

spinning out with no use

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/76877196) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/76877196>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Heated Rivalry (TV) , Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid
Relationship:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Shane Hollander , Ilya Rozanov
Additional Tags:	Fluff , Insomnia , Post-Canon , Canon Compliant , Post-Book 6: The Long Game (Game Changers) , a little tease of introspection , POV Shane Hollander , Marriage
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2026-01-01 Words: 1,720 Chapters: 1/1

spinning out with no use

by [Sambreakdown](#)

Summary

He couldn't quite pinpoint it, but something was there under his skin, uncomfortable enough to be known but elusive enough that he couldn't name it. So, instead of identifying the problem and tailor-making a solution for the morning, Shane was committing the ceiling texture to memory. Again. For the third time this week.

or, god knows why Shane can't sleep

Notes

taps mic i too am in this fandom

i did NOT take an almost four year hiatus and i did NOT have a life-altering wlv breakup everything is FINE. these sensible gay canadians sucked me back in, that's all.

there are references to tlg here, so if you are avoiding book spoilers at all costs you might want to save this for another time.

title from "endless" by emilie kahn

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

There's this thing Ilya did sometimes. It started off, like most things about their relationship, imperceptible. Easily excusable. So quiet and slight that Shane didn't realize how *much* it was until it was all-consuming, its presence undeniable in its routine. The sort of tiny, blink-and-you-miss-it detail that you would otherwise gloss over until you're met with its absence.

Shane, though, was aware of it, of course, the way a sound-asleep Ilya would hook his ankle around Shane's in bed. Laying shoulder-to-shoulder, Ilya snoring so soundly beside him that Shane knew he was dead asleep. Their ankles would stay linked like that until one of them inevitably rolled over and close together to slot into each other more completely. It was, frankly, an adorable quirk that Shane grew accustomed to once they finally regularly spent the night.

The first time it happened, that first summer at the cottage years ago, Shane awoke to the sensation. They had drifted apart in their sleep at some point, both men laying on their backs next to each other. And then Ilya just—snaked his foot across the small gap between their bodies until he slid it under Shane's, crossing their ankles. Shane could have sworn he heard a soft little sigh from Ilya. He didn't dare move out of fear of waking his boy— Ilya. So he laid there, staring at the ceiling with a dumb grin splitting his face because this impossible man next to him was so effortlessly tender, even in his sleep.

Shane is, so many years later, staring up at their bedroom ceiling again. His husband—always his Ilya—snoring obnoxiously beside him, well satiated from their day-off festivities. Shane could not say the same. Satisfied, yes, always, but relaxed? No, not really. He couldn't quite pinpoint it, but something was there under his skin, uncomfortable enough to be known but elusive enough that he couldn't name it. So, instead of identifying the problem and tailor-making a solution for the morning, Shane was committing the ceiling texture to memory. Again. For the third time this week.

A quick glance to his bedside clock—*A clock, Shane? You have phone, yes? Does yours not tell time?*—told him it was 2:47am. That was, by his estimation, some 40 minutes ago. Fucking fantastic.

They had an afternoon practice the next day. Shane *really* needed that rest. Not that he would openly admit it to anyone besides the team physicians, but he was getting older by hockey standards. It took more of a toll on his body, the drills and the checks and the after-hours practices on the ice with Ilya. He loved it. Adored it all the same. But he would be stupid to deny that it was a harder recovery after each game now.

Maybe that was it? Existential dread over the inevitability of his retirement? No. Shane shook his head slightly on his pillow. He was by no means looking forward to the end of his MLH career, but that was still years away with a post-retirement plan already half-baked by him and Ilya and fully fleshed out by his mother. It was inevitable, Shane knew that. His days in this sport at this level were numbered, but he was making his peace with that. And, besides, it was far enough off that there was no point in fussing about it now.

So, no, it wasn't that keeping him awake. It wasn't *anything* keeping him awake. His parents were both in great health after a small scare from his dad a year prior. He and Ilya were

genuinely great. The sex was somehow more amazing with time, especially the particularly memorable number they did that night that left Shane breathless and floaty and his mind blissfully blank outside of a single stream of *holy fuck, Ilya*.

And he and Ilya, well, they've been fucking amazing, in both senses. Their life was so much *more* than Shane could have ever predicted. And what he did predict all those years ago as he set up a truly stupid number of LED candles in the living room was already breathtaking. Butterfly-inducing. Loving and intimate and every other goddamn cliché in the book.

Their fights were few and far in between and, often, easily resolved when Rose and Svetlana—hell, sometimes even *Hayden*—pointed out they could just fucking *talk* about it.

Besides, their last fight, if you could even call it that (Ilya did, Shane preferred to distinguish it as an argument), was months ago and lasted all of three hours. It was just long enough for Ilya to go to the Hollander's house and have a cup of coffee with David and Yuna before Shane knocked on the door, a sheepish blush on his face to match the flowers in his hand and the bow on Anya's collar. His well-practiced apology barely made it past his lips before Ilya was barreling into him with a hug. Shane could've sworn he saw his mom roll her eyes and mutter *All this over detergent?* over Ilya's shoulder, but he was busy focusing on the weight of his husband back in his arms, mutual apologies exchanged and accepted in between soft kisses and even softer murmurs.

So, no, Shane couldn't pinpoint a single good fucking reason why he couldn't just sleep. He was fine. His family was fine. His marriage was fantastic. His sex life was glorious. Yeah, there were still homophobic assholes in the league, but there were now so many more out players and allies that the homophobes actually stood out instead of being the norm. The Centaurs were an incredible team to Shane and the league. Hell, he and Ilya already won two Cups together. His life is fucking perfect, so it makes no goddamn sense—

Ilya's ankle hooks around his. Shane's brain, for a moment, blessedly shuts the fuck up. The static stills.

He turns his head on his pillow to look at his husband. His husband who, quite adorably, is drooling on his own pillow. His face is slack in a way that only comes with post-orgasm sleep, his laugh lines smoothed over and golden curls resting across his forehead.

Shane tamps down the urge to kiss him, not wanting to wake his husband when he looks this gorgeous asleep, drool and snores and all. He smiles, just slightly, at the sight and the odd point of connection between them. He feels Ilya's foot twitch, sees him scrunch up his nose and wiggle his face before it relaxes again, and something inside Shane settles.

He breathes in. He holds. He breathes out.

It's something he and Ilya had been practicing over the years whenever Shane started to spiral. Ilya would take his hands and lift up their arms as they breathed in, lowering them as they breathed out, all the while maintaining an eye contact that was anchoring, safe. Wanted.

He does it again now, eyes unwavering from his husband and his snores. Even dead asleep, Ilya and his ridiculous ankle holding soothes whatever was uneasy in Shane. He can figure it

out another time, whatever this thing is. Right now, he wants to drift asleep to the sight of the love of his life until their breathing syncs and they naturally drift together—

Ilya's eyes snap open.

“Jesus,” Shane startles, jumping a little in his spot.

“No,” Ilya responds, voice scratchy and rough from sleep. “It’s Ilya Rozanov. Sexy, world-famous hockey player. I am just a sex god, not literal god.”

The eye roll is earned. “You’re an asshole, is what you are.”

Ilya just smiles something soft and shrugs. “You like it.” After a pause, he continues, “What has you awake tonight?”

“No idea,” Shane sighs and scrubs his hands over his face.

Ilya shakes his head and turns to his side, opening his arms as an invitation to Shane, like he knows it’s the closest thing to a solution they have. He makes quick work of burying himself against Ilya’s chest, breathing in the familiar scent of his skin and body soap and even a slight hint of the moisturizer Shane bribes him into using. He presses a lingering kiss to his chest, which earns him a matching kiss to his hairline from Ilya. Shane wraps his arms around Ilya’s middle and swings a leg over his hips to pull them closer together. As much as he can help it, Shane wants to—needs to—eliminate any bit of space between them.

He closes his eyes and exhales a breath he didn’t know he was holding. That itch under his skin starts to cool, the rush behind his temples slowing as he focuses on the rise and fall of Ilya’s chest. Steady, safe, secure, and sound.

He can feel Ilya smile something playful against his hair. “Better?”

“Mhm,” Shane hums. “Better.” He breathes in. He holds. He breathes out. He really does already feel better.

“Good. It’s fucking late and we have practice tomorrow. You need your old-man sleep.”

Shane grins against Ilya’s chest, not even trying to hide it. “We’re the same age, dumbass,” he says around a yawn.

Ilya holds him tight, safe, carding steady fingers through his hair as if he could disentangle whatever has been keeping Shane from sleep. “And you are still very beautiful. And sexy. Not an old man in bed, just in hockey.”

Shane closes his eyes, pressing a small kiss to whatever patch of skin is in front of him. “You wish. I’m still winning the scoring race.” He splays his hands out against Ilya’s back and scratches at his skin until he feels the satisfied hum reverberate against his head.

“Goodnight, Shane.”

“Goodnight, Ilya.”

Shane doesn't remember how long it took him to fall asleep after that, but when he wakes up to his alarm some hours later, he's on his back, head facing Ilya. His husband is a mirror image, save the dried drool and messy curls. His ankle found its way back around Shane's, anchoring them together. And Shane's heart just bursts with something so sure, so impossible that must only come with being in Ilya Rozanov's orbit these past 20 odd years. So Shane breathes and gazes at his husband—his love, his Ilya—and relishes the weight of his ankle against his own.

End Notes

if you were jumpscared by a notif i hope you missed my em dashes <3 trust that better is to come, a gal just has to warm up to the water a bit.

drink water! happy new year! yay gay people!

find me on tumblr! [@5ambreakdown](#)

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