

The Four Truths of Hockey

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/78265981) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/78265981>.

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 , Yuna Hollander & Ilya Rozanov , David Hollander & Yuna Hollander & Ilya Rozanov , David Hollander & Shane Hollander & Yuna Hollander
Characters:	Yuna Hollander , Ilya Rozanov , Shane Hollander , David Hollander
Additional Tags:	Good Parent Yuna Hollander , POV Yuna Hollander , Protective Yuna Hollander , Good Parents David Hollander/Yuna Hollander , Ilya Rozanov Loves Shane Hollander , Ilya Rozanov Needs A Hug , Soft Ilya Rozanov , Hurt Ilya Rozanov , Emotional Hurt/Comfort , Angst with a Happy Ending , Coming Out , Secret Relationship , Relationship Reveal , Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence , Autistic Shane Hollander , Shane Hollander Loves Ilya Rozanov , Hospitals , Concussions , Head Injury , Injury Recovery , Montreal Voyageurs Montreal Metros Being Assholes (Game Changers) , Yuna would do anything for her sons , Not Beta Read
Language:	English
Series:	Part 2 of i can't seem to not need to need you
Stats:	Published: 2026-01-25 Words: 6,658 Chapters: 1/1

The Four Truths of Hockey

by [writer_in_theory](#)

Summary

Yuna and David offer to help Ilya recover from his concussion, which upends everything Yuna previously thought she knew.

Notes

Surprise sequel! I was going to leave the last one alone, but Yuna demanded to be heard.

This honestly can be read as a stand-alone, just know it was Ilya that got a concussion instead of Shane.

Thank you all for your kind words on the first part, it truly means so so much to me. I hope you also enjoy this one <3

For Yuna Hollander, hockey is simple.

There are indisputable facts when it comes to hockey, those that she has always known to be true.

The Montreal Metros are the best team in the league, even when their record doesn't reflect the same.

The Boston Raiders are the worst team in the league. Not because of their skill—no, they've had a number of excellent seasons over the years—but because she is a Metros fan.

Shane Hollander is good at hockey. Yuna had not always known that he would be a once in a lifetime talent, but she always knew he belonged with a stick in his hand and skates on his feet.

The Hollanders hate Ilya Rozanov. This was true from the moment the last buzzer sounded at the International Prospect Cup Final, when Rozanov joined the small company of young men who were able to beat Yuna's son. Shane Hollander was unstoppable, until he met Ilya Rozanov. Neither was better than the other, and so they were forced to fight tooth and nail for the top of the podium for years. It was a long back-and-forth that made something irritating and burning simmer up in Yuna's chest when she heard that name, or heard another interview where he chirped at her son.

Everything else could change around the league, but these truths held steady. They were a lifeline, something rock solid that Yuna could always turn back to when her life became chaotic.

The Montreal Metros. The Boston Raiders. Shane Hollander. Ilya Rozanov.

All of it was true, until Rozanov hit the ice and did not get back up.

"Looked like a clean hit," David said beside her on the couch, "that's too bad. You hate to see that."

The announcers were saying much of the same as medics rushed the ice. They were stopped, though, by one sound that shattered every truth Yuna knew.

"Ilya!"

Shane pitched forward, falling harshly to his knees on the ice in his attempt to reach the fallen Raider. His voice was strained, pained in a way that strikes deeply at Yuna's heart. She's helpless in Ottawa as she watches her son beg for the Russian center to get back up.

Over the many years she's watched Shane on the ice, Yuna has always been impressed by one thing: his ability to remain cool and collected no matter what. Even in the MLH, where she knows the chirps strike personally, Shane is known to not get into fights. He's known not to lose his temper or let anything affect his ability to play the game. Even when someone lands

a messy check on a teammate, Shane will respond back in kind like a good captain should and then will move on with it.

Off of the ice, Shane has always been an emotional boy. Even as a kid, Yuna was careful to notice the signs before an all-out meltdown—the gentle quiver of his chin, the glassy look in his eyes, the strange stillness in his chest and shoulders as he held his breath to avoid crying. Yuna’s boy feels everything deeply, and it’s a wonder in itself that he never expresses it on the ice.

He did now.

Shane’s hands shook as they grabbed onto Rozanov’s jersey, his right one just to the side of the ‘C’ on the other man’s shoulder like he was trying to grab for his heart. As the camera zooms in, Yuna can see tears streaked steadily down Shane’s face as he still pleads and begs with the unconscious man on the ice. There’s fighting on the ice but even the camera doesn’t pan to it, everyone instead enraptured by her son’s pain.

The camera follows them as the medics load Rozanov onto the stretcher, as Shane refuses to leave his side.

“It appears Ilya Rozanov has regained consciousness,” one of the announcers said as coverage continued at the edge of the ice. “What- what was that he called Shane Hollander?”

“Lyubimyy,” the other announcer said. “It means sweetheart, a term of endearment for...well, for romantic partners. It seems these two may not be rivals like we once thought.”

The Montreal Metros are the best team in the league.

The Boston Raiders are the worst team in the league.

Shane Hollander is good at hockey.

The Hollanders hate Ilya Rozanov.

Except.

“David,” Yuna called out even though she knew he was right beside her on the couch, hand held onto her wrist as though it would steady him. Her eyes don’t leave the screen until Shane and Rozanov do, the stretcher rolled down to where an ambulance would no doubt be waiting for them.

What did she want to say? What *could* she say?

She’d considered the fact that Shane liked men, once. It was the day Shane came to lunch looking terribly sad, bone-deep in a way that she hoped her son would never feel. Yuna tried to distract him, talking about Wimbledon and Swedish princesses, and any other silly thing she could think of to make him smile, to distract him from whatever was hurting him.

There was no asking directly with Shane. He preferred to hide his hurt, as much as it pained her to watch. All she could do was sit with him in it, and wait until he either worked up the

courage to let her in or for him to grow so overwhelmed that she had no choice but to step in.

It was a painful cycle, one that caused an unbelievable ache in Yuna's bones whenever it started, but one she was used to. She'd never stop being there, because this was Shane, her boy, her darling boy who felt too much all the time.

So she hadn't asked. She didn't ask about the fact that he hadn't had a girlfriend since the semi-final round of his first International Prospect Cup. She didn't ask about any of the hickeys she happened to see on his neck at their lunches, or the wild swings from overwhelming giddiness to this stifling grief. Yuna didn't ask, and Shane didn't tell her.

God, she should have asked.

Maybe then she wouldn't be sitting on a couch hours away from where her son likely just stepped onto an ambulance. She wouldn't be sitting there, reeling from watching her son fall apart on the ice for—for—

“David, what do we do?”

Yuna never felt so helpless as she did in that moment. She planned, she organized, she made sure every second of their lives were perfectly in order. Nothing could sneak up on her that she couldn't handle, she was always sure of it.

Then Ilya Rozanov went down on the ice and Shane went down with him.

David looked just as lost as Yuna did. His eyes were wide as he looked at her, shifting as though searching her face for something. She always had the answers, always had the plan for how to get out of situations. She didn't know this time, she just didn't know.

All she knew was that Shane walked out of this game, left behind the very thing he was so unbelievably talented at, for Ilya Rozanov. Rozanov, the man that he was supposed to have hated for nearly a decade now.

She knew that the Montreal Metros were still the best. She knew the Boston Raiders were still terrible. Yuna knew her son was still good at hockey, but that maybe now it wasn't his number one priority. She didn't know where they stood with Rozanov, not when he woke up from a devastating head injury and called her son *sweetheart*, not when she watched Shane cling to the man all the way off the ice and further into the rink.

The only person who knew was Shane.

So Yuna did the only thing she could think of—she called him.

Deep down, she knew she wouldn't get an answer but still she tried. Four times, until David gently reached for her arm again and took the phone from her shaking hand.

“He'll be at the hospital,” David explained, even though she already knew. “Give him time to answer. He will.”

“He didn't tell us,” Yuna said, voice cracking around the words. “He didn't trust us.”

“What do you always tell that boy about jumping to conclusions?” David asked, trying for a lighter mood. She couldn’t bring herself to laugh like she normally would, not when she could still hear her baby’s terrified shouts echoing around that rink. David understood though, like he always does. He simply squeezed her hand and pressed on. “You know how Shane is. He...needs to have all the answers for himself first. He probably needed time, and this wasn’t in whatever Yuna Hollander-style plan he had built up.”

Yuna *did* laugh at that one, wet around the tears building in her eyes. Her son may have his father’s hockey skills and quiet resilience, but he got *her* attention to detail and planning.

“You know, it makes sense he would pick another player,” Yuna mused, once her initial panic began to dissolve down. “Hockey’s his world, it’s only right that his partner is involved in it too...but did he have to pick *Rozanov*?”

“Yuna,” David warned, but the glint in his eyes clued her in to the fact that he was amused.

“It’s *Rozanov*, David,” Yuna groaned, sinking back into the couch as the game continued on. Both teams appeared out of it, after watching their captains exit in such a spectacularly awful manner. “The guy is terrible! He’s rude on the ice and off of it.”

“There must be something Shane sees in him,” David tried, although he looked as unsure as Yuna felt.

There had to be something, anything that could explain why her sweet, charming Shane who loved too much, would choose someone as harsh and rough as Ilya Rozanov.

It was an obvious choice to drive to Montreal.

Shane called around 3AM, sounding for all the world like a man at the hospital bedside of his most beloved. His voice was tired and cracked around his words, as though the evening had taken every ounce of energy from his body. When he started to talk about Rozanov’s status —“I don’t know if Ilya’s okay, Mom, he hasn’t woken up yet.”—Yuna immediately began to pack a small bag.

It was simple. The Montreal Metros were the best, the Boston Raiders were the worst, and Yuna’s son needed her.

David was kind enough to drive. The two hour drive felt like an eternity as Yuna scrolled through social media, trying to get a read on how much the rest of the world took from Shane’s display of worry out on the ice.

Just as she and David had, it seemed the rest of the world figured out how much Rozanov and Shane meant to each other. There was an overwhelming amount of kindness and support for the two of them, namely because of the terrible circumstances in which their relationship had been outed. The Raiders had released a simple statement overnight, mourning both the loss of the game and the fact that Rozanov was hospitalized.

They didn’t comment on the relationship.

The Metros didn't comment on anything at all, except for a victory post looking forward to the next playoff match.

Hayden Pike had started chiming in on socials around the time Shane called them. He, unsurprisingly, was jumping in on conversations to shut down any hate toward Shane. Mostly, he focused on the ones who claimed this would affect Shane's skills or that this somehow made him unable to continue being on the ice with the others.

It was heartwarming, to see Shane had found such a strong friendship. That hadn't always been true. Though he'd never told her directly, Yuna knew from her own experience that it was difficult to grow up different from the other kids. Add to that the fact he was a generational talent and was skating circles around the others by the time they hit middle school? Yuna didn't have to be told to know that Shane struggled to make friends growing up.

But now, he had Hayden Pike who was willing to fight anyone who dared suggest that Shane wasn't the same future hall-of-famer he's always been.

He's also had Ilya Rozanov, apparently.

"How long do you think they've been together?" Yuna asked when reading the comments and headlines became too overwhelming.

David glanced at her for only a second before returning his focus to the road. "His thing with that actress ended in January, so it can't be more than a few weeks."

"*Rose Landry*," Yuna supplied, because she'd seemed like such a sweet girl. Yuna had been overjoyed when Shane first told her that he found a girl, and that she was as beautiful and kind and funny as Rose was.

Did he know then that he liked men? Was she a way to hide the truth, or had he truly not realized?

"The All-Star Game!" David exclaimed then, hitting the wheel once with his hand out of excitement at solving the puzzle. "You saw their chemistry out there, that had to've been it."

It made too much sense. Shane and Rozanov played like they've always played together. Rozanov had even shifted over to play wing so he could still play on the same line as Shane. Yuna assumed then that the league made Rozanov concede the center position for more media hype, but perhaps the two men had simply taken the chance to finally play together after a whole decade of being rivals.

A decade of being rivals. A few weeks of dating.

One game, one check, one head injury to change all of it.

Yuna glanced at the GPS and winced at the expected time of arrival.

Thirty more minutes.

Thirty more minutes until she would have answers.

The last time Yuna had been in a hospital was when David's mother passed.

The woman had been 96 years old and had Stage IV pancreatic cancer. They'd known for months that there wasn't much time left on her clock.

It hadn't made it any easier when the day came.

That was the last time Yuna had felt as helpless as she did now. All she could do was sit beside David and hold onto him as he said goodbye. She could thank his mother for everything she'd done for them, and she could promise to take care of the woman's son, just as she had for all the years they'd been together. She could talk through what was happening to Shane, because he was too young to understand the weight of the hospital room.

Shane understood it now.

When Yuna and David made it to Rozanov's private VIP hospital room, they found their son hunched over in a cheap plastic chair. He'd changed out of his gear into a pair of sweats and a Metros sweater. His hair was a mess and it looked like he hadn't slept all night. One hand was reached out to the hospital bed in front of him, still holding onto Rozanov's hand, his thumb brushing over the skin there idly.

Rozanov was not awake.

"Oh, honey," Yuna sighed, rushing over to her son. Shane broke contact with Rozanov then, reaching out to hold onto Yuna. She held him and almost immediately he cracked, gentle cries falling from his lips as his hands clung to her. "Oh, Shane, it's going to be okay. He'll wake up, he will."

"He did," Shane confirmed then, shoulders still shaking with the force of his cries. "He already did."

"That's great, honey. He's going to be okay then." Yuna breathed a sigh of relief. Her boy would not have to lose the person he loved so soon in life. Fate would not be so cruel today.

"But Mom, I'm sorry. I'm so sorry, that's not how I wanted you to find out. I was going to tell you and Dad, I promise. I'm so sorry."

"Shane, no, hey," Yuna said then, pulling back from the hug so she could look at him. As he did so often in these situations, Shane pulled his gaze to the side, then screwed his eyes up tight so he wouldn't be able to look her in the eyes. "Hey, hey, look at me. Shane, look at me."

"I really tried, Mom. I did, I tried."

The words left unsaid broke Yuna's heart in two.

I really tried not to be gay. I really tried to hide who I loved. I tried so hard to hide who I am, Mom.

“Shane, I need you to look at me now.” Yuna had figured out over the years when she needed to force this. She didn’t always, not since he’d let her know that sometimes looking people in the eyes made his skin feel like ants were crawling around underneath it. This was important, though. She didn’t ever want him to think that *that* was something she would want for him.

It took several seconds, but finally Shane lifted his eyes to look at her. They were tearful and afraid, enough to nearly take Yuna’s breath away.

Oh, my poor boy. I’ve failed you, when did you get so sad? Why didn’t I notice?

“Shane, you are our son,” Yuna said in that same forceful tone. She reached up to hold his cheeks with both hands, brushing away some of the tears there. “*Our son*. We will always love you. We may not always say the right thing, but who you love will never change how much we care about you. Even if it is Rozanov.”

“*Mom.*”

“What? You *had* to pick the bad boy type? You couldn’t have found some nice boy in Montreal?” Yuna teased, relief flooding her at the tearful laugh that Shane gave her.

“No, Mom, it’s always been him.”

Oh, oh her baby is in love. The way his entire expression melted with those words made it obvious. It was the same way that David looked at her, and she’s sure the same way that she looks at him in return.

“Always? This hasn’t been since the All-Star Game?” David asked then, stepping forward and holding onto Shane’s shoulder in comfort.

Shane laughed then, shaking his head. “No, uh, it’s been longer than that. Since our rookie year.”

“Your rookie year?” David gasped, wearing his shock obviously.

“No, that is wrong. Since before,” a new voice chimed in, rough with sleep and pain medications.

“Ilya,” Shane groaned, but the warm smile still remained.

“Since summer before,” Rozanov corrected with the most gentle look Yuna has ever seen on the man. *He melts for her son. Oh, he’s in love too.*

“Since the summer before your rookie year,” David repeated, clearly still as off-kilter as Yuna felt. This was an entirely new situation, one she had no clue how to navigate properly. But they’d already made so many mistakes if Shane had been that terrified to tell them, and Yuna refused to make any more. If they needed to be here to fix whatever had gone wrong before, damn it they would be here.

“How are you feeling, Rozanov, um, Ilya?” Yuna asked, keeping her voice low. She remembered the last time Shane had gotten a concussion, and how any little noise could make the pain worse.

“Mm,” Rozanov hummed, as if taking stock of himself. “Head hurts. Will be fine.”

“He can be discharged if he has someone to watch him 24/7,” Shane explained. “I’m taking him back to the cottage once the doctor signs the orders.”

“What? Honey, you have a playoff game in New York,” Yuna reminded him. Did he even know that the Metros still pulled off the win?

Did he even still care? Had he finally found something, someone, that could eclipse his love for hockey?

“I know, and I want to be there,” Shane said, “but I need to be here.”

“I told Hollander already if he misses playoff game and lets dinosaur win Cup I will give *him* concussion,” Roza-*Ilya* stated.

A startled laugh bubbled up in Yuna’s throat at the matter-of-fact words. “I guess that answers my question of if you ever let each other win,” she said simply. “I’m starting to understand why you picked him, Shane.”

“Mom,” Shane groaned, dropping his quickly reddening face into his hands.

“What? I like that he has his priorities straight.”

“I’ve won the Cup before, I can win it again another year.”

“Mrs. Hollander, please knock sense into your son while I am stuck in bed,” Rozanov told her, and honestly (irritatingly), Yuna could feel the affection for him start to grow in her. “I am fine here. You go win Cup.”

“Shane, you’re going to New York, end of story,” Yuna told him, holding up a hand when he opened his mouth to argue. “But, Ilya, there is no way we’re leaving you here when you can recover at home. Isn’t there anyone we can call for you?”

Rozanov remained silent, but Shane answered for him. “No, there isn’t. Svetlana is in Russia right now, and family is...no.”

Yuna would have never pictured this being the way her day would go. Even during that car ride as she imagined scenario after scenario, this was not one of them. She imagined that Rozanov would be as rough off of the ice as he was on it, and that his interview personality was the way he acted all of the time. She never pictured the soft look he gave Shane, the one that said he would do anything for him. She never imagined the gentle words, teasing but insistent that Shane not give up something important for him. Rozanov looked after Shane even when he was the one laying in a hospital bed. She could see the love between them so obviously as Shane returned to holding onto his hand, and as Rozanov took up the mantle of

brushing his thumb over Shane's skin, a simple act of tethering comfort in a high-stress situation. Rozanov loved Shane with everything he had.

And that, that was all Yuna ever wanted for her boy.

So she nodded and looked to David once for permission, even if she knew he would be okay with whatever plan she devised.

"Then you'll come home with us."

It was Shane who responded first—spluttering and sending himself into a violent coughing fit. "Mom, what? No," he argued, looking between Rozanov and her with wide eyes.

"What's the problem? We can look after him, he can recover somewhere comfortable, and *you* can still go to the playoffs. It's perfect, Shane, so what's the issue?"

"I-Mom, you just met him," Shane exclaimed, wincing and apologizing as Rozanov moved to grab his head. "Dad, *please*."

"I think it's a great idea, if R-Ilya's agreeable."

All eyes in the room turned to the Russian, who only seemed to have eyes for Shane. The two men had a silent conversation, one that obviously Shane lost when he sighed and began to rub at his temple.

"Thank you, Mrs. Hollander," Rozanov said finally.

"Please, it's Yuna. Now where is this doctor? There's no reason to keep you here longer than you have to."

Having Ilya Rozanov as a guest in their house was far easier than Yuna thought it would be.

The personality he showed off to the media was clearly not all there was to the man. He certainly had some attitude to him, but he was always respectful to Yuna and David. Rozanov even tried to help around the house, despite their insistence that he was only there to recover. On more than one occasion Yuna had to shoo him out of the kitchen and back to the couch, and she'd heard David continuously tell him that he didn't need to pick up around the living room, that he should be resting.

When David had a glass of vodka chilled on ice, Ilya had hummed in agreement at the choice. It launched David into the long story of how he'd discovered this particular brand, and Ilya nodded along with at least observed interest. David hardly had anyone to talk to about these things, since Shane didn't drink and Yuna preferred something far less harsh on her tongue if she were to indulge.

Ilya kept her company while she cooked, after she made it clear that he wasn't allowed to help her while he recovered. He would sit at the kitchen island. Sometimes they spoke, and other times they'd sit in easy silence. She always dimmed the lights more in the kitchen if he joined her, careful of his concussion.

“This is Hollander?” Ilya had asked once, holding up a small framed photo of Shane skating on a pond nearby their old family home.

“It is,” Yuna answered, voice soft as she was reminded of how small and innocent her boy had once been. “He’s five in that picture. He saw some older boys out there passing a puck around and demanded to join them. David tried telling him no, that he wouldn’t be able to keep up because he was so young, but God, that never stopped Shane. Honestly, it might’ve made him more determined to do it.”

“That sounds like Shane,” Ilya agreed, something like a smile pulling at the corners of his lips.

“He wasn’t good at first, but he just kept trying. He started asking David all the time to go out there on that pond with him, to teach him how to hold a stick and pass the puck. The rest is history.”

Yuna’s boy, born to play hockey.

“I started hockey when I was twelve,” Ilya spoke up then.

Even as they grew more comfortable with each other, Ilya hardly ever spoke of home. There were vague comments, enough for Yuna to know that his father had recently passed but that he hadn’t been a kind man, that his brother was not currently in his life anymore, and his mother...

Well, he said it was long ago that she’d died, but Yuna knows that grief clearly. She hadn’t been so young as twelve when she lost her mother, but it still devastated her when it happened. He didn’t say what had happened, but knew from the spark of hurt in his eyes that it still stayed with him.

Yuna paused chopping the vegetables then, setting the knife aside so she could focus on his story. Ilya never spoke of home, of his family, so this was important.

“Was it...?”

“After,” Ilya spoke, his accent thicker around the word and around the grief she knew had to still be choking him. “I did not love hockey at first, but I was good. My father was more... tolerable? Was less critical once I proved worth.”

It was a good thing Mr. Rozanov was already gone, because Yuna’s anger alone would have been enough for her to fly to Russia and give him a piece of her mind. Prove worth? *Prove worth?*

How dare this boy ever have that kind of weight placed on his shoulders. It was no wonder he was the way he was out on the ice. She wondered how he never cracked under all of the pressure his family clearly placed on him.

“Do you enjoy hockey now?” Yuna asked, scared to hear the answer.

It took Ilya a long time to answer. She'd long since resumed preparing dinner, and David had stepped into the room to start setting up the dinner table. Yuna had almost forgotten that she even asked the question when Ilya's voice, more quiet than she was used to hearing from the bold man, sounded.

"I enjoy hockey. I think Shane loves it more than I do."

And that rocked everything Yuna knew about the man. She'd assumed he was just like her Shane—lived and breathed hockey, would scarily be lost without it. He wasn't, though, and that was almost a breath of fresh relief for her. He would be good for Shane, could understand the love for the game but wouldn't feed into Shane's obsession with perfection at it. He could keep her boy grounded in a way that she'd never been able to.

Yuna understood this even better when they all sat down for Shane's playoff game.

Ilya was still recovering, but there was no keeping him from the TV screen that night. Though it had only been a few nights spent all together, he'd grown more comfortable with them. So much so that he immediately curled up on the couch, wrapped in one of their blankets. *The blanket Shane always uses when he's home*, Yuna thought.

"They do not protect him," Ilya observed a few minutes into the second period, when Shane is checked into the boards again.

Yuna hadn't noticed it. She knew Shane had been having a rough game, but she chalked it up to this being a playoff game. New York had not had such a good run in years, so she'd assumed this was them trying their best to not disappoint their fans.

Once Ilya said it, Yuna couldn't stop noticing it. The way the defensemen will knock off Admirals from the other players, but won't stop them from checking Shane. The way that they don't start a fight or retaliate after a sketchy check that had Shane sidelined for five whole minutes of the second period.

The way Shane's eyes are dimmed during the interview before the third period. He always looked so joyous while he played, so determined when he gave these interviews.

Now, now Yuna's son just looked miserable.

"What's happening?" she asked, though the burning anger in her chest made it apparent that she already knew.

She knew it even as Ilya said it aloud.

"They did not take news well," Ilya said, his voice almost shaking with his own rage. "They hope he gets hurt, because he is gay."

David stood then, disappearing into the next room. Yuna didn't call after him because she knew what he was doing—running from this game, avoiding it so he doesn't lose himself in this righteous anger for their son.

There was a game when Shane was fourteen.

He was already being scouted for the U-18 Canadian team. By rules, he was still too young to play but that didn't stop the team from reaching out to make it known that next year they wanted him. The attention was amazing but it caused an obvious rift between Shane and his teammates at school.

Suddenly, they stopped protecting their center during games. Shane took more and more hits until one that knocked his head bad enough that he had to miss the rest of the season. Yuna remembered sitting in the stands, holding her breath as her baby went down on the ice. He'd tried to stand up, had even thankfully managed to pull himself to his knees before the rinkside medic stopped him.

None of his teammates checked on him. Not on the ice or off of it.

Shane had been alienated by his skill. He'd cried that night, wondering if he should miss a few shots on purpose or trip during a game to make them like him again. Yuna had shut that thought process down immediately, telling him that he could survive through this. That their isolation of him was further proof that he belonged in the big leagues, where he would be respected for his skills not harmed for them.

Now here he was, being isolated by his own team again.

It was so much worse this time, so much more painful to watch every check and every unprotected blow to Shane, knowing that the reason why it was happening was because of who he was, who he *loved*.

By the end of the third period, Yuna was already researching teams that needed a center and who wouldn't exceed the salary cap by taking him on.

"I am sorry, Yuna," Ilya told her later that night. They'd all decided to go to bed early that night after the Metros loss, after the devastating treatment Shane suffered on the ice. Still, Ilya stayed to help her fold up the blankets in the living room first.

"For what, honey?"

"Shane would not be hurt by teammates if I did not look back."

It took longer than it should for Yuna to realize what he was referencing. The last few days have exhausted her, from sudden and new realizations to spending the rest of the evening researching and planning how to get her son away from the team she'd grown up loving. When she did, a pained sound escaped her lips before she could stop it.

"Ilya, no," she commanded, using that same firm voice she used with Shane when she needed him to understand something important. "You can't think like that."

"Maybe Metros would protect him if it is not me. Maybe we...I don't know, maybe is better if we stage break up."

Yuna dropped the blanket she was in the middle of folding, taking the few steps she needed to stand right in front of the man. She reached out, taking hold of each of his upper arms the

way she sometimes did for Shane to ground him in the conversation. “Ilya, I need you to understand something.”

When he didn’t answer, she continued. “I have seen Shane so unhappy this year. He looked like something was killing him, but he wouldn’t tell us what was wrong. I suspect now that you two were on a break?”

Ilya didn’t speak, but he nodded. His expression betrayed his hurt, looking as if the thought of an unhappy Shane might tear him in two.

“I’ve never seen my son in love until that day in the hospital,” Yuna told him. “You make Shane happy. You’re *good* for him. Don’t you dare ever suggest otherwise.”

“He is getting hurt by them, Yuna.” His voice is thick with his accent and tears that haven’t started falling yet.

Oh, this poor broken boy. The world has not been kind to you, has it?

“We will get him out of there. Believe me, first thing tomorrow I will be calling everyone I know at the Metros and finding out exactly what they think will come out of allowing Shane to be treated that way. We will get him to a better situation, Ilya, but that doesn’t involve leaving you behind. You’re a part of this family now, whether you like it or not.”

“I do like it.” The words are quiet, barely above a whisper as though it is a dark secret to share.

“I know, I know,” Yuna whispered back, using her grip to pull him into a hug. Ilya rests his chin over her shoulder, his body bent awkwardly to allow the position. The hold seemed to crack something in him, because soon he’s gripping the back of her shirt like Shane always did when he needed to cry. Yuna brushes one hand through his blonde curls, feeling her own tears well up as the man breaks down in her arms.

This man had been hurt by too many people. He’d been left out in the cold by too many others. Damn it all if Yuna would allow that to ever happen again.

Hours later, when Ilya had cried all of the tears he’d been saving for years, waiting for the comforting touch of a mother to let them out, Yuna was still awake. She sat on the couch, Shane’s—and Ilya’s—blanket spread out over her lap. The rest of her house was perfectly decorated in matching colors and patterns. This blanket was cheaper, bought in a time when they did not have all of the money Shane insisted on sharing with them. It had cartoon images of hockey sticks and pucks decorating it, a children’s blanket that Shane inexplicably chose to hold onto.

Shane came back late in the night to find Yuna still sitting there. A recap show of the game was on but she couldn’t hear a single word they said.

“How’s Ilya?”

Yuna smiled at his warm protection of the other man.

“Sleeping,” she told him. “He’s in your room. He’s been feeling better.”

“Good,” Shane said, already eyeing the stairs as if he knew he should be polite and talk with her, but wanting nothing more than to check on the other man. “Why are you still awake?”

“I’m looking at teams who need a new center next season,” Yuna explained. “We can talk about it tomorrow, but I think it’s time t-”

“You’re right. I can’t stay with the Metros.”

Fuck, they’d truly hurt her boy.

Shane loved that team. She knew that he would do anything for them. They’d truly betrayed his trust if he was willing to walk away without fighting her on it.

“I’m so proud of you,” Yuna whispered, standing to give him a hug. How many tears would she cry this week? Would these boys ever stop making her weep? “And Shane? I really like him. You picked a good one.”

“I know I did,” Shane answered, squeezing her once before stepping back. “I’m glad you and Dad see it too. Goodnight, Mom.”

“Goodnight,” Yuna said. As Shane began to climb the steps, Yuna realized something else and called out, “Keep the door open while you two are in there.”

“Mom, that rule was only for girls.”

“That was before I knew I didn’t have to worry about you and girls. Now leave the door open.”

Yuna didn’t miss the smile Shane gave her as he finished going up the steps. She didn’t hear the sound of a door closing.

Yuna sighed and sat back down on the couch, tugging the childish blanket back over her. She’d never used it before, preferring her soft blue plush blanket over the thin material, but it was fitting now.

Hockey had always been the one simple part of Yuna’s life. It had simple, undeniable truths that could not be disproved.

Until Ilya Rozanov got a concussion and shook up everything that Yuna knew about the world.

The Montreal Metros were not the best team around, not if they were willing to betray her son for the simple fact that he loved a man.

The Boston Raiders were still terrible, but they couldn’t have been that bad if they kept Ilya.

Shane Hollander was still fantastic at hockey, and Yuna had no doubt that he would help to build another team to the dynasty he’d helped make out of the Metros.

Perhaps most devastatingly different—the Hollanders did not hate Ilya Rozanov.

Shane loved him. He'd loved him from the beginning, since the summer before their rookie season. Shane loved him enough to out himself as gay to the entire world, the consequences be damned. He loved him enough to risk his hockey career with the Metros, the team he'd grown up loving. Shane loved Ilya Rozanov.

David loved Ilya Rozanov. He loved having someone to discuss rare vodkas with. David's eyes lit up every time Ilya offered to help Yuna with dinner, and every time Ilya told a story about Shane that they didn't already know.

Yuna loved Ilya Rozanov too. She loved how kind he was. She loved the outpouring of love he had for her son, who deserved to have someone who understood just how truly special he was. She loved how despite how cruel fate had been to him over the years, Ilya Rozanov never let his soul harden. She even came to love his sass, finding herself laughing at his quips instead of the usual annoyance now that she knew the kind boy underneath them.

No, the Hollanders did not hate Ilya Rozanov.

They all loved him.

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