the first steps

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at https://archiveofourown.org/works/79781586.

Rating:	General 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, Yuna Hollander, Ottawa Centaurs Team Ensemble (Game Changers), Original Children of Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov
Additional Tags:	Mpreg | Male Pregnancy, Alpha/Beta/Omega Dynamics, Married Couple, Married Life, Past Mpreg | Male Pregnancy, Married Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov, Post-Book 6: The Long Game (Game Changers), Alpha Ilya Rozanov, Omega Shane Hollander, Hollanov Dads, Slice of Life, Not Beta Read
Language:	English
Series:	Part 18 of hollanov parenthood adventure ✨
Collections:	Anonymous
Stats:	Published: 2026-02-18 Words: 1,856 Chapters: 1/1

the first steps

by Anonymous

Summary

They were waiting for the big goal— learning to walk.

That was the one that they were most excited for.

The one Shane was eager to see, he was so sure she would do it any day now.

Or the one where Sofia walks for the first time

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Babies when they were born always had certain milestones in their development to achieve which Shane was very familiar with.

He may or may not have scoured baby development websites for hours and hours on end when he was pregnant with Sofia. It wasn't like he had much else to do when they took him off the ice, practically banning him from setting foot on it.

So Shane had all the time in the world to create an entire binder of color coded goals, things that babies should be achieving at certain stages and what months they typically met those goals in. It was his project and he took great pride in it.

So much so that when Sofia was born he was so excited to start filling it out and taking pictures that everyone knew about by then.

All the guys on the team enjoyed looking at the book, learning things for their own pups that they didn't even know.

Sofia had met every goal on time, not that Shane would have been disappointed with her if she hadn't but he worked on them tirelessly with her.

The tummy time from birth, making sure she was getting enough language development from being talked to in both English and Russian, sitting up unassisted, rolling on time, and his most important — not using baby talk all the time since studies showed that babies learned best if they were talked to like an adult.

That didn't stop Ilya from talking to his baby girl, cooing at her every chance he got.

She was their entire world.

They were waiting for the big goal— learning to walk.

That was the one that they were most excited for.

The one Shane was eager to see, he was so sure she would do it any day now.

Everything in her development up until this point was typical, she was on time for everything and it felt good to check the boxes whenever they brought her for checkups at the doctor's office.

There was one little thing though, Sofia didn't seem to take much interest in walking after she figured out how to scoot around on her bottom. She would use her little legs to shuffle around and it was comical to watch — it got her from point A to point B so she had stopped trying to pull up and take a few steps away from furniture. Which was mildly concerning.

Sure, Sofia tried gliding but realized she was faster using the shuffling method.

That was where Shane started to get a little worried.

"Ilya, what if she decides that she wants to just shuffle around for the rest of her life? I mean it's possible!" Shane chewed on his inner cheek, watching Sofia play one night after dinner when they were snuggled up on the couch watching the highlights from New York vs Carolina which quickly turned into the dancing fruit whenever Sofia started to rub her eyes tiredly, fussing over every little minor inconvenience she had to endure.

The minor inconvenience in question? The star shape not fitting in the square cut out of her shape sorting box.

"Sofi, it's okay here let's just watch your bedtime fruit." Shane suggested as he scooped their pup up into his arms stopping when he realized they could practice walking to the couch. Ilya already turned it to her 'sleepy time show' ready with the lavender blanket combo to tag team her with. She had already had her bath earlier so they were able to soak up the cuddles before their game the next day until their pup was ready to doze off.

Hand over tiny hand, Shane led Sofia around the living room helping her take one step then another.

"Go Sofa go!" Ilya cheered, sitting up to watch their pup practice walking her little legs bouncing with each shaky step.

"Papapa." Sofia babbled on a mission to get to her papa, dimples prominent with her chubby cheeks stretched into a smile.

That was enough to melt Ilya's heart, he was practically a puddle of mush by the time they made it to the couch finally. Sofia was exhausted but that was the goal anyways, it was time for bed— for her anyways.

"Mwah, mwah, mwah my little walker." Each 'mwah' was exaggerated by a kiss to the cheek, Ilya could hardly contain his excitement which of course transferred to Sofia. Even if she hadn't walked by herself, every step counted.

They had quite the day ahead of them, they were playing the Admirals at home and it would be the game that allowed them to clinch a spot in the playoffs so it was a pretty big deal.

Yuna would keep Sofia, her little bag was packed (not without tears being shed by both Shane and Ilya) and she would stay with her grandparents for the day.

"What if she walks tomorrow and we don't see it?" It was a question Shane asked every day and every day Ilya's answer was the same.

"She will walk when she's ready— we'll see it, trust me sweetheart."

"Look there's daddy and papa." Yuna pointed out Shane and Ilya in their black and red jerseys zipping by on the ice.

Shane felt it in his bones — this would be *the* day. He just knew it. There was just something that told him this day was special for some reason.

Making their way down to the glass for warm-ups, Yuna held up Sofia bouncing her gently in her arms reaching up to adjust her little knitted hat and her headphones to ensure they were snug enough. "Look, Sofi. Who is that?"

Sofia's eyebrows furrowed in concentration before a dimpled grin made its way onto her face, unfaltering the second she realized exactly who that was waving at her. It was her papa and behind him was daddy! She clapped her hands, letting out the cutest squeal that made the people around them laugh.

"Oh my gosh is that Hollander's baby? She's *so* cute!" A girl beside them cooed at Sofia and another fan waved at the pup.

"She looks more like Rozanov I think." Another fan commented, all in good nature. The Centaurs had the best fans and Yuna thanked them for their compliments, so proud of her boys and their baby girl.

They made their way up to their seats again, getting settled before puck drop. Sofia wanted so badly to make her grandma walk back down the stairs, her little legs wiggling every chance she got.

"We have to stay in our seats now, Sof. We'll get to go walk at intermission." Yuna promised her granddaughter, wrapping her up in her blankie as she opened a pack of puffs for her to munch on while they watched her daddy and papa clinch their spot in the playoffs.

"You heard it here folks, your very own Ottawa Centaurs have made the playoffs! We can't wait to cheer them on during their cup run!" The announcers concluded the game with a final buzzer — it was a close call 5-4 but they did it.

Shane could hardly contain his joy, eyes bright as he collided into Ilya who was waiting with open arms. Everyone was celebrating, feeling the relief that they had solidified their spot in the playoffs — a chance to win the cup.

Of course Shane and Ilya were asked to do media, Ilya being captain and Shane because they wanted to hear what it meant to him to playing for the cup with his husband. That was a question that never seemed to get old.

Ilya was mid-sentence answering a question just outside the locker room when they both heard a familiar babbling sound following by some happy squeals.

"Sofia! Sofia you are too fast scooting around like that!" Yuna followed behind the pup, her curls released from the confines of her beanie wild and free. Her hair was still short, the curls were loose like Ilya's but Shane was absolutely obsessed with them — just like he was with her.

Then suddenly…it happened.

Sofia pushed up off the ground, steadying her little wobbly self and of course Yuna was right there to catch her if she needed — but she didn't. She didn't need anyone. The little pup

started to take one wobbly step in front of the other towards…towards him and Ilya. Her eyes fixated on them both.

"S-She did it." Shane stammered in disbelief, tears welling up in his eyes. "Oh my god she actually did it." He breathed shallow afraid it would somehow startle her.

Ilya had paused answering questions, his undivided attention on Sofia. The proudest smile that could rival sunshine itself took over the stone look he had before and he couldn't hold himself back anymore as he swept Sofia up into his arms.

"She did it before her first birthday! She is overachiever, just like her daddy!" Ilya beamed, there couldn't have been a prouder father in the entire world than him right at this moment.

"What- what do you think made her finally do it?" Shane was trying hard not to burst into tears, overwhelmed with emotion at the moment. His baby — she was growing up right in front of his eyes.

"I guess she just saw something she wanted." Yuna smiled softly, so proud of her boys, proud of her girl — this day was definitely a day to remember.

Later on that night when they were in bed after they had put their sweet little pup in her pajamas and had finished up their nightly bedtime routine, they laid there taking it all in.

"She walked. She actually walked." Shane repeated, half in disbelief. He couldn't believe she had actually walked for them for the very first time — just before her first birthday.

Ilya shifted in bed, wrapping his arms around Shane's waist to pull him on top of him letting him lay there. "Well she does come from you, Mr. Perfect." He teased, pressing his forehead against Shane's as he leaned down to press a kiss against his lips.

"I am not perfect."

"You were going to take her to the doctor the second she turned one if she wasn't walking." Ilya accused, knowing that was *exactly* what his husband would have done given the circumstances.

There were some babies that didn't walk until after their first birthday or so that was what Ilya had read but Shane was so sure it was before.

Shane happened to be flipping through his phone as he landed on the team's instagram page, a little highlight reel tagging them both. He clicked it not expecting to see the entire moment caught on video of Sofia wobbling towards them for the first time— and here came the water works.

"Look how little she looks." Shane stroked the screen as if he hadn't seen her in months — she was literally in her room next door and they had seen her an hour before.

"She's our big little girl." Ilya murmured sleepily, three seconds away from snoring.

"Yeah she is… I'm just glad she found something worth walking towards."

End Notes

💌 this came to me because I wanted to write sofia's first steps 🩷 they were such a special moment for shane and ilya that I had to write it out~ hope you guys enjoy! if you ever have any requests let me know what you wanna see i'm always open to suggestions ✨

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