

worth it all (and then some)

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/77818511) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/77818511>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid
Relationship:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Shane Hollander , Ilya Rozanov , Zane Boodram , Ottawa Centaurs Team Ensemble (Game Changers)
Additional Tags:	Mpreg , Male Pregnancy , Alpha/Beta/Omega Dynamics , Married Couple , Married Life , Postpartum Depression , Male Lactation , stretchmarks , Weight Issues , Body Image , Hurt/Comfort , Alpha Ilya Rozanov , Omega Shane Hollander , Post-Book 6: The Long Game (Game Changers)
Language:	English
Series:	Part 2 of hollanov parenthood adventure ✨
Collections:	Anonymous
Stats:	Published: 2026-01-17 Words: 3,476 Chapters: 1/1

worth it all (and then some)

by Anonymous

Summary

With his emotions jumping all over the place, Shane felt vulnerable and exposed. There were pictures out there on twitter of him the night Sofia was born that who even knows who took them. It wasn't like he wasn't used to dealing with the media. Or even that he wasn't used to strangers taking pictures of him— it was just that he was not in the mood for it.

Or, Shane is postpartum and he's going through it.

Notes

hi! i also wanted to note that shane struggles with breastfeeding, has pp, and is just straight up not having a good time in some parts of this so yeah i just wanted to put that out there but also it does get better for him <3

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

Hockey superstar Shane Hollander spotted out and about downtown without his other half strolling with his newborn shortly after their birth. Neither Hollander or Captain Ilya Rozanov of the Ottawa Centaurs have made a public post about the birth of their child.

Are they hiding something? Is this pup a result of a scandal? More as this story develops.

Oh yeah, Shane looked terrible in that. Like really bad. They couldn't have picked a worse picture actually. But even more so, there was an implication hanging in the air like a cloud of toxic fumes overhead that his daughter *wasn't* Ilya's.

Which was hilarious even if it really wasn't. Laughable that there was even the slightest notion of the sweet powder fresh bundle on his chest was anyone else's but Ilya's. Her soft curls that were sticking up five different directions currently from the angle her head was pressed against his chest could be attributed all to her papa.

Even the way Sofia slept bunched up into a little ball with her face smushed against his chest almost as if she wanted to make a home in his skin— it was just like her papa's way of sleeping. They were practically twins at this point.

So, the mere notion that Shane had even been carrying anyone else's pup had been hard to even hear at first. *Especially* being freshly postpartum sitting in a hospital bed trying his hardest to get Sofia to latch when she just wouldn't.

With his emotions jumping all over the place, Shane felt vulnerable and exposed. There were pictures out there on twitter of him the night Sofia was born that who even knows who took them.

It wasn't like he wasn't used to dealing with the media. Or even that he wasn't used to strangers taking pictures of him— it was just that he was *not* in the mood for it.

The media ate him up and spit him back out on a daily basis, they either praised Shane for all his accomplishments or berated and belittled him for leaving Montréal *still*. There was just no pleasing some people and he struggled with accepting that even to this day. It was something he had been working towards in therapy but alas having a newborn kinda sorta took up their every waking moment.

Shane continued to scroll, much to his better judgment.

Will Hollander be playoff ready next year? The omega recently having had a pup is expected to return sometime in late August early September but will that be enough? Does Hollander have it in him to be a parent and have a family?

The comments under the post were becoming blurry as Shane continued to read somewhere in between reading the article that was picking him apart piece by piece and the people agreeing underneath.

A slight burning sensation brought him out of the trance he had fallen into, Sofia's angry little noises alerting him to his hungry pup who was *not* getting much out of his aching chest— it was aching for a number of reasons but he neatly tucked those away in the back of his mind for now.

“Sorry, sorry I know you're hungry.” Shane apologized, wiping his eyes with the back of his free hand as he lifted his shirt and guided his newborn to his chest.

A wince escaped his lips as soon as he felt the latch and he had to bite his lower lip to keep from startling Sofia. It felt like shards of glass being scraped across his chest, a stinging sensation that lingered never fading.

The lactation consultant in the hospital had reassured him that this was normal, that there would be some chaffing that he would even crack or bleed but this- this was borderline unbearable. And no matter how much of that stupid cream or whatever that they had given him at his last checkup didn't even help, it only made the burning sensation worse.

Shane had been so far in his own head that he hadn't even realized that Sofia was barely getting anything at all. Shortly after she began feeding, she started squirming around with dissatisfied little grunts which soon turned in a soft wail that would build and build until-

Ilya was already at the doorway, still in his running clothes, sweat clinging to his skin as he crossed the room in a few strides with a bottle ready in hand. Shane breathed out a shaky sigh of relief, their fingers overlapping for a second as his husband passed him the bottle but it wouldn't budge.

“You go lay down, I'm going to feed her. You need rest right now.” Ilya murmured against Shane's soft locks, haphazardly strewn about his sleepy head.

It was true. Sleep was something Shane struggled with nowadays when there wasn't any reason at all for him to have a lack of it, especially not with an alpha like he had. Ilya was the one behind the scenes making sure everything ran so Shane could recover, the best alpha and husband anyone could ever ask for.

Any semblance of a protest was quieted by Ilya's lips against his own, a tender kiss to calm his senses and persuade him to go rest.

The bags under the omega's eyes were growing by the minute, his eyelids heavy with sleep. Shane reluctantly stood from the all too comfortable rocking chair that his dad had handbuilt for Sofia's nursery, passing their baby girl over.

With a heavy sigh, Shane peeled his shirt off to get a fresh shirt on seeing as the one he had was now stained with milk. The sticky sensation was literally making him want to peel his skin off but unfortunately that would be socially unacceptable and impossible so he would have to settle for a new t-shirt preferably Ilya's.

As Shane passed by the full length mirror, he caught sight of his own reflection, cringing for a second because it felt like he didn't recognize the person looking back at him.

This didn't feel like *his* body. It felt like he was just a passenger in all of this.

Faint angry red looking marks were now permanently etched into his skin in various places that almost seemed cruel to have them in. Shane hadn't noticed the ones on the backs of his thighs where the curve of his ass met his inner thigh and— *god they were ugly*.

Ilya had to look at *those*? They were hideous. Why hadn't his alpha said anything about them?

Shane wasn't able to recall the moment his eyes had begun to water, the mirror now blurry in his vision. Fuck, how did he let himself go *this* bad?

It was hard for him to remember why his body was like this, that he had grown an entire human being inside his body for nine months — so yeah, things would be different he just didn't expect his body to change this much.

Stepping into the shower, Shane turned the water all the way on hot feeling it scorching his skin practically. It felt good to just stand there under the water and let it run down his body, grabbing a washcloth to scrub away the stretch marks that were forever etched into his skin.

Shane let out a light whimper whenever his hand brushed against his still painfully full chest having to resort to hand expressing in the shower, letting the wasted milk wash down the drain with the soap and water.

He was a failure. He couldn't even give his baby the one thing his body was good for.

"Ottawa leads 2-1 against the admirals in the home opener. Our very own Shane Hollander has recently given birth to our newest tiniest addition to the Centaur family. We just wanted to congratulate him and Ilya on their baby girl." Thomas their beloved broadcaster congratulated them through his screen, the glow from the tv the only thing illuminating the otherwise dark living room.

Shane was still in a lot of pain from having torn from such a quick birth that it was hard even sitting upright for very long periods of time without his special cushion under him which was embarrassing in itself but Ilya insisted that it didn't look like a donut- when it infact looked like one. He stayed home with their now five week old daughter watching Ilya through a screen celebrating the start of the newest season with their team.

Time was already a thief. How was she already *that* old? It just felt like yesterday that he had went into labor— just yesterday that she was still apart of his body curled up safe and sound inside him. But she wasn't, she was here and growing everyday.

"Shh, look hey papa just got an assist on Uncle Troy's goal and he pointed to the camera just for you." Shane bounced Sofia in his arms gently, trying to soothe his colicky infant as she squirmed in her daddy's arms dissatisfied with the lack of milk she was getting.

"Here, sorry to interrupt your dinner forgive me. I just thought you might wanna see papa." Shane pressed a kiss to Sofia's dark curls as he lifted her to his chest and held her there as she began to nurse, soft noises being the only other thing he could hear besides the commercial break.

Ilya appeared on screen for the first period interview and a big smile on his face that could rival the sun itself.

"So Ilya what's it like having scored a goal and an assist for your first game back as a dad?" Amelia their ice level broadcaster pointed the microphone towards the alpha who gladly answered.

"It feels amazing. I still feel like she was just born yesterday." Ilya said in between breaths, sweating from just getting off the ice.

"I bet she's at home watching you, huh?" Amelia teased with a smile, a picture of Shane and Ilya with a fresh Sofia in their arms showing up on the screen for everyone watching at home.

It was a picture they had put up on their Instagram the day after she was born so it wasn't something the public hadn't ever seen but it still felt so personal, seeing himself drained of all color with his hair matted to his forehead—he looked like he had been ran over by a zamboni. But there was so much raw joy in that picture it was so special to him.

Ilya's smile grew ten times if that was even possible at the mere mention of Sofia.

"Actually she is probably watching dancing fruit and being the best baby for her daddy. She gets that from me obviously." Ilya bragged, he couldn't help it. They got lucky with how Sofia would calm down as soon as they either put a hockey game on or those weird dancing fruit videos on YouTube. There would be times even he would be glued to the screen oddly enough.

The way Ilya was actually spot on was uncanny.

The game ended and all their commentators did was talk about the newest little Centaur which made his chest swell with pride because their daughter was already so loved by everyone around them.

He wanted her to know nothing but the warmth of their inner circle and— fuck, he was crying *again*. It felt like everytime he even so much as thought about Sofia facing the adversity of the outside world he felt that tightening feeling in his throat and his vision would get blurry. It felt like everything made him cry at the drop of a hat. There would be times that he would end up crying over nothing.

It was mildly annoying and he knew he should probably talk to someone but this was part of having a baby right? Postpartum was just a lot of feelings and running on little to no sleep—at least that's what he thought it was.

Then there was sundown. Shane had the curtains drawn because even just glancing outside to see the sun setting made him...sad. He wasn't sure why but Ilya playing a game right now probably didn't help with that but he insisted that Ilya played tonight. He couldn't miss this and Shane felt like he could pull himself together.

Somewhere around the winning goal and the post game interviews, Shane had dozed off and woken up to himself in bed.

Oh god what had happened? He was definitely on the couch holding Sofia nursing her. There was no way he could've went to bed.

"Sweetheart, hey it's okay." It was Ilya, the feeling of panic and relief flooded his system all at one time and tears began gathering in his eyes again.

"Did I- Did I fall asleep?" Shane stammered, his breathing finally slowing but only by a little as he tried to walk himself through the motions of what had happened — he walked up the stairs by himself and put Sofia in her bedside bassinet, right?

If that was the case then he didn't remember it and he didn't know what was worse not remembering or falling asleep with her in his arms.

But Ilya was looking at him with such kind eyes, no blame in them just love. There were some underlying hints of worry there which fair enough he was trying his hardest not to let the glue that had been holding him together finally dissolve.

"Look at me, it is okay. Sofia is okay. You are okay." Ilya murmured gently, rubbing a thumb against his cheek as he sat up in bed.

Sofia. Where was she?

The omega squinted, sleep still evident in his eyes as he rubbed at them quickly trying to make out the sleeping swaddled cocoon shape in the bassinet. "You got her to sleep? How?"

"She was still full so I gave her a nighttime bath and she fell asleep. Was not too hard, especially since she was milk drunk. I am very jealous." Ilya teased, trying to make light of the situation. He wasn't going to tell Shane the panic that shocked his system like ice when he walked in from the game to see his omega on the couch with Sofia asleep on his chest.

Ilya knew Shane was exhausted but he didn't realize *just* how exhausted he was or he wouldn't have played that night. And Shane knew that.

"I can't believe I fell asleep- I was holding her and I dozed off and- oh my god I could have *dropped* her." Shane's eyes watered as he bit his lip to keep himself from bursting into tears which he eventually did anyways.

"She's okay, she was asleep too when I walked in. Actually she got mad at me because I took her off your chest, I had to practically pry your arm off of her you had a good grip." Ilya had been surprised that their pup hadn't been awake because she definitely had her nights and days mixed up still but she had been so soundly sleeping that he felt bad for moving her.

Shane still felt terrible the rest of the night and ended up staying awake watching Ilya and Sofia sleep.

It took a hot minute for Shane to realize he needed to talk to his therapist about his postpartum feelings. That it *was* normal to feel different after giving birth, apparently it was equal to experiencing a trauma which would make sense actually physically and somewhat mentally how he felt.

It wasn't a bad thing to dread simple tasks and that he wasn't broken for not being the *biggest* fan of breastfeeding.

It got Sofia fed but he wasn't making nearly enough between pumping and nursing skin to skin which didn't do any favors for his mood.

That was when Ilya suggested something that felt akin to walking into a lion's den.

"We could use formula? The kind that Dr. Park said was good milk. It would not be the end of the world if she drank that." Ilya suggested, holding his breath because Shane hadn't had much sleep he tried to make him, he really did but Shane was obsessed with trying to research ways to produce more.

Shane pressed the off button on his pump wordlessly before getting up to press his face against his alpha's chest. A warm patch against Ilya's chest signaled that he was crying.

"I can't- I just can't make as much as she needs. Dr. Park said she needs to go up an ounce and there isn't anymore that I *can* give." Shane felt useless but Ilya always seemed to have a good answer. His husband always knew just what to say.

"I guess I drank it all." Ilya shrugged lightly, pressing his lips to Shane's soft locks. "But really, I don't think it would be bad idea." He knew this much it meant to Shane but he also was aware of the emotional and physical toll it took on him too.

"I can do more night bottles for Sofa, you can get more beauty sleep and before we both know it you will be cup champion again."

It wasn't really the first time Shane had thought about using formula either.

Of course there was the whole 'fed is best motto' that was plastered around the doctor's offices and on all the baby care websites.

To Shane, that felt like he was failing to feed his own pup. Like he couldn't provide what she needed and it chipped away at him slowly until well...this.

"What if she doesn't like it? What if she starves and I dry up then what?" Shane had already compiled a list of pros and cons long before this conversation but Ilya already knew that.

"Shane, *moya lyubov* it will be okay. She will survive- we will survive. And when she gets bigger like I said just blame it on me." Ilya smirked, earning a gentle half hearted whack to the chest.

"Fine, yeah we can try it."

About a month later or so later, Shane was feeling somewhat back to his normal self. They were doing good actually. Don't get him wrong though, he still struggled from time to time with his body image.

It still was rather jarring looking into the mirror when he would get undressed and there were times he would quickly change in the locker room now that he was back to practicing in a bright red no contact jersey still — it was a lot better than nothing.

"Pass her on over I wanna see lil' bit." Bood reached for the bundled up pup in a fuzzy bear bunting suit.

Ilya claimed it made her look fierce so no one would want to snatch her, which of course Shane had to roll his eyes at when he had bought it.

"She's a little fussy, she's been teething a little-"

"And missing her papa, I know I have missed you too *Solnyshko*." Ilya skated past as soon as Shane handed Sofia to Bood, she blinked at him with her little unimpressed stare identical to her papa's — they could be twins with every facial expression she made.

Bood chuckled at the look the pup was giving him and did a lap around the ice, hoping that would bring a smile to her little face. "Hollzy were you even in the room when she was made?"

Shane turned bright red. Even after their team knowing they were *very* out, *very* married, and clearly had a baby to prove that they were not celibate whatsoever — it still made him blush harder than ever whenever it was brought up in casual conversation which wasn't as often as one would think.

The tiny bear bundle began to fuss a little and Bood eventually handed her over to Ilya who more than gladly accepted her into his arms, peppering her little face with kisses. "Mwah, mwah, mwah! Papa will eat you up!" The alpha could be heard overexaggerating every kiss, the biggest grin on his face that made a *very* tiny voice in the back of Shane's head almost want to give him about a dozen more just to see that smile on his husband's face.

Little giggles could be heard as Ilya raced from one side of the ice to the other over and over again. Shane watched from the sidelines, a soft smile on his lips taking a video of the moment so he could keep it forever.

Moments like this were what made Shane get slight amnesia over, forgetting all the emotions that came with being pregnant, giving birth, and going through postpartum — all of that faded to the background when he watched his husband with their pup.

Yeah, this was all worth it and then some.

End Notes

i wanted to write shane going through postpartum and this came about as like a second part to my first fic 'let's win the cup, baby!' it can definitely be read as a standalone though <3 thank you so much for reading, hope you enjoy!

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