away tears as he comes back to the last little bit that Ilya sent to add at the end.

"I know this video maybe will not change the minds of people in your town, or people on your team. I'm sorry if that is true. I know not everyone in the world is the same, but I hope this can help you know that what they say about you is their opinion. It is not true about you. I have been kissing boys since I was 15. I have been winning awards and kicking ass for the same amount of time." He smirks. "You are welcome to the hockey camps we run where you will be surrounded by queer hockey players who will be happy to play with you." He looks over at where Shane can be seen talking to Bood in the background. He grins at the camera. "Maybe you will even find your own pretty hockey boy to kiss."

The video goes viral, because of course it does, but what ends up making an even bigger splash is the season opener game of the Ottawa Centaurs vs New York Admirals in New York. At the end of the game, after the handshakes, Ilya skates right up to Scott Hunter, who while he rolls his eyes as he does, tilts his cheek out and accepts a kiss on the cheek. It becomes a thing. Every game, every team, the best player gets a kiss on the cheek. There's plenty of people who are initially resistant, but players become aware that with every person who accepts the kiss, the worse they look refusing. Soon enough getting a kiss from Ilya Rozanov becomes an honor, with rookies being pushed forward blushing and embarrassed when their teams acknowledge their contributions. When Ilya retires, Luca Haas takes up his mantle. A tradition is set, a culture is slowly changed.

Why Do We Kiss The Best Player Of The Game? A Brief History of the Ottawa Kiss

Kissing at the end of the game is now par for the course, and understood as being referred to the Ottawa Kiss, for the team where it originated, but did you know that even twenty years ago, this practice caused a massive amount of discourse and scandal in the hockey

community? It all started with a Fanmail.... Ottawa Center, Ilya Rozanov, one of the first out queer professional hockey players, who famously dominated the league with his husband Shane Hollander, received a request to make a Fanmail message for a high school hockey player who had recently been targeted by his community after coming out. Rozanov proceeded to kiss every one of his team mates on camera. He also recruited every team in the league to submit their own teammate kisses. Soon enough the internet trend took hold, first within the men and women's hockey communities, and soon expanding out into numerous other sports...

Chapter End Notes

So I've had an absolute blast writing this fic, and it seems like people have been enjoying it. I'm thinking about either making this a series or possibly just saying fuck it to the increasingly inaccurate 5+1 format and adding more chapters. Please let me know if people have a strong preference.

Also, if you have ideas for Ilya being a chaos gremlin on Fanmail, please drop them in the comments and I'll be happy to do them. Also feel free to come yell at me on [tumblr](#)

End Notes

Thanks for reading! Please let me know your thoughts!

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