

a load of lies

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/78081851) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/78081851>.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid , Heated Rivalry (TV)
Relationships:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov , Troy Barrett/Harris Drover , Minor or Background Relationship(s)
Characters:	Shane Hollander , Ilya Rozanov , Troy Barrett , Harris Drover , Zane Boodram , Evan Dykstra , Wyatt Hayes , Luca Haas , Nick Chouinard , Tanner Dillon , Boyle (Game Changers) , Holmber (Game Changers) , LaPointe (Game Changers) , Young (Game Changers)
Additional Tags:	Ottawa Centaurs (Game Changers) , Texting , Social Media , Crack , Crack Treated Seriously , Fluff and Crack , Humor , Fluff and Humor , Domestic Fluff , Domestic Bliss , Post-Book 6: The Long Game (Game Changers) , Married Couple , Ilya Rozanov Loves Shane Hollander , Shane Hollander Loves Ilya Rozanov , Married Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov , Domestic Kink , Shane Hollander Walks Ilya Rozanov Like A Dog, (literally) , POV Outsider (kind of) , Mixed Media , Ilya Rozanov is a Menace , Ilya Rozanov is a Little Shit , Ilya Rozanov is Whipped , loverboy ilya rozanov , Shane Hollander is Obsessed With Ilya Rozanov , Ilya Rozanov is Obsessed With Shane Hollander , Shane Hollander is a Little Shit , Found Family , Unconventional Format , Tooth-Rotting Fluff , Romantic Fluff , Texting Fic , Post-Canon , Established Relationship , Shane Hollander Speaks Russian
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2026-01-23 Words: 5,716 Chapters: 1/1

a load of lies

by [badmetaphors](#)

Summary

"You are doing this on purpose," Ilya accused.

Shane looked up, perfectly innocent. "Doing what on purpose?"

"The—" Ilya gestured. "This. The—the organizing."

"The organizing that I do. Every Thursday. Like I have for the entire time we've been together."

"You know what you're doing."

Shane's lips twitched. Just barely. But Ilya saw it. "I'm folding a hoodie."

BREAKING: Local man gets pavlov'd by the KonMari method, more at 11.

Notes

okay so this [tumblr post](#) MUGGED ME in an alley at 3 am & my last brain cell went *pop* like bubble wrap so now we're ALL stuck in this nightmare together ;))

to my incredible betas [prags](#), [annie](#), [nico](#), [nj](#) & [mj](#) who made this fic infinitely better & only judged me a little bit—you're all angels & i love you endlessly!!

russian got you puzzled? tap for translations <33

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

The group chat notification lit up Ilya's phone while he was sprawled on the couch, supposedly reading his book but actually just staring at the same page for the last ten minutes.

save a horse, ride a centaur

Today, 5:40 PM

gaybie (troy)
drinks tonight? monks?
cassie's roomie (bood)
im in
fet-haas (luca)
yeah buddy
superhero nerd (wyatt)
count me in
spotify inferior (evan)
can't, caitlin has book club and im on susie duty
cassie's roomie (bood)
SOFT
yes

Ilya was about to type out a yes when Shane appeared in the bedroom doorway. With a laundry basket. A basket full of clean, warm-from-the-dryer clothes.

"No," Ilya said out loud.

Shane looked up, eyebrows raised. "No, what?"

"What are you doing?"

"Um. Putting away clothes?" Shane tilted his head like Ilya was being weird, which was rich coming from the man who organized his closet by color and fabric weight. "It's Thursday."

"Is *6 pm* on Thursday."

"And? They're clean. They need to be folded." Shane set the basket down on the bed and pulled out one of his t-shirts. Ilya's t-shirt, actually—the soft gray one that Shane had been systematically stealing for the past three months—and began folding it.

Ilya watched Shane's hands smooth down the fabric, his long fingers catching on the hem to align it perfectly. The little shake to get rid of wrinkles. That focused expression that Shane brought to everything he did, whether it was hockey, meal prep, or making Ilya lose his mind.

The black band on Shane's left hand caught the light as he reached for another shirt. His mouth went dry.

save a horse, ride a centaur

Today, 5:45 PM

gaybie (troy)
rozanov you in?
ye

Ilya looked at his phone, then looked at Shane, who had moved on to a pair of jeans with the same intense concentration he brought to studying game tapes.

Looked back at his phone.

save a horse, ride a centaur

Today, 5:50 PM

Rozanov
can't make it
gaybie (troy)
why not?

Ilya's brain, which had gotten him through learning English and playing professional hockey and handling Russian media, completely failed him.

save a horse, ride a centaur

Today, 5:55 PM

gaybie (troy)
why not?
shane is doing the laundry today

He hit send before his brain caught up with his fingers.

The group chat went silent. Then:

save a horse, ride a centaur

Today, 6:00 PM

Rozanov
shane is doing the laundry today
cassie's roomie (bood)
...what
fet-haas (luca)
???
spotify inferior (evan)
is that code for something
gaybie (troy)
rozanov what the fuck are you talking about

Ilya tossed his phone onto the couch and stood up. Shane had moved on to another shirt—one of Ilya's Centaurs hoodies, which he was folding with careful precision despite it being a hoodie that absolutely did not need that level of care.

"You are doing this on purpose," Ilya accused.

Shane looked up, perfectly innocent. "Doing what on purpose?"

"The—" Ilya gestured. "This. The—the organizing."

"The organizing that I do. Every Thursday. Like I have for the entire time we've been together."

"You know what you're doing."

Shane's lips twitched. Just barely. But Ilya saw it. "I'm folding a hoodie."

"You are being..." Ilya searched for the word. "Provocative."

"Provocative," Shane repeated, his voice carefully neutral even though his eyes were definitely laughing. "With clothes?"

"..Yes."

"Ilya." Shane set down the hoodie. "Are you saying you've developed some kind of... conditioned response to me doing laundry?"

"I don't—that's not—" Ilya stopped. "What is that now?"

"Pavlov's dog," Shane explained, and he was definitely smirking now. "Ring a bell before feeding a dog enough times, eventually the dog starts salivating just from hearing the bell, even without food."

Ilya stared at him.

"Except," Shane continued, picking up the hoodie again and smoothing it with both hands, maintaining aggressive eye contact, "in this case, the bell is me folding your clothes, and the food is—"

"I understand, thank you very much." Ilya crossed his arms. "And is still your fault."

"How is it my fault that you're apparently hard-wired to get turned on by household chores?"

"Because every time—" Ilya gestured helplessly. "Every single time. You put them away. Everything organized, all neat and tidy. And then you look so fucking satisfied with yourself, like you've won Olympic gold, and then—"

"Then I what?" Shane asked, even though he absolutely knew.

"You know what."

"Do I?" Shane picked up a pair of Ilya's boxer briefs—the dark gray ones, the ones Shane liked—and held them up, smoothing the fabric between his fingers. "Maybe you should remind me."

Ilya's phone was buzzing insistently from the living room. He ignored it entirely.

"You," Ilya said, stalking across the room, "are terrible person."

"I'm just being a responsible adult." Shane's voice was perfectly innocent even as his eyes tracked Ilya's movement across the room. "Very innocent."

"Nothing about you is innocent."

"That's hurtful." Shane's lips curved. "And also true."

Ilya reached him and plucked the boxer briefs from his hands, tossing them back into the basket. "This can wait."

"Can it?" Shane's hands came up to rest on Ilya's hips. "I was really looking forward to reorganizing the sock drawer."

"Shane Hollander." Ilya cupped his face. "If you mention sock drawer right now, I am leaving."

Shane laughed, bright and genuine, and pulled Ilya closer. "Can't have that."

"No," Ilya agreed, and kissed him.

Shane tasted like the peppermint tea he'd been drinking and something that was just fundamentally Shane, and Ilya would never get tired of this. Would never take it for granted.

Even after years of being together, of sharing a bed every night, of building this life in Ottawa—Shane kissing him still felt like coming home and winning the lottery and scoring the game-winning goal all at once.

"For the record," Shane murmured against his mouth, "I wasn't doing it on purpose."

"Liar."

"Okay, maybe a little bit on purpose." Shane's hands slid under Ilya's shirt. "But only because your face does this thing when you're trying not to be turned on. It's cute."

"Is not cute. I am Russian. Russians are not cute."

"You're cute," Shane insisted, and kissed him again before Ilya could argue.

They made it to the bed, mostly. The basket got knocked to the floor. Several t-shirts staged a dramatic escape onto the carpet. One sock made it all the way to the bathroom door, though neither of them could figure out how.

Later, *much* later, when they were tangled together in Shane's ridiculously expensive sheets (because Shane Hollander had opinions about thread count, apparently), Ilya's phone started buzzing again.

"You should probably check that," Shane said, his voice drowsy and satisfied.

"Probably," Ilya agreed, but didn't move from where his head was pillowed on Shane's chest.

Shane sighed and reached over him to grab the phone from the nightstand. He squinted at the screen. "Your group chat is having a meltdown."

"About what?"

"About..." Shane scrolled. His lips twitched. Then he started laughing. "Oh no. Oh, Ilya, no."

"What?"

Shane turned the phone so Ilya could see.

save a horse, ride a centaur

Today, 6:45 PM

cassie's roomie (bood)

WAIT

WAIT WAIT WAIT

fet-haas (luca)

what

cassie's roomie (bood)

didn't he use the EXACT same excuse last thursday

superhero nerd (wyatt)

oh my god

fet-haas (luca)

OH MY GOD

chiron's papa (harris)

what are you talking about

gaybie (troy)

roz bailed on drinks last week

spotify inferior (evan)

...

fossil (young)

no fucking way

superhero nerd (wyatt)

AND THE WEEK BEFORE THAT

fet-haas (luca)

WHAT

cassie's roomie (bood)

i'm looking at the chat history right now

THREE WEEKS AGO

"can't make it, laundry day"

chiron's papa (harris)

HELLO???

sherlock holms (holmberg)

wait let me check

FOUR WEEKS AGO

SAME THING

gaybie (troy)

this cannot be real

fet-haas (luca)

IS IT EVERY THURSDAY

superhero nerd (wyatt)

HOW DID WE NOT NOTICE THIS

spotify inferior (evan)

how much laundry do two people HAVE

fossil (young)

THATS WHAT YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT???

pointer (lapointe)

i'm scrolling back to november

oh no

OH NO

cassie's roomie (bood)

WHAT

pointer (lapointe)

it goes back MONTHS

fet-haas (luca)
I'M GOING TO LOSE MY MIND
chiron's papa (harris)
okay everybody calm down
superhero nerd (wyatt)
DO NOT TELL ME TO CALM DOWN
gaybie (troy)
this is the weirdest thing that's ever happened to me
father (nick)
is it though
gaybie (troy)
YES NICK
YES IT IS
cassie's roomie (bood)
okay but SERIOUSLY
is "laundry" like a sex thing
fet-haas (luca)
oh god is it a sex thing
dill pickles (tanner)
why would that be a sex thing
father (nick)
you sweet summer child
cassie's roomie (bood)
CHOUINARD EXPLAIN
father (nick)
i'm not getting involved in whatever this is
gaybie (troy)
rozanov answer your phone
spotify inferior (evan)
why is his phone on dnd
fet-haas (luca)
STOP
gaybie (troy)
is anyone else concerned
cassie's roomie (bood)
about what, that rozanov has a laundry fetish?
fet-haas (luca)
is that a thing?
superhero nerd (wyatt)
according to the internet you can have a fetish for literally anything
cassie's roomie (bood)
oh god what did you google
superhero nerd (wyatt)
i'm not sharing my search history
gaybie (troy)
guys can we focus
sherlock holms (holmberg)
on rozanov's fetish?
gaybie (troy)
on figuring out what the hell he meant
superhero nerd (wyatt)
maybe rozanov is being a supportive partner
cassie's roomie (bood)

HAHAHAHA
spotify inferior (evan)
 yeah that's not it
fet-haas (luca)
 wait what if it's a code for like... cleaning their equipment?
cassie's roomie (bood)
 why would that be code
fet-haas (luca)
 i don't know!!
 this whole thing is weird!!
pointer (lapointe)
 what if it's not that deep
 and rozanov is just really into clean clothes
gaybie (troy)
 you've met rozanov right
pointer (lapointe)
 okay fair point
cassie's roomie (bood)
 new theory: it means watching netflix
fet-haas (luca)
 how did you get there
cassie's roomie (bood)
 netflix and chill?
 laundry and... chill?
superhero nerd (wyatt)
 that's the worst theory yet
cassie's roomie (bood)
 i don't know i'm grasping at straws
gaybie (troy)
 hollander and rozanov doing laundry together
 can you picture that
cassie's roomie (bood)
 hollander would fold everything perfectly
 and rozanov would just throw shit in drawers
spotify inferior (evan)
 okay yeah that's accurate
fet-haas (luca)
 WAIT
 what if it means hollander is cooking dinner
cassie's roomie (bood)
 luca what the fuck
fet-haas (luca)
 think about it!!
 hollander cooks, right?
 maybe it's a code for cooking!
spotify inferior (evan)
 why wouldn't he just say cooking then
fet-haas (luca)
 why wouldn't he just say what he actually meant in the first place!!
twin boyler (boyle)
 this conversation is giving me a headache
gaybie (troy)
 should we call someone

cassie's roomie (bood)
 who would we even call
gaybie (troy)
 "hello NHL player assistance? yeah our teammate is sexually attracted to fabric softener"
sherlock holms (holmberg)
 I'M CRYING
cassie's roomie (bood)
 "yes officer, my friend is being held hostage by... dryer sheets"
fet-haas (luca)
 maybe we should just ask him tomorrow
gaybie (troy)
 and say what?
spotify inferior (evan)
 this feels like a trap
father (nick)
 it's definitely a trap
cassie's roomie (bood)
 what if it's an inside joke
fet-haas (luca)
 world's worst inside joke
superhero nerd (wyatt)
 but what does it MEAN
dill pickles (tanner)
 maybe they're just hanging out
cassie's roomie (bood)
 no one says that as an excuse to hang out with their HUSBAND
fet-haas (luca)
 UNLESS
superhero nerd (wyatt)
 unless what
fet-haas (luca)
 what if hollander really IS just sorting out clothes
gaybie (troy)
 ...
cassie's roomie (bood)
 ...
superhero nerd (wyatt)
 oh my god
fet-haas (luca)
 and rozanov just wanted to help???
spotify inferior (evan)
 that's the most boring explanation
dill pickles (tanner)
 occam's razor
gaybie (troy)
 that can't be it
cassie's roomie (bood)
 but what if it is
superhero nerd (wyatt)
 my brain hurts

"I am never going to live this down," Ilya groaned.

"Nope," Shane agreed cheerfully. "You're not."

"Is still your fault."

"Maybe." Shane's fingers traced patterns on Ilya's stomach. "But I could get an Olympic gold for other things too. For instance, I could be very good at—"

Ilya kissed him before he could finish that sentence, which was probably Shane's plan all along.

A week later at practice, Troy cornered Ilya while he was getting dressed.

"Okay," Troy said, sitting down on the bench. "I have to ask."

"No," Ilya said without looking up from his skates.

"You don't even know what I'm going to say."

"Is about Thursday. Answer is no."

Troy was silent for a moment. "How did you know it was about that?"

"Because everything is about Thursday now. Is my life."

"Rozanov." Troy leaned forward. "Buddy. The guys are worried."

"About what?"

"About your weird... thing!"

Ilya finally looked up. "Is not weird."

"You bailed on drinks because Hollander was doing laundry. You live with him. You see him every day. You literally share a bed with him every night."

"So?"

"So what could possibly be so urgent that you couldn't come out for one drink and then go home?"

"Maybe I like clean clothes. Maybe I am very invested in proper fabric care."

Troy stared at him.

"Maybe I am secretly very domestic," Ilya tried.

"We've seen your gym bag," Troy pointed out. "It's a biohazard."

Ilya scowled. "Shane likes when things are organized. Is nice."

"Okay, but—" Troy stopped. His eyes went wide. "Oh my god."

"What."

"It's not about the laundry, is it?" Troy's face was doing something complicated. "It's about... quality time? Like, you guys have Thursday as your day?"

Ilya blinked. "Uh—"

"That's actually kind of sweet," Troy continued, clearly building his own narrative. "You know, Harris and I have Tuesday movie nights. Same concept. Sacred time, no distractions." He nodded, looking satisfied with his deduction. "Makes sense. You guys are always traveling, so you need that scheduled time together."

"Sure," Ilya said slowly. "Is... exactly that."

"See? Not weird at all. Why didn't you just say that from the start?"

"Is private," Ilya said, which was technically true.

"Right, right. I get it." Troy clapped him on the shoulder. "Good for you guys, honestly. Relationships need that kind of structure."

Ilya was saved from having to respond when Shane walked into the locker room. Ilya caught his eye and, because he was an idiot who liked to live dangerously, mouthed "laundry day tomorrow" with the most ridiculous expression—eyebrows waggling, little smirk, the whole thing.

Shane's face went bright red. He shook his head slightly, fighting a smile.

Troy, who had been watching this exchange, looked between them with a knowing expression. "See? That's nice. You guys have your thing."

Shane's eyebrows shot up. "Our... thing?"

"Your Thursday tradition," Troy explained. "Quality time together. Very healthy."

Shane's lips twitched. "Right. Our... quality time."

"Exactly!" Troy looked pleased with himself. "Nothing weird about it at all."

Shane and Ilya locked eyes across the room, having an entire silent conversation.

He thinks it's about quality time?

Don't correct him.

I wasn't planning on it.

Is hilarious.

We're never telling them.

Never.

Troy, oblivious to all of this, headed toward his stall, already pulling out his phone. "I'm gonna tell the guys to drop it. Mystery solved!"

As soon as he was out of earshot, Shane crossed the room to Ilya. "Quality time?" he murmured, voice low enough that only Ilya could hear.

"Is technically true," Ilya pointed out.

"You're such an asshole."

"You love it."

Shane's eyes sparkled. "Unfortunately."

save a horse, ride a centaur

Today, 8:45 PM

gaybie (troy)

okay i figured it out

cassie's roomie (bood)

WHAT IS IT

fet-haas (luca)

TELL US

fossil (young)

the suspense is killing me

gaybie (troy)

it's not what you think

cassie's roomie (bood)

TROY

fet-haas (luca)

WHAT THE HELL

gaybie (troy)

it's just their quality time thing.

like date night but on thursday.

they do laundry together or whatever and just hang out.

cassie's roomie (bood)

...that's it?

gaybie (troy)

yeah. nothing weird about it.

they're on the road so much they need scheduled together time.

fet-haas (luca)

oh

spotify inferior (evan)

that's actually kind of sweet

superhero nerd (wyatt)

i mean i guess that makes sense

cassie's roomie (bood)

but why make it sound so weird

gaybie (troy)

because rozanov is rozanov

fossil (young)

finally, common sense prevails

fet-haas (luca)

so we were worried over nothing
gaybie (troy)
pretty much
chiron's papa (harris)
wait so what's the joke then
gaybie (troy)
there is no joke.
it's just their thing.
cassie's roomie (bood)
i feel disappointed somehow
fet-haas (luca)
same
superhero nerd (wyatt)
like we built it up to be this big mystery
gaybie (troy)
you guys are idiots
spotify inferior (evan)
says the guy who spent an hour trying to figure it out
gaybie (troy)
shut up
father (nick)
i'm just glad this is over
cassie's roomie (bood)
yeah but like
why LAUNDRY specifically
fet-haas (luca)
maybe hollander likes doing laundry
superhero nerd (wyatt)
who LIKES doing laundry
gaybie (troy)
people who organize their closets by color
spotify inferior (evan)
so hollander
gaybie (troy)
exactly
cassie's roomie (bood)
i guess that tracks
chiron's papa (harris)
you guys are weird
gaybie (troy)
says the guy who irons my workout clothes
chiron's papa (harris)
they look better pressed!!
gaybie (troy)
anyway.
mystery solved.
we can all move on with our lives
cassie's roomie (bood)
fine
fet-haas (luca)
fine
superhero nerd (wyatt)
but i'm still confused

gaybie (troy)
that's just your natural state
superhero nerd (wyatt)
fuck you terry

The next morning at practice, Ilya walked into the locker room to find several of his teammates looking at him with knowing expressions.

"So," Bood said. "Troy told us about your Thursday thing."

"Did he."

"Quality time, huh?" Luca grinned. "That's actually pretty cute."

Ilya shrugged, working very hard to keep his face neutral. "Is important to have time together. You know. For relationship."

"Yeah, I get that," Dykstra said. "Caitlin and I have Saturday mornings. It's sacred."

"Exactly," Ilya said, relieved that they'd all accepted Troy's explanation. "Is like that."

"I still think it's weird you can't just come out for one drink," Bood said. "But whatever works for you guys."

Shane walked in then, and immediately clocked the energy in the room. His eyes found Ilya's, questioning.

"They know about *quality time* Thursday," Ilya said innocently.

Shane's expression didn't change, but Ilya could see him fighting a smile. "Do they."

"Yeah," Troy said, looking pleased with himself. "And I told them it's not weird, it's actually healthy."

"Very healthy," Shane agreed solemnly. "Communication and scheduled time together. Key pillars of a successful relationship."

"See?" Troy gestured at Shane. "This guy gets it."

"I absolutely get it," Shane said, and Ilya had to look away before he started laughing.

Wyatt was squinting at them suspiciously. "You guys are being weird about this."

"Are we?" Ilya asked.

"Yeah, like... I don't know. Something's off."

"Nothing is off," Shane said smoothly. "We're just glad everyone understands now."

"Understands what?" Wyatt pressed.

"That Thursday is our night," Ilya said. "For quality time. Together. Doing laundry. And *other* couple things."

Wyatt's eyes narrowed. "Why did you say it like that?"

"Like what?"

"Like you're hiding something."

"Am not hiding anything." Ilya turned back to his stall. "Is just normal couple routine."

"But—"

"Drop it, Wyatt," Troy said. "We've moved on."

Wyatt looked between Shane and Ilya, clearly not convinced, but everyone else had already started talking about other things. The moment passed.

Later, as they were heading out to the ice, Shane fell into step beside Ilya.

"That was close," Shane murmured.

"Wyatt is too smart," Ilya agreed.

"Think he'll figure it out?"

Ilya glanced back at where Wyatt was talking animatedly with Harris, already distracted. "No. Is too strange to guess."

"Good." Shane's hand brushed against Ilya's, just briefly. "See you after practice?"

"Is Thursday tomorrow," Ilya reminded him, grinning.

Shane shook his head, fighting a smile. "Right."

save a horse, ride a centaur

Today, 9:30 PM

chiron's papa (harris)

wait i just thought of something

gaybie (troy)

oh no

chiron's papa (harris)

why does rozanov call it "shane is doing laundry"

not "we're doing laundry"

cassie's roomie (bood)

...huh

fet-haas (luca)

OH SHIT

YOU'RE RIGHT
superhero nerd (wyatt)
i KNEW something was off
gaybie (troy)
you guys are reading too much into this
spotify inferior (evan)
no noharris has a point
chiron's papa (harris)
like if it's their quality time together
why phrase it like shane's the one doing it
cassie's roomie (bood)
and rozanov just... watches?
fet-haas (luca)
WHAT DOES IT MEAN
gaybie (troy)
it doesn't mean anything!!
superhero nerd (wyatt)
it definitely means something
father (nick)
i thought we were past this
fossil (young)
so did i
sherlock holms (holmberg)
here we go again
gaybie (troy)
you guys are insane
cassie's roomie (bood)
think about it terry
rozanov specifically waits for shane to do the laundry
not to help. to BE THERE
fet-haas (luca)
oh my god
superhero nerd (wyatt)
it's not about quality time at all
gaybie (troy)
YES IT IS
chiron's papa (harris)
then why not say "we're hanging out"
or "we're having date night"
chiron's papa (harris)
why specifically "shane is doing the laundry"
spotify inferior (evan)
he's got you there
gaybie (troy)
i hate all of you
cassie's roomie (bood)
new theory
fet-haas (luca)
im listening
cassie's roomie (bood)
what if rozanov really does just like watching hollander do laundry
superhero nerd (wyatt)
...

chiron's papa (harris)
...
fossil (young)
that's insane
cassie's roomie (bood)
is it though
is it really
fet-haas (luca)
i mean hollander is very organized
maybe it's soothing to watch?
superhero nerd (wyatt)
like ASMR?
chiron's papa (harris)
laundry folding ASMR??
spotify inferior (evan)
that's a thing, isn't it
fossil (young)
i'm not googling that
gaybie (troy)
NONE OF THIS IS RIGHT
it's just their scheduled time together
you're all making it weird
cassie's roomie (bood)
we're making it weird??
ROZANOV made it weird by being cryptic
father (nick)
can we please drop this
sherlock holms (holmberg)
i second that
pointer (lapointe)
third
superhero nerd (wyatt)
but we're so close to figuring it out
gaybie (troy)
there's nothing to figure out!!
chiron's papa (harris)
agree to disagree
fet-haas (luca)
yeah i'm not convinced
cassie's roomie (bood)
same
gaybie (troy)
i give up
you're all on your own
superhero nerd (wyatt)
wait where are you going
gaybie (troy)
to live in a world where my teammates are NORMAL
cassie's roomie (bood)
so not this world then
gaybie (troy)
CLEARLY

That night, Ilya came home to find Shane in the bedroom with a basket of towels.

Fresh-from-the-dryer, warm, fluffy towels.

"Absolutely not," Shane said before Ilya could speak. "I know what you're thinking, and no. These are clean towels. We need clean towels. This is not—this is just regular—"

"But you're," Ilya pointed out, already pulling his shirt off.

"I always fold! That's what normal people do!"

"I know." Ilya moved closer. "Is a problem."

Shane threw a towel at him. "You're the problem."

Ilya caught the towel. Still warm. "You created this."

"I really did." Shane looked at the half-done pile, then at Ilya, then back. He sighed the sigh of a man who knew he was about to be very late finishing a simple household task. "The towels can wait, can't they?"

"Definitely," Ilya agreed.

"For the record," Shane said, even as he reached for Ilya, "you're helping next week."

"Will you watch?"

Shane pulled him in by his belt loops. "Obviously."

"Will you take out the wrinkles?"

"Maybe."

"Will yo—"

Shane kissed him before he could finish, which was probably for the best because they were getting sidetracked there. Shane's hands were in his hair, and his mouth was doing incredible things, and somewhere in the back of Ilya's mind, he registered that they'd knocked over the poor basket again.

Six months later, nothing had changed. The team group chat still devolved into wild speculation every time Ilya mentioned Thursday. Theories ranged from "secret chess tournament" to "competitive meal prep" to "maybe they just really like being boring together."

No one ever guessed the truth. Ilya planned to keep it that way.

save a horse, ride a centaur

Today, 7:00 PM

cassie's roomie (bood)

drinks tonight?

fet-haas (luca)

in

spotify inferior (evan)

yeah

Rozanov

can't

gaybie (troy)

oh god here we go again

Rozanov

shane is reorganizing the closet

cassie's roomie (bood)

IS THAT CODE TOO?!

fet-haas (luca)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN

superhero nerd (wyatt)

i'm googling "closet reorganization"

gaybie (troy)

please don't

fossil (young)

i hate all of you

Rozanov

is not code

he is literally reorganizing the closet

by color AND season

cassie's roomie (bood)

and you're staying home to watch him do that?

Rozanov

...yes

fet-haas (luca)

WHY

Rozanov

is satisfying

chiron's papa (harris)

SATISFYING???

Rozanov

yes.

everything in right place.

very nice to see.

cassie's roomie (bood)

i'm going to have an aneurysm

fet-haas (luca)

this is worse than the laundry thing

superhero nerd (wyatt)

way worse
gaybie (troy)
i don't want to know
i officially don't want to know
father (nick)
WISDOM
pointer (lapointe)
i'm with terry on this one
sherlock holms (holmberg)
same
spotify inferior (evan)
you guys are missing out on valuable intel
gaybie (troy)
VALUABLE INTEL ABOUT WHAT
spotify inferior (evan)
about what makes rozanov tick
fossil (young)
closet organization apparently
cassie's roomie (bood)
and laundry
chiron's papa (harris)
and probably other household chores
fet-haas (luca)
oh my god
what if he's into ALL cleaning
superhero nerd (wyatt)
like a cleaning fetish?
cassie's roomie (bood)
is that a thing???
chiron's papa (harris)
i mean it could be
gaybie (troy)
I'M LEAVING THE CHAT
father (nick)
you're not going anywhere
gaybie (troy)
WATCH ME
moy lyubov ❤️
He's helping me, actually.
cassie's roomie (bood)
HOLLANDER IS IN THE CHAT
fet-haas (luca)
ABORT ABORT ABORT
spotify inferior (evan)
THIS IS NOT A DRILL
moy lyubov ❤️
Also, for the record, he's terrible at folding fitted sheets.
Rozanov
SHANE
moy lyubov ❤️
Just thought you guys should know.
superhero nerd (wyatt)
i'm going to remember this forever

gaybie (troy)
same
sherlock holms (holmberg)
this is the worst timeline
chiron's papa (harris)
im still confused
gaybie (troy)
GOOD
moy lyubov ❤️
See you guys tomorrow.
Ilya says hi.
Rozanov
i did not say hi
moy lyubov ❤️
You're saying hi right now.
Rozanov
...hi
cassie's roomie (bood)
they're so domestic it's disgusting
fet-haas (luca)
kind of cute though
pointer (lapointe)
NOT THE POINT
chiron's papa (harris)
someone please explain the bit
gaybie (troy)
NO
cassie's roomie (bood)
NEVER
spotify inferior (evan)
WE PROTECT YOU FROM THIS KNOWLEDGE
chiron's papa (harris)
???

superhero nerd (wyatt)
consider yourself blessed, drover
fossil (young)
honestly at this point i don't even want to know
father (nick)
FINALLY
SOMEONE TALKING SENSE

Later, when they were tangled together in bed, Shane's head on Ilya's chest and Ilya's fingers threading through his hair, they lay in comfortable silence. The kind of silence that only came from years of knowing each other, of building a life together.

"You know what I was thinking about today?" Shane said quietly, his breath warm against Ilya's skin.

"Updating pantry by expiry date?"

Shane huffed a laugh. "No. I mean... this. Us. How lucky I am. Getting to have you here, every day. Coming home to you every night." He pressed a kiss to Ilya's chest, right over his heart. "Sometimes I still can't believe it's real."

Ilya's hand stilled in Shane's hair. His throat felt tight. "Is real," he said softly. "Is very real."

"I know." Shane shifted so he could look up at Ilya, his eyes soft in the low light. "I just want you to know that I see you. Not just when you're being impossible about putting your socks in the hamper, but... all of it. How you make my parents laugh. How you eat the last of my meal prep even though it's labeled. How you're patient with Luca even when he asks the same question five times. How you reorganize my training schedule because you know my body better than I do sometimes."

Ilya's chest felt tight in the way it always did when Shane got sincere like this, when he dropped the defenses and just said what he was feeling.

"I do know better," Ilya said, but his voice came out rougher than he intended.

"You do," Shane agreed. His hand came up to cup Ilya's face. "Ya lyublyu tebya. (I love you.)"

Ilya's breath caught. Shane had been learning Russian for years now, but hearing it still made something warm bloom in his chest. "Ya tozhe tebya lyublyu (I love you too)," he whispered. "Tak sil'no, solnyshko. (So much, sunshine.)"

Shane smiled, soft and devastating. "I know you made fun of me for learning that phrase, but I meant it. Ya vseгда budu tebya lubit. (I will always love you.)" His pronunciation was getting better, much better, even if he still couldn't quite roll his Rs the right way.

"Vseгда (Always)," Ilya echoed, and pulled Shane up for a kiss that tasted like promises and home and everything they'd built together.

When they broke apart, Shane settled back against Ilya's chest with a contented sigh. "Show-off."

Shane grinned and pressed a kiss to Ilya's chest. "One of us has to be."

"Could be me."

"Could be," Shane allowed. "But I'm better at laundry."

Ilya pinched his side, making him yelp and laugh. "One day I will fold something perfectly, just to prove a point."

"One day," Shane agreed, not sounding convinced at all. "So. Same time next Thursday?"

Ilya laughed, the sound rumbling through both of them. "Ugroza. (Menace.)"

"You love it."

"I love you," Ilya corrected. "The laundry is just... happy accident."

"Best accident ever," Shane murmured, already half-asleep.

Ilya held him closer, breathing in the scent of his shampoo, feeling the steady weight of him, the realness of him. After all the years of hiding, of stolen moments and secret visits, of loving each other in the spaces between their lives—they had this. A home. A bed. Thursday nights and lazy mornings and the rest of their lives.

"Best accident ever," Ilya agreed softly.

Shane's breathing had already evened out into sleep, but Ilya stayed awake a little longer, just holding him. Just grateful.

The confetti was still falling when the reporter shoved a microphone in Shane's face.

"Shane Hollander! You just won the Stanley Cup! What are you going to do next?"

Shane, sweaty and exhausted and riding the biggest high of his life, grinned at the camera. His hair was a disaster—Ilya had been running his hands through it approximately seven seconds ago—and he still had champagne dripping down his jersey.

"Honestly?" Shane said, breathless and happy. "I'm just excited to go home and do laundry."

The reporter laughed, clearly thinking it was a joke.

It was not a joke.

Off-camera, just out of frame, Ilya choked on the water bottle he'd been drinking from.

Shane's eyes flicked to him for just a second—long enough for Ilya to see the absolute devil in them—before returning to the reporter with perfect innocence.

"I mean, we've been on the road for weeks," Shane continued, as if he wasn't currently destroying his husband's composure on live television. "Clean sheets, organized closet, you know. The important things."

The reporter nodded along, completely oblivious.

Ilya was grinning like an absolute idiot, one hand pressed to his mouth to keep from laughing, the other clutching the Stanley Cup.

save a horse, ride a centaur

Today, 3:30 AM

gaybie (troy)



[VideoShane Hollander Just Won the Cup and All He Wants to Do Is... LAUNDRY?!](#)

DID HOLLANDER JUST

cassie's roomie (bood)

HE FUCKING DID

fet-haas (luca)

ON LIVE TV

superhero nerd (wyatt)

I'M SCREAMING

chiron's papa (harris)

what does it MEAN

gaybie (troy)

WE DON'T KNOW

WE'VE NEVER KNOWN

spotify inferior (evan)

it's been 84 YEARS

cassie's roomie (bood)

AND WE STILL DON'T KNOW

father (nick)

and you never will

fet-haas (luca)

CHOUINARD YOU KNOW

father (nick)

i know nothing

i see nothing

i am but a simple hockey player

fossil (young)

bullshit

pointer (lapointe)

complete bullshit

sherlock holms (holmberg)
the worst bullshit
superhero nerd (wyatt)
please nick
we're begging
father (nick)
no
gaybie (troy)
PLEASE
father (nick)
absolutely not
chiron's papa (harris)
why not!!!
father (nick)
because some mysteries are better left unsolved
cassie's roomie (bood)
I HATE YOU
fet-haas (luca)
SO MUCH
father (nick)
you'll thank me someday
gaybie (troy)
doubtful
chiron's papa (harris)
extremely doubtful
spotify inferior (evan)
ok but did anyone else notice how rozanov reacted
fossil (young)
oh i noticed
superhero nerd (wyatt)
he looked like he was going to die
fet-haas (luca)
and then he was GRINNING
cassie's roomie (bood)
like an IDIOT
gaybie (troy)
those two are going to be the death of me
chiron's papa (harris)
same
pointer (lapointe)
at least we won the cup though
sherlock holms (holmberg)
that's true
fossil (young)
worth it for that alone
spotify inferior (evan)
even if we never figure out the laundry thing
gaybie (troy)
ESPECIALLY if we never figure out the laundry thing
father (nick)
now you're learning

When they finally made it home, Shane did eventually do the laundry.

Eventually.

But not before Ilya made him pay for that interview.

And then they both laughed about it, tangled together in sheets that would definitely need to be washed again, and Ilya thought:

Yeah. This was worth it. All of it. The hiding, the years of waiting, the terrible secret hookup building in Montreal, the fights and the fears and the uncertainty.

Because now he had this. Had Shane. Had a life that was theirs, built together, full of stupid in-jokes and folded laundry and teammates who would never, ever figure out their secret.

"Ya lyublyu tebya (I love you)," he murmured into Shane's hair.

Shane smiled against his chest. "Ya tozhe tebya lyublyu. (I love you too.)"

"Yours," Ilya smiled.

"Yeah," Shane agreed, pulling him closer. "Mine."

And somewhere, in a group chat that would never die, his teammates were still trying to figure it out.

They never would.

And that, Ilya thought with a grin, was the best part.

End Notes

ilya is a menace, shane is his accomplice & the ottawa centaurs gc is basically a support group now.
comments & kudos are cherished, printed out & read to me like a bedtime story.

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