

Grin and Bare It

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Grin and Bare It

by [Camcat333](#)

Summary

"I can't wait for them to put your tooth back in," Shane tells him when they get back home after the game.

"What? You do not like sticking your tongue through my hole?"

"Ew. No, I do not like it when you push my tongue into the spot where your missing tooth is."

OR

boston fans attack ilya before a game but he is determined not to let it ruin his season

"I am so fucking sorry." Hayden repeats again.

Shane nods, his chest is tight and that is as much of a response as he can manage.

Yuna finds the words for him. "It's okay Hayden. We all know it was an accident."

The crisis response team has gathered at Shane's house in Montreal. Shane's parents, Hayden and Jackie, mill around the living room. Farah, Shane and Ilya's shared agent joins them over a video call.

"I knew we shouldn't have given the kids screens. Let alone ones that connect to the internet." Jackie sighs.

Hayden's phone had been glitching so he signed onto Instagram on the girls' tablet to scroll. He had left his account logged in and somehow Ruby had managed to post a video to his account. Not just any video, but a video the kids had taken on the day Shane and Ilya had spent babysitting them.

It showed the two men exchanging their vows, dressed up in play clothes standing in the Pike's living room. It showed their quick kiss, and the dance party that followed and the longer, more tender kisses they had stolen when the kids weren't looking.

"I just still can't get over how I wasn't invited to my own son's wedding." David jokes. A small laugh comes from around the room. Shane's brain is stormy with anxiety but he manages to fire enough neurons to put a small smile on his face.

"I didn't even notice the girls were taping us." The video, admittedly, was very cute. If it had been kept private Shane would've cherished it. But despite Hayden deleting it minutes after it was posted, it had blown up and was all over the internet.

"It is nice that we have a video," Ilya says, returning from the next room where he had been taking a phone call. He places his hands on Shane's shoulders and tries to squeeze some of the tension out of them. "Of the happiest moment of my life."

"You know I still expect a real wedding, right?" Yuna says seriously. "One with an officiant and flowers."

"We will have a big wedding." Ilya smiles and leans down to kiss Shane's cheek. "With a giant cake, and hundreds of people on a private island. Maybe fireworks, yes?"

As nice as it was to imagine a big wedding to love of his life, the shadow of reality was still looming darkly over Shane's head.

"If we both lose our jobs in the NHL it might be hard to afford a big wedding," Shane mutters.

"But that's not going to happen. Right Farah?" Yuna says.

It takes a second for Farah to unmute herself. "We're not going to let that happen. The commissioner may not be happy about this but you've got a lot of people on your side. The fans, your teammates, and our lawyers are suiting up. We're ready to fight whatever the league throws our way."

"She is right. I just finished call with Coach Wiebe. He says we have his full support. Both of us." Ilya states.

"We're here for you. Anything you guys need. Really." Hayden adds.

Shane lets out a sigh. It's not quite relief, but something inside of him starts to settle.

It's tough at first. The first few practices, the first road trip after they are outed are tough. Shane's team gives him icy looks. Some hockey fans travel to Ottawa with homophobic signs and are kicked out of the arena. There's a media circus about it.

But soon another hockey scandal comes and takes some of the attention away. A Carolina player tests positive for steroids, and he's benched.

There are good changes too. More and more hockey fans bring pride flags to games. Articles are written about the hockey husbands.

And Shane and Ilya can go out in public. At first, they start with private restaurants, walking trails. Then there's a charity gala and they are photographed on the red carpet together. And they look good together. Really good.

They are asked if they want to be on the cover of OUT magazine together. They discuss the opportunity over the phone, while lounging in their respective hotel rooms.

"I don't know. Wouldn't it kind of be pushing it in everyone's face?" Shane worries.

"I want it in their faces. They should be jealous of me and my hot boyfriend," Ilya makes a kissy face and smiles.

Shane chuckes. "Yeah. I mean it would be fun. And it might be nice to finally have photos together where we aren't in hockey gear."

"Yes. I want a photo with you in sexy clothes. We should practice our modeling. You should send me a picture."

"The only problem is I think I forgot to pack my sexy clothes."

"Ah. No worries. No clothes will work too."

The photoshoot goes viral. Not so much with the hockey fans, but the rest of the internet eats it up. People use the photos as reaction pics on twitter. A few influencers try and recreate the elaborate athletic poses featured, which turns into a TikTok challenge of its own. They partner with a charity supporting homeless LGBTQ youth to auction off a signed Hollander-

Rozamoz jersey that was made especially for the shoot. The website crashes from too many visitors. They are asked to do a prime-time talk show interview, but the recording clashes with their schedules.

"I keep seeing your goal from last night on my phone," Ilya says.

"It was an impressive goal," Shane replies smugly.

"You want to see impressive goal? You should watch my game tonight."

"Oh you still play hockey? That's weird. I haven't seen any of your goals on my phone lately."

"Just wait. I'll score tonight, for you." Ilya makes a kiss noise into the phone.

"Call me after the game?"

"Of course."

Tonight's competition was against Boston, and Ilya wants to be sure he is on top of his game. He wants to shove it in their faces, his amazing skills and the skills of his team that were only getting better and better with each game.

He stops at a strip mall just a few minutes away from the arena to grab a smoothie. A last-minute infusion of sugar should give him extra energy for warmups to get this game day rolling.

"Rozanov!" A voice yelled. "It's fucking Rozanov!"

Ilya waves politely at the three adult men in the parking lot.

"Hey, he's playing at the game tonight." One of the other men slurs. "We're going to the game tonight."

They approach closer and Ilya smiles as he poses for a picture. Sometimes seeing fans before a game helps motivate him. Sometimes he latches onto their excitement.

"Should be a fun night," Ilya says. One of the men puts his arm around Ilya's shoulder to pose for a photo. He is so drunk that he's forgotten about personal space. Ilya can smell the alcohol on him.

"Yeah, fun for Boston." The man taking the photo responds.

Ilya can hear it now. The Boston accent he used to be surrounded by. These were not fans of his, at least not anymore.

The third man stands. "I can't believe you asked this fucking traitor for a photo."

"Come on," says the photo taker, "That's still Ilya fucking Rozanov."

"No, he's not. He's a fucking traitor and a sissy."

"Yeah," the drunk man still attached to Ilya's shoulder, starts to agree. "He's right, you're a fucking traitor."

Ilya starts to pull away, to walk back towards his car, but the drunk man has a grip on his shirt.

The man kicks him in the knee. The sharp blow catches him off guard and he loses his balance. As he starts to fall the drunk man grabs onto the collar of his shirt and lands a hard punch on his cheek.

Another hit catches on the side of his face. He drops his smoothie to the ground and regains his balance. As he stands, the third man approaches and lands a soft hit on his ear. Ilya's mind is racing. He could easily take these drunkards, but how would it look? His beating up the opposing team's fans right before a game. The third man lands a few more hits to the side of his head before Ilya can find stable footing. He manages to push one of the men hard backwards.

"Dude stop." The man taking the photograph yells. "He'll fucking kill you."

The taste of blood fills Ilya's mouth. He spits on the ground and clenches his fists as the men run into their car.

"And here comes Captain Ilya Rozanov, who formerly led the Boston team to glory years ago before moving to Ottawa." The sportscaster announces.

"One of Rozanov's strongest skills is getting under the nerves of the opposing team, so his former Boston teammates will certainly have it out for him tonight."

"It looks like Rozanov has already gotten into trouble, and the game hasn't even started. Is that a black eye?"

A close-up shot reveals a swollen lip and bruises on Ilya's face, but how?

Shane tries not to act concerned. He is at the Pikes' house watching the game with a handful of his other teammates. They still weren't thrilled about Shane and Ilya's relationship, so he had to play it cool.

"Why is he already all beat up?" JJ asks the question directed at Shane.

"I dunno." Shane murmurs, wondering the same thing.

"Come on, you've played against Roz, he probably got on Troy Barrett's nerves during warmups." Hayden quips.

"No, that's not it. The team is actually pretty tight-knit." Shane says.

"Well whatever happened, it doesn't seem like it's affecting his game." Jackie chimes in as they watch Ilya win the first face-off.

Coach had pulled him aside during warmups to ask about the bruises.

"Just woke up this morning and thought I looked too pretty. Didn't want my good looks to distract Barrett." Ilya didn't want to think about what had happened earlier that day. He wanted to warm up with his team and prepare them to beat Boston.

"If you don't tell me the truth, I'm going to bench you." Coach says seriously.

Ilya lowers his voice so that no one else will hear. "A few Boston fans, they got excited to see me. I am fine."

"Jeez Roz. Did you call the police? People can't just go around picking on you just because you play for the other team." Coach hears the double meaning as soon as he says it. "I mean, is that why they beat you up, because you play for Ottawa or because you know..."

"I think they beat me up because they thought it was the only way Boston could win tonight." Ilya does not want to think about their motivation. He doesn't want to think about them at all. But when he talks and moves his swollen lip, he can't help but feel their hatred coursing through his own body.

"You see the doctor right after warm-ups, okay? I will not have you injuring yourself tonight. And we're going to have to talk about this more after the game. Your safety is more important than any of this." Coach says, waving to the rapidly filling arena.

"Yes. We talk more after we beat Boston."

Coach smiles, "Fine. After we beat Boston."

Ilya scores a goal early in the game but they are down by two pretty soon after. Ilya tries to keep morale up, cheering from the bench and handing out fist bumps regularly.

"They're too busy targeting Roz, I think they're forgetting to shoot at the goal." Hayden chimes in.

They watch as Ilya gets brutally shoved into the boards, despite the puck being yards away from him.

"Yeah they're totally shutting him out. God, it's so frustrating to play with someone breathing down your neck like that." JJ adds.

It was nice to see the room expressing some sympathy. Shane couldn't express anything; the lump in his throat was growing with every play. These Boston players looked like they wanted to kill Ilya. And Ilya, he was trying his best, but he looked a little rough. Shane could tell the hits were getting to him, something looked off.

As the right wing slams in Ilya again, a fight breaks out. Shane wasn't sure who started it, who the penalty would go to. All he knew that Ilya was on the ground getting tackled mercilessly. A pile of players and gloves grows quickly. The refs circle helplessly.

"Holy shit." JJ says.

"Yeah that was a bomb just waiting to go off," another teammate says, almost cheerfully.

Shane can't stand it. He buries his hands in his face. "God, just tell me when it's over." He whispers to no one. He can feel a small hand on his back.

"It's over, Hollander. Everyone's fine, he's getting up, headed to the penalty box." Hayden reassures him.

Shane peeks through his fingers at the television screen to see Ilya shuffling to the penalty box, waving at a booing and cheering crowd.

He flashes a big grin at the cameras. One of his teeth is missing.

"Oh no!" Jackie gasps. Which just makes Shane chuckle.

"It's alright." Shane swallows hard and smiles. "That one was already fake."

"Bend your knee." The team doctor yells at Ilya. The second period ends with him in the box, and then he is rushed off to the treatment room.

"The problem is not my knee, the problem is I'm missing a fucking tooth!" Ilya yells.

"Yeah, that loud mouth of yours seems to be working just fine. I'm more concerned with why you are favoring your left knee as you skate."

Ilya bends and stretches his knee to prove that he is fine. Even though the honest truth is that it's killing him. He had landed on it harder than he thought. But if he could just make it through one more period against Boston, just score one more goal to tie things up.

"Argh" Ilya lets out when the doctor goes to touch his knee. He bends it more slowly.

"It's almost like your kneecap is jammed," the doctor whispers to himself.

"Bullshit. It is just a little sore."

"So you admit it hurts?"

"No it is fine."

"I can feel that your kneecap is not sitting in quite the right place." The doctor shifts his kneecap.

"Well then, be the fucking doctor and put it back."

"Are you sure? I mean, I can, but usually I'd recommend pain meds, maybe sedation. It's going to hurt like a bitch."

"Do it."

The sound of Ilya screaming 'fuck', is much louder than the sound of his kneecap popping back into place.

"There's no way you're playing on that knee," Bood says as Ilya limps into the locker room.

"Really? Watch me."

Ilya makes it to the very end of the game before his knee gives out. The game ends with him firing off a shot, his stick high in the air. The shot hits the fucking goal posts, and he crashes to the ice. They were so close. Sort of. If that shot had gone in, they would've made it to overtime. Ilya's knee would not have made it to overtime but Luca had gained some momentum, and so maybe he would've been able to snatch the win for them.

"What a beautiful swan dive," Barrett says when he goes to help Ilya up.

The sound of the Boston team celebrating fades to the background. All Ilya can hear is his heartbeat growing faster. All he can feel is his knee throbbing. And his ribs. And his lip.

He is proud of the fight he put up that night. He keeps his brave face on until he gets off the ice, then, like his knee, the rest of his body gives out.

Shane had gotten in the car in the middle of the third period. It was a rough game, and he needed to see Ilya tonight to make sure he was okay. He got the call from his parents that he should head straight to the hospital.

"He's okay. He passed out for a second right after the game, from the pain. But we saw him, he was awake and alert. They just took him back to get some scans, X-rays and an MRI, I think." Yuna fills Shane in.

"Those refs let Boston rip him to shreds. They need to be investigated. They mauled him Mom."

"Honey," Yuna's voice softens. "He was hurt before the game even started."

"Really?"

"Really. I don't know the full story, but there is one."

Shane sighs. "Tell him I'm on my way."

"I will, but I'm sure he already knows."

Shane made the mistake of turning on the radio in the car. The sportscasters relayed the rumors that Ottawa's star center had been rushed to the hospital right after the game. Someone reportedly saw him coughing up blood.

Shane couldn't help but imagine it for the rest of the drive, and as he took the stairs two at a time in the hospital. What would he see when he finally got to Ilya's room? Broken ribs? What about his knee, could it be broken? Would he be out the rest of the season, or, god forbid, could his career be over?

"So I said, your mother left me her bra. I will give it to you and you will make sure she gets it back." Ilya pauses his story to lick a drip of popsicle juice off his wrist.

"And that's when he hit you?" Luca asks.

"No. Before next practice, in the locker room, I handed him a bra. And I told him I had signed it for his mother. That's when he hit me, and knocked out this tooth."

The room erupts in laughter.

Shane watches from the doorway. Ilya is sitting in his hospital bed surrounded by a few teammates and Shane's parents, eating a popsicle. His knee is wrapped up and propped on a pillow, and his face is swollen and bruised, but overall, he looks good. Only Ilya could manage to look so hot in a hospital bed.

"Yeah, you might have deserved that one Rozy" Wyatt Hayes, the Centaur's goalie, shakes his head.

"Was totally worth it."

"But you didn't deserve the beating you got today. The one off the ice I mean. You know that right Roz?" Troy Barrett says, throwing his suit jacket over his shoulder.

The room murmurs in agreement, and that's when Shane finally steps over the threshold.

"Off the ice?" Shane lets out, his voice wavering. Tears fill his eyes. He didn't want to cry in the hospital room in front of half of the Centaurs starting line-up, but he wasn't sure he could hold it back.

"Okay, boys. I think visiting hours are over." Yuna says.

The Centaurs stand and fist-bump Ilya before making their way out of the room.

"Take care of him okay, Hollander? Don't let it get to his head, but we kinda need this guy." Wyatt says, clapping Shane on the shoulder on his way out the door.

Shane tries to take a deep breath and slowly walks over to Ilya's bed.

"Hi." Ilya says, taking Shane's hand into his. He discards his popsicle into a cup beside him. "Don't look so sad. I am okay. They scanned me, and nothing is broken. They didn't believe me, that I have strongest bones."

Shane allows himself a moment to break down. He presses his face into Ilya's hair. A few tears escape and are quickly absorbed by Ilya's mop of sweaty curls. He can hear his parents shuffle out of the room quietly, leaving them alone.

"Okay." Shane breathes in Ilya's scent and exhales. "Okay. You're okay."

"Will be out for a few games, need to rest my knee. Ribs are bruised."

Shane takes a step back to take a better look. Ilya's mouth is swollen, so he leans down to press a gentle kiss onto his forehead instead.

"I'm glad you're okay." Shane manages. He takes Ilya's hands into both of his. "It's nice to see your teammates showed up."

Ilya sighs happily. "Yes. They are good team. Keep me company while I waited for you. Your parents came too, rode in ambulance with me."

"That good. That's good."

Ilya smiles, then winces. Shane places a finger every so carefully on his chin.

"What was Barrett saying? About you getting beaten up off the ice?"

Ilya closes his eyes and tilts his head down, leaning into Shane's touch.

"Is nothing."

"Ilya."

"I ran into some Boston fans before the game. They wanted to wish me good luck." He pauses before quickly adding. "With their fists."

"What? Where? Who were they?"

"I don't know. I don't really care. They were homophobes. They caught me off guard. I won't let happen next time."

"This is serious Ilya. They could've ganged up on you and ended your career. And why did you play when you knew you were already injured? That was stupid and you know it."

Ilya sighs. "I couldn't let them," He takes a sharp inhale. Shane can see tears are pooling in his eyes, too. "I couldn't let them win. Let them scare me."

It's Ilya's turn to break down into tears. Soon he is sobbing and his strained breath makes his swollen cheek hurt worse. But Shane's hands are in his hair and on his back, pulling him into his warm chest.

Shane holds Ilya while he calms down. He carefully wipes Ilya's face with his sleeve, drying the tears. He makes him take a sip of water.

"It was scary." Ilya admits finally. "And it made me sad. It is sad they hate me just because I love you."

Shane presses his lips together and frowns. "It is scary. And it's sad. It's really sad. But you're not in it alone. You should've called me. You should've told your team what happened before the game."

"I know. I know."

"And even if you hadn't played, you wouldn't have let them win. People like that they will never win, because no matter what names they call us, no matter what punches they throw, they can never stop us from loving each other. They can never take this away." Shane places a light kiss on Ilya's swollen lips.

"I love you Shane."

"I love you so much Ilya."

Ilya closes his eyes. "Maybe I should get bodyguard."

"That's not a bad idea."

"He would need to be very strong. And handsome."

"Of course."

"You could apply for the job. It would be a much better job than playing for Montreal, yes?"

"That depends. How much does it pay?"

"It pays in as much dick as you can handle."

"Oh yeah?"

"Yes. As much as you want and often as you want."

"Well then, I think I'll be a very rich man."

Ilya's recovery is slower than he'd like, and the Centaurs suffer without him on the ice. But the Boston fans who beat him up get caught on the strip mall's security cameras. They get hit with a lifetime ban from all NHL games and a restraining order, which Ilya is happy with. Shane wishes they'd gotten jail time, but it would've been a headache in the courts, and it's better that they get this all behind them.

Ilya's teammates send him flowers and well-wishes. Shane's parents step in to help while Shane tries to focus on his game and continue his season.

Ilya is cleared for activity in time to watch Shane in the playoffs, his first public appearance since his season ended prematurely. The Montreal fans are nice enough; a polite applause

breaks out when he flashes his toothless smile on the Jumbotron.

"I can't wait for them to put your tooth back in," Shane tells him when they get back home after the game.

"What? You do not like sticking your tongue through my hole?"

"Ew. No, I do not like it when you push my tongue into the spot where your missing tooth is."

"What? I thought you liked it?"

Shane laughs. "No, I really don't. There are some other places, though, that I don't mind sticking my tongue."

Bood hosts a viewing party for the championship game between Boston and Toronto.

Shane is nervous to go. He'd met some of Ilya's teammates in passing, but it was totally different to go to a Centaur's party. To show up in the room as Ilya's boyfriend.

Ilya is quickly surrounded by his teammates checking in on his recovery, goading him about the duties of captain that he tried to maintain over text, sending cheesy memes as inspiration, and shit talking the other teams.

"You know we don't have our phones on the ice." Dykstra jokes. "All the commentary you send in the group chat, we can't read it till after the game."

One of the wives, Cassie, takes pity on Shane and grabs him.

"So, I'm sure you're used to hangin' out with hockey players, but the real fun is with us, the WAGS." Cassie says.

"Shane," Lisa, Wyatt's wife, yells. "Oh great, you're here, we're pulling a prank on Ilya, but we need your help."

The wives welcome him with open arms, and Shane is surprised by how much he has in common. They complain about how ridiculous the Centaur's merch is and about the brutal hockey schedule.

"I can't even imagine. It sucks watching them in pain and not being able to fix it. And it must be even worse for you, I mean, having to leave him for most of the season." Lisa says, after asking about Ilya's recovery.

"Yeah. I mean, I felt awful leaving him at first, but you know my team needed me. I wish I could've stayed with him but," Shane starts.

"But Montreal doesn't stand a chance without you. We get it. We feel the same way about your man." Lisa smiles. "Don't worry. He has us. And if there's ever anything he needs, you just let us know. We're looking out for him, okay?"

Shane smiles. Ilya's team is full of good, kind people. They have a good sense of humor, too. Discreetly, wax is handed out to all the party guests, and by the start of the second period, everyone has blacked out their bottom middle tooth with it.

It takes Ilya a while to notice.

"Bood, you have food in your teeth."

"Oh, do I?" Bood smirks.

"Wait a minute."

Ilya goes around the party, pointing at people asking them to open their mouths.

"You assholes! Oh haha yes, make fun of your poor team captain and his missing tooth." Ilya yells while the rest of the crowd, Shane included, bursts into laughter.

While everyone has their attention on the big screens, as the final minutes of the tied championship game go on, Shane and Ilya lock eyes with each other. Shanes wraps an arm around Ilya's waist, and he doesn't care who sees.

"You know what, I think the missing tooth is kind of growing on me," Shane says.

"Really?"

"No. Absolutely not."

"Good. I want the full set of teeth. Makes it easier to do this." Ilya playfully bites Shane's ear, and Shane lightly slaps him away.

A cheer breaks out throughout the party.

"Is it over? Who won?" Shane asks.

"I think I did." Ilya smiles, sticking his tongue through the gap in his teeth.

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