

First Comes Love, Then Comes Marriage

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First Comes Love, Then Comes Marriage

by [worldswithinme](#)

Summary

They get to love each other in the light. I think that's cute.

Ilya is retiring and now his only job is to look pretty.

Notes

This would follow after The Long Game by Rachel Reid. Ilya is hanging up his jersey and embracing WAG Life (Wives and Girlfriends - a term for sports players partners).

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

“And after a tremendous season for the Ottawa Centaurs, Ilya Rozanov is hanging up his jersey HERE! tonight in OTTAWA!” The announcer's voice rang out. The commentary from the sports broadcasting booth was muffled by the roar of the crowd. Ottawa was so proud of their team. For the third year in a row the city had brought home the Stanley cup.

With Shane and Ilya on the same team the league hadn't really stood a chance. Ottawa was a dynasty.

Their most recent win was made that much sweeter as the Montreal Metro's slumped off the ice. For three years Ottawa had been any metro's worst nightmare. The first game after Shane had left had been a blood bath. Ilya's gloves had been off for longer than they had been on.

He had skated circles around a fallen Montreal player “Oh no J.J are you trying to let me win?” His taunting and tripping had earned him four minutes in the penalty box, well worth it in Ilya's opinion.

J.J had struggled to take a knee and stand back up. “Fout Ou!” He spat as the ref shoved Ilya towards his time out. That night a new rivalry had started across Canada.

Shane shrugged his shoulders when he met Hayden's gaze. The Montreal player rolled his eyes and followed his team off the ice. Shane tried to hide his smirk as his old teammates skated by, he didn't want to gloat or be unsportsmanlike. He wanted to celebrate this most recent win with his husband and his new team.

He watched as the man he loved took laps around the arena saying goodbye to their dedicated fans. His eyes caught on a group of teenagers crying behind the penalty box. They shook their posters and taped on the glass to get Ilya's attention. Ilya loved their fans, in response to their admiration he picked up one of the game pucks and threw it over the barrier to the girls. Their squeals cut through the cheering audience.

“That's right Jim after their third straight Stanley cup win. That must be an amazing feeling for the newlyweds.” The Co-host responded.

Ilya ended his rounds and came to a smooth halt at Shane's side. Spraying his ankles with flecks of white ice. Shane tried to look exasperated but his smile felt obvious. He pulled his husband in for a hug. It felt so good to hug Ilya in front of people. He could hold him without rushing or letting go quickly in fear.

Families had started to crowd the ice. Kids, Parents, and Partners with proud expressions embraced their players. For three years Ilya had Shane's parents patting his shoulders and kissing his cheeks.

He loved being a son again.

“Newlyeds?” Ilya asked, pretending his English comprehension was poor. “Is that how you Canadians call it?” Ilya would say soulmates. The announcers always shied away from

saying husbands. He didn't even know there were so many synonyms for the word before.

Three years of marriage and decades of *other* activities floated between them. However, the media had spun their rivalry into an enemies to lovers story. The article done with sports illustrated had said words like, forbidden romance, doomed, heartbreaking, and nevertheless prevailing.

"Shut up" Shane replied, elbowing him in the ribs. Ilya barely felt the blow through his padding, but his heart still fluttered at the contact.

"Hollander, who is going to tell them that we are ancient now?" Ilya asked, trying to hide his sarcasm behind faux earnest eyes.

"YOU are ancient now, with your jersey getting skied" Shane replied gesturing towards the ceiling where Stanley Cup banners and retired jerseys hung.

"Yuna Shane is bullying me for being old" Ilya pouted as his in-laws walked towards them.

"Shane, stop bullying my favorite son" Yuna playfully scolded, going along with the bit. She pulled Ilya into a hug first. Kissing his cheek and saying something only for his ears.

Shane held his hands to his heart as if hurt when she released him from her arms. "I thought I was your favorite,"

"This part is my favorite," David said, clapping both boys on their shoulders, as the Stanley Cup was rolled onto the ice. Trailing the trophy was the MHL commissioner.

Shane and Ilya shared a look over the man who would have forced them into the closet if he could.

Ilya wanted to say *Fuck you, look at what we did together. Look at how often we win. You couldn't stop us.* Instead they hoisted the cup as Captain and Assistant Captain.

They kissed each other at center ice as husband and husband. (And if Ilya got a little handsy, just for the show of it, who could blame him?)

Shane blushed, partially from the kiss but also because their teammates were singing a stupid nursery rhyme.

"Hollander and Rozy sitting in a tree," they sang.

"First comes love," Ilya hoped in on the joke.

"Then comes marriage," Shane whispered back. Fighting to maintain control over his overwhelming joy.

Ilya knew he was barely holding it together by the quiver in his jaw. Joy seemed to be beaming through every crack in his composure. "Then comes baby in baby carriage"

“Ilya, are you looking forward to retirement?” A reporter asked in their final interview for the season.

“Yes. I am going to follow my true passion...being a WAG.”

The room busted out into laughter. Ilya didn't hate hockey, but it was getting boring. Competing against Shane had been exciting and fun. Being on the same team was easier than breathing. They were so in sync and seamless. The league would probably need to make rules about spouses on the same team. Together they had made a dynasty. They had put Ottawa back on the map. Now, it was time for Ilya to rest. Shane would continue to push his body like a boulder uphill.

The Husbands changed and headed towards Ilya's car. The car was a part of a brand ambassadorship Yuna had booked for Ilya. It was sexy, sporty, and spoke German. Ilya loved driving it, and Shane had learned to accept 0 to 60mph in 4 seconds. They threw their things into the trunk. When a voice came from behind them.

“Ilya wait, what's your number so you can be added to the WAGS chat” One of his teammates' wives called out. Ilya loved this team. Of course the wives were quick to include him.

“I'm in it too,” Harris called from a few parking spots over. “You aren't the only partner.” Troy Barret, Ottawa's left wing, waved to the captains and opened the car door for his boyfriend.

Ilya smiled and added his number.

“See you next season,” The wife called over her shoulder, as she walked across the players only lot to her husband.

That summer flew by with summer camp, managing the foundation, and *everything* else.

“Are you excited for the first game of the season?” Shane asked, jingling his keys standing in the entrance way.

“I am about to eat so many snacks in the booth,” Ilya said, putting on a fur coat and obnoxious matching hat. “Nikki says they will have pigs in a blanket.”

“It's still warm outside.” Shane's confused face was so adorable to Ilya.

“It is mob wife fall and the rink is cold”

“You'll be fine in the players box, I'm sure it's heated.” Ilya scrunched his face and shrugged out of the coat in response.

“I am still bringing the jacket.”

Shane shrugged, smiling, “Whatever you want sweetheart.”

Ilya skated onto the ice to watch his number be retired. No one in the future of Ottawa would be 81 ever again. He could have walked onto the mat placed for coaches and donors. But skating around was more natural and he looked good doing it. The "ridiculous", in Shane's words, fur coat was fluttering behind him.

"The coat was very necessary," Shane realized. "Very Slavic chic." Ilya was probably also cold without all the thermals and gear.

"I told you so," a smile seeped into Ilya's words. "Good luck in your game"

A small frown pulled at the corner of Shane's mouth, "I wish you didn't retire."

"Retirement agrees with me. I am now going to go look hot for ESPN"

Throughout the game the broadcast would swing the camera to Ilya after every sloppy pass. They tracked his pacing, his shouting at the referee, and chatting with the wives. By the end of the night he was a reaction GIF, because he had leapt from his seat as Shane scored.

Ilya waited as the stadium cleared out a bit after Ottawa's win before heading to the gift shop. The group chat was buzzing with merch suggestions. He had casually mentioned not having any team merch besides fading workout clothes. Accidentally sending the women into a frenzy as they referenced Etsy shops, vendors, and their own DIY Projects.

He had always wanted to wear Shane's jersey in the light of day. It would be a surprise at the next game. After all, he had retired number 81. He was sure he'd look just as good in 24.

Ilya remembered being twenty-six and pissed when Rose Landry had worn Shane's jersey. He glared at the screen, as she showed off "Hollander 24". It never seemed likely that he'd be able to do that for Shane. At the time they were fully convinced a life of clandestine meetings and longing looks would be enough. Ilya couldn't believe how stupid they were. How hard they worked to deny their true feelings.

He paid for the jersey. Despite the flustered sales clerk trying to give it away for free. He felt a sense of satisfaction buying it himself. He probably could have asked someone for an official playing one. It probably would have been free. But, he didn't want to pull too many strings to get his way around the arena. It was his desire to be treated like any other regular spouse.

The season was fully under way after the opening match. There was a series of away games along the east coast, keeping Shane on the road. There were a few tight wins and a couple of losses. Finally, Ottawa was playing at home tonight.

"Remember the game starts at 7pm. Oh and..." a kiss was pressed to the side of Ilya's head. "Did you take your meds today?" Shane continued as he pulled on his shoes.

"I know when the game starts. The wives and I are coordinating our outfits." Ilya said without looking up from his phone. He settled into their couch with their dog at his feet.

"I'm sure whatever you all decide will be great." Shane said. "Okay I'm out"

Ilya said a distracted bye while focused on the group chat.

Casey: *I think Hollander is going to die when he see you Ilya* 😊😊

Harris: *I have three TikToks relying on his reaction!*

Nikki: *Harris, the devil works hard but you work harder.*

Harris: *Thank You!*

Rayna: *I'm so sad I'm missing out. These sick kids are killing me.*

Ilya: *I hope the kids get better.* 😊

Rayna: *Keep me in your prayers.*

Ilya: *I have only ever worn my own Jersey. I hope they put it on the Jumbotron. Easier to read Shane's name that way.*

Ilya smirked into the camera as the lens focused on him. He stood up waving to the crowd as the announcers reminisced over last season.

With a dramatic flourish he turned his back towards the camera. His brows raising at the wives and girlfriends, who excitedly cheered him on. It reminded Ilya of a movie he'd watched with Hayden's kids. Some bad guy trying to steal the moon, the weird yellow creature followers excited at the prospect.

"There's Ilya Rozanov wearing a number we've never seen him in before." One of the announcers called.

"And look at that reaction from number 24. Shane Hollander seems to be enjoying what he sees." The other replied.

Ottawa won the game in a clean 4 - 0. It was a solid shutout.

"I think Rozanov needs to wear that jersey for the rest of the season," the first broadcaster joked.

"Well if the centaurs are able to keep up this momentum, we will be seeing them at the playoffs once again." The other said as the broadcast faded and began its outro.

Ilya waited outside the locker room. He chatted with his old teammates as they headed out. There was an ache for his tenure as a captain. Nights where he gave amazing speeches, played ruthlessly, and organized celebratory hangouts.

Shane's eyes were bright when he saw Ilya. He seemed hungry for something. His hair was still damp from showering sticking to his forehead and it reminded Ilya of when they were 18. He was leaning against the wall like he'd been in Saskatchewan. Then there was Shane constantly reaching for him across time and space. His anxious, introverted, handsome

husband. What would have become of them if Shane hadn't found him in the parking lot. What if Ilya hadn't taken the second handshake as an invitation.

Shane peered into his eyes, as if trying to see the memory for himself. "I should have made you retire earlier"

"Why did I look amazing on Jumbotron?" Ilya asked as if he didn't know.

Shane's hands met the wall on either side of his husband's head, trapping Ilya where he was. "My jersey looks great on you," he murmured. His breath danced across Ilya's lips. He leaned in to close the fraction of distance between them.

"Ewwwww, you guys are too dad coded for this." The team's newest rookie said, stepping past them. Oliver was 19 and had confessed his admiration for Shane and Ilya the first few times they met. They were the reason he got into hockey. Now, they were a pair of lovey dovey old heads blocking the hallway. "Please spare my infant eyes and get a room!" It wasn't harsh, he wasn't actually grossed out.

"He's right, let's go home." Shane said, leading Ilya towards the exit.

End Notes

If y'all want it, there is already a draft about Shane and Ilya's dad era. This started to feel to long so I cut It out.

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