

Important to Me

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/77889531) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/77889531>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Heated Rivalry (TV) , Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid
Relationships:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov , Scott Hunter & Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Ilya Rozanov , Shane Hollander , Yuna Hollander , David Hollander , Scott Hunter (Game Changers)
Additional Tags:	Coming Out , Post-Episode: s01e06 The Cottage (Heated Rivalry) , Ilya and Scott's Bromance
Language:	English
Series:	Part 2 of Ilya's Big Gay Bromance
Stats:	Published: 2026-01-18 Words: 2,134 Chapters: 1/1

Important to Me

by [Jockles](#)

Summary

Maybe the fact that he talked to Hunter wasn't the end of the world. Maybe he didn't have to pretend it never happened. Maybe if he was irritating enough about it Shane would drop the subject.

Notes

This will be confusing if you haven't read part 1 in the series.
How terrible, I had to rewatch episode 6 twice for research purposes.

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

“Have you talked to Scott Hunter?” David asked.

“Ilya has,” Shane said, and Ilya chewed up his pasta and swallowed as fast as he could.

“Yes, we spoke after MVP award. Was good.”

“And? What did he say?” Yuna asked.

“Nothing. I didn’t tell him about *us*,” Ilya gestured between him and Shane, “but I said was important, what he did. Important to me.”

Shane leaned sideways and knocked his shoulder against Ilya’s, wordless support. Shane had been little mad at first when Ilya said what he’d done, but he had come to realise that Ilya understood the value of private support under intense public pressure in a way that Shane never could. Ilya had felt the fear and loneliness much more keenly in Russia and among the other Russian players that he was supposed to be close to than Shane had in the relatively progressive Canada, even if Hockey itself was much more of a minefield.

“Wait, you came out to Scott Hunter in a room full of hockey pundits?” Yuna’s PR brain had clearly just kicked into high gear and Ilya knew that he had to slow that one down.

“No! We had, what was his word, nightcap. After the party. Was very late, nobody saw us.”

“But you didn’t say anything about Shane? Are you ashamed of him?”

“Mom, no. Come on. He was protecting me. He knows we can’t be out.” Shane’s hand crept over to Ilya’s thigh and gave him a grounding squeeze. “I lost my shit today when you guys found out, do you really think Ilya would do that to me when I wasn’t there? To a guy I barely know?”

“Shane, she is right to be worried. She has watched me talk to the press and be very crazy. But I have never talked about things that were not my business, and I will not start now.” Ilya put his hand atop Shane’s and squeezed as tight as he could. Shane’s eyes turned to meet his.

“No, Ilya I’m sorry,” Yuna said. “I just don’t really know what the boundaries are here. What you two decide about this is up to you.”

“Yuna, we can’t ask them to run it by you every time they want to talk about their relationship with someone else. This isn’t a PR campaign, this is their life.” David, who usually didn’t get involved in these intense hockey business discussions between mother and son spoke up.

Shane had pulled his hand out from under Ilya’s while his parents had been talking, but now he was letting out a long breath and putting his head down on the table. Ilya dropped his cutlery and put a hand on Shane’s back.

“Shane, Shane. Hey, is okay.”

“Don’t worry, I’m just freaking out.”

“Is okay, we don’t have to talk to Scott hunter. I will never talk to him again if you like. Not even chirp on the ice. Is how much I love you.” Ilya couldn’t help it — trying to lighten the conversation with some humour, but Shane was still clearly spiralling. His hand reached out to rub Shane’s back, and he could feel the way that Shane was vibrating with tension.

Everything else fell away for a moment.

“Hey hey hey, hey. Is ok. You’re safe here. Your family is here. Your boyfriend is here. You are good here, okay?”

“My... My boyfriend?”

“Da. I mean, I think so. We are monogamous, yes?”

“Where the hell did you learn the word monogamous?”

“Scott Hunter, he is trying to give me relationship advice. I tell him that we do not have to send letters to each other like the dark ages so his advice is very bad.”

Shane laughed and Ilya let himself relax a fraction. Shane was still laying with his head on the table, but his face was turned toward Ilya. His eyes were frightened, but Ilya was right there. He crowded closer and kissed him gently, only absently hearing Shane’s parents murmuring to each other while he focused in on Shane.

They made it back to the cottage together, a strange euphoric delirium filling them both as they laughed in the car. Ilya could feel that his own feelings were teetering on the edge of sobbing, but Shane couldn’t drive if his eyes were full of tears and first they had to get home safe, so he held himself together as hard as he could.

Shane unlocked the cottage door and let them both in, and in facsimile of the way they’d fallen on each other when Ilya first arrived, they crashed together in a tight embrace. There was no passion - not in the way that they’d shared before, but Ilya let his tears fall as Shane’s body started to shake with the release of pressure and pent-up emotion.

For a moment Ilya wasn’t sure if he loved or hated that his upbringing only let him cry for a minute before he was pulling himself back together, and he was soon shepherding his boyfriend onto the couch. Shane sat down slowly, not letting go of Ilya, and so he couldn’t help but follow him, barely avoiding actually landing on top of Shane as they went. After a moment of rearranging —Shane’s hands never truly leaving Ilya’s body—Ilya was tucked into the corner of the couch with Shane draped across him, his face buried in the gap between his neck and the cushion, and his ragged breathing starting gradually to slow as Ilya’s arms wrapped around him with tight, constant pressure.

“Fuck. Sorry. I didn’t mean to—”

“Hush, Hollander. You’re allowed to be feeling some big things. I think maybe if I was also coming out to my father I would cry like a baby.”

“That’s different and you know it.”

“Okay, then I think maybe I would feel the same way if I was saying it to my mother. She is very important, and I would feel a lot of pressure for it to be right. Even if everything is fine, it is a lot of pressure.” Ilya swallowed through the lump in his throat that was threatening to burst free at the thought of his mother. He wondered if thinking about Shane meeting her would ever leave him feeling anything other than completely hollowed out.

“Yeah. But you said she was just like you. Smart and funny and kind. She would still love you.”

“Shane, you will also make me cry. Please, stop.”

“Okay. I’ll stop. I love you.”

“I love you, Shane Hollander.”

There was a long pause while Shane's breathing evened out completely, and they sat together in companionable silence.

“Did Scott really give you dating advice? You said you talked to him and thanked him, but you never told me exactly what you talked about.”

“I think I was still worried about coming here. To the Cottage. I knew that I wanted it to mean that we were more, but I was still scared. I think Hunter saw that. And I said you were too beautiful so you couldn’t follow me to my games without people noticing.”

“Ilya, what the fuck. You can’t just say that about a guy to another guy.”

“But is true! You are very beautiful and people will notice if you follow me to my hockey games. Mostly because you will not be playing your hockey games and then I will be hunted down by angry Canadians.”

“You’re ridiculous.”

“Oh, and he saw your text. He thinks you are very horrible because you make me wear Voyageurs shirt even when I’m perfectly innocent and very nice.”

“Of all the players in the league Scott is the last one to call you innocent. And I don’t know why I didn’t follow through when you clearly did antagonise him.”

“Eh, I think he still likes me. He gave me his number. And I have number of his boyfriend also. He said that you can also text him, if you want. Maybe you and Kip start your own WAG group. Wait no, you are HABs. WA-HA-GA-Bs. No, is too much. Just HABs.”

“Really, even not knowing who I am?”

“He is very nice, almost makes me think he is secretly wanting to be Canadian. Is why I think you will get along, he is nice and boring and talks to the press like good hockey boy who has never done anything wrong.”

“Alright then. Gimme.”

“Wait, first I must threaten him not to steal you away because you are so irresistible and perfect.”

“Rozanov, give it here.” Shane reached out to where Ilya’s long arm was holding the phone away and they wrestled for it for a few moments, before it dissolved into a very different kind of wrestling.

Later that evening, when they had sheepishly realised that they had, in fact, been interrupted by a warning call from Shane’s parents before they came over with more food and had shared a much more casual dinner together, Shane brought up Scott again.

“Have you actually talked to him since the awards show at all?”

“No, we don’t have much to talk about. Not every gay hockey player has to be best friends.”

“No but, you seemed more settled after you talked to him in June. Not much, but a bit. I think you should talk to him more. Be nice.”

“Shane, if I am nice to him he will think someone has stolen my phone.”

Shane gave an exasperated sigh, but he was smiling at Ilya and he knew that this man still found him endearing.

“Text him now. Tell him that his advice worked. Or tell him that I was very impressed with your use of the word monogamous.”

“Nooo, I want to go to bed with my sexy boyfriend, I do not want to think about dinosaur.”

“Just do it. He probably won’t text back. It’s late he’s probably already be asleep.”

“Fine, but I will tell him it is your idea.”

“Oh god, he’s gonna think I’m some kind of nagging wife. I’ll never be able to face him across the ice again.”

Ilya let Shane be while he unlocked his phone and looked at the contact that he’d saved. Scott had insisted that he text once already so that Scott also had his number, but since then he’d ignored it.

Ilya: save me as ‘best hockey player’

Old Man Scott: thank you for your number Ilya, and good luck with Jane.

Old Man Scott: Here’s Kip’s contact, he says you can both add him if you want to talk.

He stared at the heading, the reflected glow of the screen barely enough light for him to see Shane’s face, but he was smiling. Perhaps this wouldn’t be so bad, if it made Shane happy like this.

Ilya: Jane says hello

Ilya: He thinks that we should be friends. I don't think he understands hockey as well as he thought.

"Ilya! You — There are whole twitter accounts dedicated to my hockey IQ you take that back."

"You don't understand rivalry. I mean look, you have rivalry one time and end up fucking. I do not do this with my other rivals. Like Scott Hunter."

Old Man Scott: Rivalries can stay on the ice, Ilya. Just because your whole personality is how much you hate Hollander doesn't mean it's like that for everyone.

Old Man Scott: Also, hello Jane. I'm sure Ilya said but you can text or call me or kip whenever if you need something.

"See, Scott agrees with me." Shane was leaning over Ilya's shoulder, reading avidly.

"Nooo, you cannot say I have to make friends with him and then be together against me. Is very rude."

"Tell Scott that I'll text Kip. I, uh. I think Scott actually already has my number so that one might not work. Or at least, there's a not-zero chance he could get hold of it. That would let the cat out of the bag if he realised he already had my number saved."

Ilya: Jane says he will message Kip because the Admirals suck and you're too old.

Old Man Scott: Honestly based on the one message I've seen from him you might not be lying

Ilya: is true, he is a cruel man that holds many grudges.

Old Man Scott: Ah great, Kip says he's looking forward to talking to anyone who can keep up with Ilya Rozanov.

Old Man Scott: Apparently your reputation precedes you

Ilya: Perhaps his hockey education is actually okay if he knows me. Make sure he watches more Boston games so that he knows what hockey is supposed to look like.

Old Man Scott: don't you have anything better to do in the bedroom than chirp at me? I'm going to bed. Have a good summer.

End Notes

:vibrating: I am not done with this universe. I keep thinking of things.

Kudos and Comments directly fuel my writing as they do the writing of all your favs. Don't forget that.

I have a [HR fic sharing discord server](#) - come and join and share your works with some cool cats!

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