

Happy Birthday, Ilya!

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/77774941) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/77774941>.

Rating:	General 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 , Harris Drover , Yuna Hollander , David Hollander , Ottawa Centaurs Team Ensemble (Game Changers) , Troy Barrett , Luca Haas
Additional Tags:	Fluff , Birthday , Celebrations , Surprises , Surprise Party , Coming Out , montreal girl , Jane - Freeform , Team Bonding , Shenanigans , Relationship Reveal
Language:	English
Collections:	Anonymous
Stats:	Published: 2026-01-16 Words: 3,689 Chapters: 1/1

Happy Birthday, Ilya!

by Anonymous

Summary

The Centaurs think they've planned the perfect surprise for Ilya's birthday. Instead, they're the ones caught off guard when they discover Shane at their captain's house. Between party prep, team antics, and one very suspicious "Jane", Shane ends up hanging out with the team.

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"They must really love each other," Wyatt said.

"What else?" Bood prompted Shane.

"You hockey boys are a bunch of gossips." Yuna laughed and drank from her wine. She checked on Shane, but he didn't seem to mind the questions.

"Don't you want to know too, Yuna?" Bood asked.

"Maybe. But she's probably very private," Yuna replied.

Notes

no strict timeline. in this au, the boxing day fight and all the events after didn't happen.

enjoy! 💕

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

It was Ilya's birthday, and despite the number of headaches Ilya Rozanov had given him over the years, Harris was planning a surprise party in his honor.

It was just that Ilya had been so... absent lately. He still showed up to practice and team meetings, but he slipped away from team hangouts more often now. He left early and declined invites. At some point, the team had quietly agreed that they missed him so much. There was also no chance Ilya would agree to a birthday party thrown for himself, which was strange considering how cocky he could be. But the team wanted to celebrate with him whether he liked it or not.

So Harris had talked to Coach Wiebe and told him they needed Ilya out of his house that day. He reminded him that the acting had to be convincing because Ilya was too perceptive.

Luca and a few people from the social media team designed birthday posters and little drawings for Ilya. Dykstra volunteered to handle the music, which Harris reassigned to Tanner. There was no way they were ruining the night with his selection of country songs. Bood and Troy would barbecue. Wyatt would help with cooking or setting up tables and chairs. The rest of the team would help Harris with logistics like picking up the cake because there was no universe where he trusted the boys to bake. Harris was fully prepared to babysit all of them. The WAGs had even offered to pick people up if things got messy. Although they'd probably crash at Ilya's place if needed.

By the afternoon, Harris saw Ilya roll into the parking lot in his flashy car, which Harris had learned to appreciate. At least they would hear him coming home later. That would give them time to hide.

"Happy birthday," Harris greeted. "What are your plans tonight, birthday boy?"

"Thank you, Harris, but my birthday is cancelled. Coach is making me work. On my birthday. Was supposed to be my day off."

Harris did his best to look innocent. When Ilya headed into the meeting room with the coaches, he immediately pulled out his phone.

HBD Ilya!!! 🎉

He's here, boys. You set up what you can, I'll be there soon.

Bood arrived first, just as planned, because he was always punctual. And because of that, Harris had given him the code. Because he was expecting an empty house and he was excited to party tonight, he yelled a loud "HIYAAAA!!!" as he turned into the kitchen.

He was met with a shriek, a sharp *Shit!* and Shane Hollander standing in front of the open refrigerator with a hand clutched to his chest. Shane stared at him like he had been caught stealing. Bood felt his pulse spike because that was so embarrassing.

“Oh. Hey, Hollander,” Bood said.

“Hi. Is Ilya with you?” Shane asked as he closed the refrigerator, and looked past Bood.

“No,” Bood said quickly. “The team wanted to surprise him for his birthday. Everyone’s coming over to set up before he gets home. What are you doing here?”

“Um... I figured I’d surprise him too.”

Bood carefully schooled his expression. It was no secret that Ilya and Shane were friends. They set-up the foundation together and some Centaurs even helped out at the summer camps. Bood just had not expected this level of familiarity. Still, it made him smile because it was nice to know Ilya had people outside the team who wanted to celebrate him. He looked around awkwardly, and noticed the groceries on the counter. As well as the cake with some candles.

“Oh shit,” Bood said. “Sorry, man. We weren’t expecting anyone so we brought stuff too. Do you want us to leave or ...? I don’t—”

“No,” Shane said quickly. “No, it’s fine. The more the merrier. Right?”

It was a little awkward, but Bood decided that Shane was being genuine, despite looking like he’s trying to convince himself of that.

“Totally, man. Harris should be here soon. He planned everything so I’m just gonna—”

He trailed off and excused himself, already pulling up the party GC.

HBD Ilya!!! 🎉

Troy: @Harris im here with luca i think theres someone inside

Wyatt: @Troy @Luca thats me man. walking to the door now. where did you park?

Troy: west side near the tree

Wyatt: ok will go there and help carry things

Troy: @Harris do we know if ilya’s gf is coming?? what do we do if she’s there???

Harris: no idea omg!! would this be the day?

@everyone im inside come over now!!!!

FASTER FASTER

PLS PLS PLS



Troy: why???

Troy grunted as he carried a box of party supplies while Wyatt and Luca talked about the movie they watched last night. He couldn't help but feel happy because he is comfortable with a team in a way he hadn't before.

When they reached the front door, Luca knocked and Bood opened it with a tight smile, and he barely heard Bood whisper a playful "Surprise" toward Luca. Troy glanced at Luca, and the kid was wide-eyed, staring at Shane Hollander.

"Hi, Hollander!" Wyatt greeted. Bood and Wyatt had done some coaching at Ilya and Shane's hockey camp over the summer, so they were on speaking terms with him. Troy and Luca, though, only knew Shane from playing against him on the ice.

"Hey! What's up?" Shane came over and helped them with their boxes.

"Good! Did Harris invite you too?" Wyatt asked.

"Ah, no. I was... well, my parents and I also planned a birthday surprise for Ilya."

"Oh, so they're coming over later?" Wyatt smiled, and Shane nodded. They started chatting about this and that. He glanced at Luca, who was still frozen beside him and bumped his shoulder to his.

Yuna wasn't surprised to see the team gathered at Ilya's house for his birthday. Ilya had always told her and David that he liked his new team, so it felt good to meet the people he spent most of his time with.

When Yuna and David arrived, they noticed that Shane kept to himself a little. She guessed he was afraid of being obvious or maybe just nervous around people who cared about Ilya. She pulled him aside and told him to relax. These were people Ilya liked, she said, and this was the point of them being friends in public. Shane seemed to take her advice, because she soon saw him laughing with Bood and Troy while they worked the barbecue, while David and Dykstra carried a ladder to hang the birthday banner. If anyone wondered how the Hollanders knew where Ilya kept his tools, no one said a word.

Yuna could see the effort as they worked diligently. Or maybe they were scared of Harris barking orders. With everything set up, they only had to wait for Ilya. Harris had texted Coach Wiebe to let him go of whatever meeting they busied him with. Some of the team played spikeball in the yard, while others nursed their beer. Conversations drifted to wives, girlfriends, and kids, so Yuna kept an eye on Shane to see if he looked uncomfortable. He seemed the opposite.

“Harris, did you invite Jane?” Dykstra asked suddenly.

“Who’s Jane?” Yuna raised an eyebrow curiously. She hadn’t heard of Jane.

“Jane is Ilya’s girl from Montreal.” Harris explained. “And no, I didn’t know how to contact her.”

“Ah. Her name is Jane.” David mused.

“Have you ever met Jane?” Wyatt turned to Shane.

Shane hesitated, but answered, “Uh, yes.”

Instantly, everyone’s attention was on him.

“Wow!” Bood exclaimed while standing up dramatically. “You are Roz’s BFF!”

If Yuna had a heart attack thinking he was about to say BF, no one can blame her.

Troy waved a hand. “We’ve never met her, but we respect that. It’s his life.”

“Marleau told me he’s been texting her since like rookie season. What’s she like?” asked Dykstra.

“Well... she loves hockey, too. She’s a bit competitive, like Ilya.”

“Is she really in Montreal?” Troy asked. “Is it serious?”

“Yeah, I think so.” Yuna didn’t point out that Shane was asked two questions.

“Long distance must be hard,” Luca said. “But since they’ve been at it for a while, it must be working.”

“They must really love each other,” Wyatt said.

“What else?” Bood prompted Shane.

“You hockey boys are a bunch of gossips.” Yuna laughed and drank from her wine. She checked on Shane, but he didn’t seem to mind the questions.

“Don’t you want to know too, Yuna?” Bood asked.

“Maybe. But she’s probably very private,” Yuna replied.

“The team has a running bet about why Roz won’t introduce her,” Harris shared. “The leading theory is that she must be married.”

David shook his head and said, “Oh, come on. Ilya might be a ladies’ man, but that’s not it.”

“Or she’s very, very famous,” Bood said. “Like a princess.”

Yuna laughed because these Centaurs boys were funny like their captain.

“Do you think she’d wanna attend this party? If she knew?” Wyatt asked.

“I think she’d like it.” Shane answered with a genuine smile.

When Shane excused himself from the conversation, he went inside and pulled out his phone to check the location finder. Ilya was five minutes away and Shane was excited. He felt a bit silly, too. He went back outside and told them where Ilya was. Conversations got cut off mid-sentence in favor of going inside and hiding themselves out of view, crouching behind counters and doorways, trying and failing to stay silent. Harris had to shush them all, holding his phone ready to catch the moment. Not long after, the rumble of a car rolled past the house, and they heard the garage gate whined open.

A few moments later, the front door swung wide, and everyone shouted “Happy birthday!” Party poppers exploded and confetti burst into the air. Shane had briefly thought how they were going to clean that up. But he saw Ilya froze in the doorway, eyes wide and stunned, like a deer caught in headlights, and his mouth formed an O-shape. The surprise gave way to something brighter and almost disbelieving.

“Holy shit,” Ilya said faintly.

Ilya’s eyes lit up, glassy with unshed tears, and when his closest teammates brought the cake forward, crowding around him with loud greetings and crushing bro-hugs, the tears finally spilled over.

“Make a wish, cap,” Wyatt said, clapping him on the shoulder.

“Wish for a Cup!” Dillon yelled.

“Cup! Cup! Cup! Cup!” His teammates chanted.

Ilya shook his head while laughing. “You guys are crazy,” he said, while swiping at his face with the heel of his hand as he tried to pull himself together. Before blowing out the candles, he glanced up and he found Shane across the room. Shane smiled brightly at him, and Ilya leaned in and blew.

“Cake him!” someone shouted.

“No, don’t you—” Ilya protested, but it was too late.

Troy smeared cake across Ilya's cheek. Someone else popped open a bottle of champagne with foam spilling everywhere. Laughters and shouts filled the house. It was messy and ridiculous and perfect, and Shane knew he would think about this night for a long time. In the middle of all the hugging and cheering and backslaps, with cake eaten or smeared onto faces and crumbs littering the floor, Shane and Ilya ended up wrapped around each other.

"Hey, you," Ilya said, his voice teasing.

"Hi," Shane said, squeezing him tighter. "You good?"

"I'm good, moya lyubov," Ilya whispered.

Shane mouthed "Ya tebya lyublyu," without sound. In that moment, he did not care who might see. The Centaurs were loud and rowdy, and he was ninety-nine percent sure no one was paying attention anyway.

"All right, all right," Harris shouted. "Dinner now. Games later."

"Games?" Ilya clarified. "Harris, what is this? Is there clown too?"

Harris narrowed his eyes at him in mock offense, but Ilya just pulled him into a hug. "Thank you," he said quietly, and Shane heard it. "Really. I'm happy." Then shoved Harris away to Troy's direction.

After dinner, when everyone was too full and lazy to do anything except sprawl and argue, Yuna and David excused themselves after giving Ilya a hug. Yuna pulled Shane aside to ask if he wanted to come with them, but he told her he liked the Centaurs and wanted to see them when they were being particularly goofy. Shane did not admit that he mostly also wanted to curl up next to Ilya later, but his parents probably know that.

"Okay," Ilya said, clapping his hands. "I know you animals want to play now, but my dear friend Shane Hollander will give me side-eyes all night if we don't clean up first. Chop-chop."

"You asshole," Shane said fondly, rolling his eyes as he picked up plates and carried them into the kitchen.

By the fifth game, Luca still had an alarming amount of energy.

"Why are you not tired?" Troy asked him.

"I don't know," Luca replied, already reaching for another chip.

They had raided Ilya's pantry and there were far too many Snickers and chips for a bunch of professional athletes.

“Okay,” Harris announced. “Now this is a quiz game.”

The Centaurs groaned in unison.

“It’s a fun quiz,” Harris said defensively. “By the end of this, we’ll know who Ilya’s best friend really is. And Ilya told me the prize for being his best friend is meeting Jane.”

That earned a round of laughter. Well, the boys definitely want to meet Jane, especially that Hollander had confirmed that a Jane really existed.

“I shouldn’t play then,” Shane said casually. “I already met Jane.”

“Special prize for you if you win. Which you won’t, I think.” Ilya challenged.

Harris then proceeded to explain the game, and the app where they’ll answer, and showed them the game code on the TV screen. Names began popping up on the TV as people joined.

PLAYERS

Z. Bood
Jane
real jaaaaane
jane from montreal
roz is so sexy
stanley ftw
coach wiebe the goat
princess jane
rozy’s dog
Jane Rozanov
ily ilya
chiron
ilya’s bear

“Roz is so sexy?” Ilya read aloud. “Correct. He wins the game, who that is.”

“Coach Wiebe the goat?” Harris muttered. “I hate you people.”

“Wait,” Bood said. “We didn’t have to use our real names?”

“Yeah,” Harris confirmed. “Whatever you want.”

“You didn’t say that!” Bood complained. “I was the first one to enter.”

“Ain’t that be funny if you placed last.” Tanner mused.

“There’s too many Janes!” Troy observed. “Be more creative guys.”

Ilya leaned back on the couch. “I feel very loved. Many Janes.”

He leaned toward Shane sitting beside him. “Hey, Hollander. What’s your name on there?”

Shane angled his phone away while Ilya pouted. Luca watched them from the other end of the couch and decided they were very cute friends.

“Ready?” Harris said. “First question.”

#1. If Roz could have any pet in the world, what would he pick?

- a) Dog
- b) Cat
- c) Rabbit
- d) Snake

Everyone got it right. When the rankings flashed, the fastest ones were:

- 1. real jaaaaane
- 2. chiron
- 3. ily ilya

“That was easy,” Ilya complained. “Everyone knows that.”

#5) How many penalty minutes did Roz have last season?

- a) 100
- b) 72
- c) 88
- d) 64

When the rankings as of that round got revealed again, Hollander asked seriously, “How many questions left?”

“Chill, Hollander! You’re so competitive!” Ilya teased.

#10) Which player in the league does Roz not like the most?

- a) Hayden Pike
- b) Dallas Kent
- c) Shane Hollander
- d) Scott Hunter

“Which player in the league does Roz not like the most?” Harris read, already wincing. “For the record, this is a joke, Shane. Like we know you guys are friends now...”

“It’s okay. I get it.” Shane assured him.

“Vote Hollander, everyone!” Bood yelled.

“You just want us to lose,” Luca told him, and clicked Dallas Kent on his phone.

When the final rankings appeared, Z. Bood placed third and he bragged loudly about being the only one brave enough to use his real name. Second place was ily ilya, which earned cheers and suspicious looks between the players.

“I’m not revealing the winner unless i love you ilya confesses,” Harris said.

“It’s me, but it’s not that. I just think the name’s witty.” Luca admitted meekly. I mean, he liked their captain, but not like that. They laughed and cheered for him, and someone locked his head to ruffled his hair.

“Okay,” Harris said. “Calm down. Winner reveal.”

“I bet it’s one of the Janes,” Wyatt said. “They’re so many, it must be.”

“Are you also a Jane?” Troy asked. “Because I’m one of the Janes.”

“I thought you were Chiron. I’m the coach wiebe one,” Dykstra admitted.

The TV flashed, and showed the winner as: jane from montreal.

A party music was blasted and someone turned the volume up too high. Luca had no idea what was happening because someone was blowing a party horn directly into his ear, and a few of the boys climbed onto the couch and danced like they were at a bar.

When things finally settled, Harris turned the volume down. “All right,” he said. “Who’s *jane from montreal*?”

“Come on, Troy! Go get it!” Wyatt shouted.

“I’m pretty sure that is not me. I’m Princess Jane!” he shouted back.

“Jesus!” Tanner exclaimed. “Wait, I am also a Jane but I forgot which one.”

“You idiot. You would know if you win or not, man. Just check the app.” Bood yelled. Luca thinks they’re going from tipsy to drunk now. Luca silently wished he won’t babysit these men.

“Well?” Harris was met with silence. After a beat, he added, “Well, I can check your apps individually.”

“It’s me,” Hollander said suddenly. Luca concluded that Shane probably drank too much that night because he was blushing furiously.

It was close to midnight when they drifted into second snacks, picking at leftovers straight from containers. Bood reheated some pizza and Tanner passed around chips that had gone slightly stale. They were tired in a good way, worn out from too many games and too much laughing, but no one seemed ready to end the night.

Harris tried to suggest one more game and was immediately drowned out by groans. “No,” Troy said flatly. “I will fall asleep on the floor and you will have to carry me.”

Shane watched Ilya from across the room. He looked relaxed, smiling, surrounded by his team. The days leading up to Ilya’s birthday were always hard. Ilya had told him once, late at night, how birthdays used to be loud and warm and full of food and laughter when he was a kid. How everything had felt right until it hadn’t. How he still missed his mother so much sometimes.

Shane didn’t see Ilya slip away but he noticed when he was gone. He found him in his bedroom, standing by the window, looking out at the dark river beyond the house. The noise from the living room muffled and distant. Shane hesitated in the doorway, unsure how to approach Ilya.

“I, um,” Shane said. “They’re a good team.”

Ilya turned his head slightly with a smile ghosting over his face. “Yeah.”

“I spent the whole afternoon with them,” Shane went on, hands slipping into his pockets. “I don’t know if they were just being polite or what. I feel like some of them were surprised to see me and my parents here. But a few of them have been to our camps, so it wasn’t completely new.”

Ilya nodded. “I love them.”

“I’m sorry if…” Shane swallowed. “Harris told me they missed you a lot. You don’t go out with them as much anymore. I feel like I had something to do with that.”

Ilya turned fully then. He crossed the room and kissed Shane’s forehead. “Nothing to apologize for, sweetheart.”

“Do you want to tell them who Jane is?”

Ilya was quiet for a moment. “Yeah,” he said finally. “I think I want to. But I can wait. It’s okay if you don’t want them to know yet. I’m just happy you got to know them. Sometimes it feels like they already know you. When they ask me about Jane. I talk about her a lot.”

Shane smiled and wrapped his arms around him. “Tell them, Ilya,” he said. “Tell them I’m Jane.”

When they went back to the living room together, some of the guys were sprawled across couches, half-asleep, phones glowing in their hands. Luca was sitting on the floor, scrolling through something and laughing to himself. Troy and Wyatt were arguing quietly, and Bood had his head tipped back, staring at the ceiling like he might actually fall asleep there.

Ilya cleared his throat.

“Everyone,” he said. “Jane is coming, by the way.”

“What?”

“Jane?”

“From Montreal?”

“Now?”

“Tonight?”

“How?”

“Are you serious?”

“You can leave now. Bye-bye. Thank you. Hurry, please.” Ilya answered.

“You want us to leave now?” Troy yelled.

“How could you do this to us?” Bood said dramatically.

“We’ll camp outside,” Wyatt added. “I swear.”

“But also,” Luca said, squinting. “Are you actually serious? Should we leave?”

Ilya held up his hands. “Since I love you all,” he said. “You can stay.”

“Nah, you’re kidding. She’s not coming.” Dykstra concluded, and the team agreed with him, going back to their phones and conversations. Ilya chuckled to himself. Ilya thought he’d wait and announce when they were all sleepy, but he couldn’t.

He cleared his throat. “Boys,” he said. “I want you to know...” The team looked up.

“He,” Ilya said, pulling Shane gently beside him, “is my boyfriend.” And he kissed Shane.

It was silent at first, followed by variations of, “ARE YOU FUCKING KIDDING ME?!”

It was so loud and chaotic. Someone laughed so hard they knocked someone and some things over. Someone else shouted something completely unintelligible right as party horns blared and confetti cannons went off. Shane hid his face on Ilya’s neck, and Ilya was laughing too with their arms wrapped around each other.

End Notes

did i write a bday fic bc its my bday? yes i did. 🎉

thanks for reading and i hope you enjoyed this. kudos and comments are much appreciated!

edit: thank you so much for all the bday greetings!! 🥳

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