

You've Got Mail!

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You've Got Mail!

by [wermbrian](#)

Summary

The hockey world is shocked when #1 draft pick Ilya Rozanov backs out of the NHL last second and opts to play for the KHL in his home country. Nobody knows why, and he leaves North America without comment. So Shane does what any kid with a crush did in 2010.

He emails him.

Or; the Hollanov epistolary email fic

Chapter 1: but i do

Chapter Notes

in this au, everything is the same up until their after first hookup. everything after is canon divergence (obviously)!

formatting was clunky but all dates are in MM/DD/YYYY bc I am American and the times are in the sender's time zone.

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

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

09/08/2010 16:12:52 EDT

Subject: Hey :)

Hey Rozanov,

Sorry if this is weird. I got your email address off of one of the CCM communication emails, I hope this is the right one. I just heard about you going to the KHL. They didn't announce why, but I hope everything's okay. I know you were excited about Boston but I bet it will be nice being closer to home :)

Anyway I hope this isn't weird. I just wanted to say that I'm sad I won't get to play against you this season. You're an awesome player to watch. I think I already told you that though, haha :)

Okay bye I guess,
Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
09/21/2010 01:34:17 MSK

Subject: Re: Hey :)

yes i play for khl now. you are welcome hollander. now you get to be best player in the nhl.

good luck at season opener

- rozanov

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
09/22/2010 08:12:40 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Hey :)

Rozanov,

I saw you scored two goals in your first game. Congrats. Impressive.

We don't play our first game for another week but I'm really excited. We've been practicing a lot and it's been hard but I like the challenge. Pike and Boiziau have been really welcoming and the rest of the guys are okay too. I'm playing second line for pre-season but coach says he wants to pull me up to first which is cool but I don't want to rock the boat or anything and make anyone upset. It's been kinda unreal being an actual player for the Metros, like that's always been my dream ya know? I used to have Metros posters on my wall and now there's a poster of me. Crazy. Did you always want to be a professional hockey player?

It's good to hear from you.

- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
09/30/2010 01:34:17 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Hey :)

you are the first ever person to be sad to play first line. boring

my father always wanted me to be a professional hockey player. is that the same thing?

- rozanov

P.s. if i get a Shane hollander poster will you sign it?

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
10/02/2010 07:42:44 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Hey :)

Rozanov,

I'm not sad to be playing first line, I just feel a bit awkward. Like everyone on the team has worked their whole lives for this, it's kinda weird to just be handed it, idk. Plus everyone is talking about me being Japanese and I don't want anyone to think Montreal is just trying to be progressive or something by making a big deal about me or anything. I just like playing hockey and all the attention is kinda overwhelming I guess? Like, they're comparing me to Scott Hunter and he's like a legend and I haven't even played my first game yet. idk.

I don't think your father wanting you to be a professional hockey player counts as you wanting it, but I think I kinda get it? My mom is obsessed with hockey and she was so excited that I really liked it too, I don't know what she would do if I didn't. I'm an only child so I get a lot of attention and it can feel like a lot of pressure sometimes but it's not like she forced me or anything. Do you have any siblings?

I'm excited about the home opener but I just heard I have to do one of the interviews in French and I kinda suck at French. Like I can speak it but my accent isn't very good. I can't imagine doing all my interviews in my second language like you did.

- Hollander

P.s. Sure, if I can get a signed Rozanov one.

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
10/14/2010 19:38:13 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Hey :)

scott hunter the dinosaur? no, you are better. you have also worked your whole life for this. don't feel bad for getting something you deserve. that's stupid. also stupid is complaining about getting too much attention. you could be like me and no one would notice that you are gone.

i have a brother but he is bad at hockey. bad at most things actually. he has a daughter and she is perfect angel but that is all he is good for. i am taking her to zoo tomorrow)))

you play boston next week. good luck

- rozanov

P.s. you can put it above your bed so you can look at me while you jerk off

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
10/22/2010 09:36:07 EDT

Subject: Montreal 4, Boston 1

Hey Rozanov,

The subject line was getting kinda long so I changed it, I hope you like it ;) haha. They could really have used you. It was a pretty rough game for Boston tbh.

That's so cool you have a niece. I bet you're a really great uncle.

Hayden Pike invited me to have dinner with him and his wife and kids last night. Jackie is his wife and she's so nice and even made me food that I can eat with my diet. Hayden hated it lol but I thought it was really good. His kids are super cute too and Jackie said she's gonna get them Hollander jerseys to wear to the games sometimes. Hayden said that she's never let them wear any other jersey other than his so I think that means she likes me haha.

I hope you like your new team. Do you like being close to your family?

I just sent you a link to a YouTube video I found about a bunny being friends with a husky. Unlikely friends, kinda like us haha. I keep going down these rabbit holes about random things and the other day I was like 15 mins late to lunch with my parents because I kept watching videos like this one. Kinda dumb but I thought maybe your niece would like it.

I think you have a game tonight? Or maybe it already happened. I'm so bad with time zones haha.

Well anyway, good luck.

- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
11/03/2010 22:19:36 MSK

Subject: hollander has jokes now?

you are the bunny, yes?

thank you for sharing. i showed ofeliya and she thought it was cute.

my friend svetlana was at your game, she is friend from home but is in boston most of the year. her father is famous russian goalie sergei vetrov. she said you looked very good

team is fine. it is good for me to be near my family, yes.

- rozanov

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

11/12/2010 10:40:24 EDT

Subject: CCM email :/

Hey,

Congrats on the hat trick. Just so you know, that took a lot of humility to type because I still haven't gotten one yet and so that's just another thing you've beaten me at. Also if you keep fighting like that though you're not gonna have any teeth left by the end of this season.

I saw the email about CCM not releasing the campaign we did together. For the record I think that's bullshit. I can say something if you want me to. It wouldn't be a big deal, I really don't want to have to do a replacement shoot. Besides I wanted to see those pics lol. Anyway just let me know I guess.

Congrats again,

- Hollander

P.s. I'm writing this in the hotel room and Hayden asked what I was typing and I said an email and he said to who and I panicked and said a girl. Now he's asking too many questions so I just told him her name is Lily and she lives in Europe haha. So hey Lily :) lol

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

11/15/2010 20:44:23 MSK

Subject: Re: CCM email :/

you watch my games? you are a fan of me, yes?

good, you have much to learn from me. first is improving your backhand. if you had a better backhand you would not have lost the puck to hammel in the third period against new york.

don't say anything to ccm, it is ok. even though you did look so pretty that day.

- rozanov

P.s. hi jane

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

11/15/2010 19:22:16 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: CCM email :/

You're such an asshole lol. The only thing I have to learn from you is how to rack up penalty minutes.

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

11/17/2010 23:14:46 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: CCM email :/

i can also teach you how to chirp. since you obviously do not know how.

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
11/17/2010 21:09:04 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Re: CCM email :/

Fuck you, Rozanov.

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
12/25/2010 07:22:18 EDT

Subject: (no subject)

Merry Christmas, Rozanov.

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
12/25/2010 19:54:20 MSK

Subject: Re: (no subject)

russian christmas is on january 7.

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

01/07/2011 06:32:18 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: (no subject)

С Рождеством, Розанов.

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

01/07/2011 23:54:24 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: (no subject)

ah you speak russian now?

С Рождеством, Hollander.

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

02/05/2011 12:21:18 CDT

Subject: All Stars game :)

Hey Rozanov,

You sat out a game because of an injured shoulder? I hope you're okay, that sucks. Are you back playing soon?

I'm in Nashville right now because I was selected for the All Stars game :) I went out with some of the guys last night and they were really fun to hang out with. I don't drink during the

season but we went to this really nice bar and it was actually pretty cool. I think you'd like it. We could have gone if you had played for Boston because you definitely would have made All Stars. That would have been fun haha.

Anyway I hope you're doing well.

- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
02/08/2011 09:12:45 MSK

Subject: Re: All Stars game :)

my biggest fan shane hollander wants to take me on a date? sveta will be very jealous.

congrats on beating hunters accuracy shot record. it must have been like a billion year old record so very exciting for you. also it means that i was right, you are better than him. not better than me though. still no hat trick?

shoulder is fine. playing tonight.

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
02/14/2011 22:52:16 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: All Stars game :)

Well I just meant like, with all the guys haha.

Also, check my stats from tonight. A hat trick just for you.

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
02/17/2011 00:34:49 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: All Stars game :)

aw no date with shane hollander (((

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
02/18/2011 08:22:50 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: All Stars game :)

Fuck you lol.

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
06/13/2011 02:14:10 EDT

Subject: thinking of u

Hey again. I'm in Las Vegas for the NHL awards ceremony and I think I'm drunk, haha. Scott hunter made me take shots with him and the other rookies up for the award and I don't usually drink but it was kinda fun lol. Oh yeah, I won rookie of the year :) it's really exciting but can I tell you something? The whole time I was just thinking of you. Like no offense to the other nominees but I kinda knew I was gonna win and I would have been way more nervous if you had been there. Nervous because I wouldn't know who would win between us and nervous because I bet you look really good in a tuxedo haha. So yeah I guess I just

wanted to tell you that I was thinking of you tonight, and I know you said that no one even notices ur gone but I do. So yeah.

Anyway.
Goodnight, Rozanov

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
06/13/2011 18:24:18 MSK

Subject: Re: thinking of u

congratulations. big night for you
goodnight hollander.

Chapter End Notes

i know some of y'all are babies, but if you were around to have an email address in 2010, you know that not only are shane24hockey and roz818181 period-accurate email addresses, they're also, like, the least embarrassing i could have made them.

Chapter 2: wondering

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

09/08/2013 15:22:01 EDT

Subject: Good luck this season

Hey Rozanov,

It looks like your season has started off good. I've been reading a lot on the strategic differences between the KHL and the NHL and it's really interesting. Even though I knew the ice was different, I didn't realize how much Russian hockey tends to be more focused on precision and passing versus speed and aggression. Especially because you're such a quick and decisive player. Anyway, I've been learning a lot.

Did you have a good summer? I spent most of mine at my parents house in Ottawa, I'm thinking of building a cottage out there and so they helped me look at some places. My favorite is this spot by a lake a little bit outside of the city, it's really private and the sunsets are so nice. I love Canada in the summer. What's Russia like in the summer?

Just wanted to say hi and I hope you're doing well.

- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

09/18/2013 20:03:48 MSK

Subject: Re: Good luck this season

hollander -

you spend your time off of hockey reading about hockey? you are so boring.

my summer was good. svetlana was visiting moscow for a few months. it was good to have her back with me. it is nice here in the summer. not too hot but still sunny.

you play against solovyov next game. he is quick but stupid. easier to get around him by cutting through the middle. good luck

- rozanov

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

09/22/2013 09:10:21 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Good luck this season

Good advice. You played with him in juniors, yeah?

I'm glad you had a good time with Svetlana. Is she like your girlfriend?

- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

10/03/2013 18:24:18 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Good luck this season

yes, in juniors. and no, svetlana is not my girlfriend. sometimes we fuck but it is not serious. i love her but not in that way.

- rozanov

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

10/06/2013 21:32:50 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Good luck this season

Got it. Well I bet it's nice to have her around.

Do you still see your old coaches son?

- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

10/18/2013 01:20:33 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Good luck this season

yes but not like you mean it, i think. he is a friend, kind of. but he has growing up to do (? i think that's how you say it.)

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

10/20/2013 22:15:53 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Good luck this season

Oh okay. I was just wondering.

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
11/02/2013 13:14:26 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Good luck this season

oh my god hollander you are so boring. you want to ask me a question, yes? then ask me the question.

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
11/10/2013 00:02:17 EDT

Subject: my question

Haha sorry, I just don't really know what to say. I guess I was just wondering if you ever think about that night in the hotel? Because I do, I think about it a lot. That might be weird to say and I know you live in Russia and you see other people which is totally fine (obviously) but I really liked it and I just hope it was good for you too. I wanted to do it again. I want to do it again.

Sorry if you don't feel the same way or anything. I guess I just wanted you to know.

- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
11/11/2013 18:24:11 MSK

Subject: Re: my question

ah so you talking about russian hockey was you trying to flirt with me.

Hollander. if i knew that was the last time i was going to see you i would have kissed you all night.

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
11/12/2013 06:48:31 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: my question

Oh.

Do you really think that's the last time we'll ever see each other?

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
11/14/2013 20:39:09 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: my question

yes. i live in russia now. did you forget?

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
11/15/2013 08:32:06 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: my question

Well, yeah, I know that, but with the Olympics being in Russia this year I just thought...I don't know. Or even you coming back to the NHL someday. I guess I just thought that I would see you again.

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
11/16/2013 10:10:26 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: my question

Russia is complicated. my situation is complicated. i am trying to be responsible.

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
11/16/2013 16:49:20 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: my question

Okay, yeah, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to push or anything.

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

01/22/2014 15:54:19 EDT

Subject: Good luck in Sochi :)

Hey again,

I just wanted to apologize again if I said anything that made you uncomfortable. I know you're in Russia and that this is nothing, it's fine. No big deal :)

Excited to see you on the ice for the gold medal match ;) don't worry, you'll look great in silver.

Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

02/01/2014 22:35:36 MSK

Subject: Re: Good luck in Sochi :)

you arrive in russia the day before opening ceremony? i have an apartment close to the arena. i can meet you outside the east entrance. don't wear anything with canada flag.

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

02/05/2014 00:44:02 MSK

Subject: Worth the wait

That was so fucking hot. I'll be thinking about that for a long time.

Good luck, Rozanov. See you in the finals.

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

02/08/2014 20:22:10 MSK

Subject: (no subject)

Fuck, Rozanov. Just saw the final score. I'm so sorry. Are you okay?

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

02/22/2014 23:55:46 EDT

Subject: Just checking in

Hey, is everything alright?

Just landed back in Canada. Thinking of you.

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

06/16/2014 06:12:56 MSK

Subject: (no subject)

you deserved mvp. not fucking mcconnell. san francisco sucks, anyway.

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

06/16/2014 08:45:09 EDT

Subject: Re: (no subject)

?? What the fuck do you want, Rozanov?? You don't respond for like 4 months and then, what, you come back just to talk fucking hockey like normal? Give me a fucking break. I should have known better than this. You don't give a shit about me or anything.

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

06/18/2014 03:18:30 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: (no subject)

jesus fucking christ hollander.

you think i dont give a shit about anything?? hollander i think about you and your fucking freckles for over a fucking year and then i fuck you in fucking russia. do you realize how stupid that was?? but i wanted to, and ive thought about it every fucking day since. and then i lose to fucking latvia because im shit at hockey becasue im playing in the fucking khl even though i should be in the nhl, even though i fucking earned it.

dont say i dont give a shit about anything. i can be an asshole or whatever but dont you fucking dare say that.

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

06/18/2014 20:14:35 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Re: (no subject)

Shit, Rozanov.

I'm sorry. I heard some guys say that you went back to Russia because your father made you. Is that true? Sorry, I didn't know how to ask earlier.

Sorry if I made things harder.

- Hollander

P.s. I've thought about it every day since, too.

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

06/22/2014 10:22:06 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: (no subject)

stop saying sorry. fuck.

it is complicated. he did not make me, but i had to. he is sick. i either make a bunch of money in nhl and send it to my brother to take care of him, or i make less in khl and do it myself.

you do make things harder, hollander. but you also make them better so. i dont know.
whatever

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

06/22/2014 19:20:29 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: (no subject)

Rozanov, I'm so sorry. That's a really huge fucking sacrifice. I can't even imagine. He's really lucky to have you.

Is there any way I can help? I mean, probably not much, being so far away, but if there's anything I can do, I would love to help in anyway I can.

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

06/30/2014 12:16:54 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: (no subject)

hm. i dont want to hear about the fucking nhl anymore. that might help. im sorry.

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

07/02/2014 09:15:38 EDT

Subject: Not about NHL

Oh, yeah, for sure. What do you wanna talk about then?

There's a Russian rookie on our team and he's been teaching me some Russian phrases, but I'm not sure it's even understandable, my accent is so bad haha.

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
07/03/2014 21:05:26 MSK

Subject: Re: Not about NHL

? hollander that is kind of about the nhl.

what is he teaching you? is he teaching you how to say "please can i suck your cock?"

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
07/05/2014 13:50:20 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Not about NHL

Oh yeah, sorry, I guess it kind of is. I guess I don't really do much other than play hockey?

And what?? No! Why would he teach me that? It's more just like basic phrases and stuff.

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
07/15/2014 22:58:54 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Not about NHL

mm. i just thought it would be useful for you to know.

Chapter End Notes

even though this is an au, we still needed a little ep 2 angst

Chapter 3: nebulous

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

08/12/2014 10:14:30 EDT

Subject: Not hockey

Hey Rozanov,

How's your summer going? Did Svetlana come back again? I googled her dad, that's so cool that you know them. He's like, a legend haha. Wait, am I allowed to talk about hockey in general? Or do you just not want to hear about the NHL. God I'm bad at this aren't I, haha. It's kind of hard to think about what to talk about if not hockey. It's like, my whole life, ya know?

Okay. Here. I'm gonna make a list of things I like that aren't hockey.

1. Architecture. I usually don't have the best eye for things that are "beautiful" or whatever, but I can really appreciate a nice building. I think it's because buildings always have a purpose, and need structure and function. And then once you have that, then you can be a little creative with how you make that interesting. And personal. Art can feel so open ended and nebulous that sometimes I just get lost. But with architecture it's like, you still have to be able to live in it or work in it or whatever. So if you want it to look nice and feel comfortable you have to work within those limits to find what feels like home, I guess.
2. Running. Is this too close to hockey? I started going on runs for training, obviously, but now I can't imagine life without it. I want to run a marathon someday but I can't have it interfere with hockey, so maybe once I'm retired. Although, I also can't really imagine ever being retired. Like, I try to think about it sometimes and I can't picture it at all. I can't even picture normal life things, like being married and having kids and stuff. Sometimes that worries me if I'm being honest. Anyway. That's definitely too much hockey talk, so I'm sorry.
3. Reading. Okay, yes, I read a lot about hockey, but I also really like thrillers? It's kinda random but I got hooked on them when I was younger. I was really anxious as a kid, which I know doesn't sound like thrillers would be good for me, but I think it was a way to like, get all those anxious feelings out in one place and then once I was finished I could just set the book down and leave the feelings there. Or something, I don't know, it's hard to explain. They would just make me forget about all the pressure around me.

And then also if I thought my life was bad, I could just look at those stories and be like well at least I'm not going through that, haha.

4. Hanging out with the Pike kids. I felt like I wasn't really good with kids but that was before I started hanging out at Hayden's house more. I'm an only child and so are my parents, so there just weren't very many kids around me growing up. But the little Pike's are so cool, and when I go over I'll play games with them and stuff. My apartment is kinda boring but I have like a bunch of drawings from the kids on my fridge and it's really sweet. They call me Uncle Shane :)

Oh, we just started building my cottage near Ottawa! I ended up buying that place by the lake I told you about. I'm really excited, it should hopefully be finished by next summer. Any big life updates for you?

Chat soon,
- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
08/20/2014 19:20:44 MSK

Subject: Re: Not hockey

summer is good, yes sveta came to visit again. it is good to have her here. i miss her when she is not.

nebulous, do you mean "unclear, vague, or ill-defined"? i had to look it up in english dictionary. it is a good word. art and a lot of things are "nebulous."

you wrote about good things. here are some things i like that are not hockey.

1. chess. very russian of me to say, yes. my mother taught me when i was younger. she was very smart. i was not very good, i could not sit down for that long and i thought it was boring. but since then sometimes i will go play in the park. it is good for my hockey, i think. strategy. also helps me make friends that are not teammates or at clubs.
2. music. i like to go dancing, with sveta and others. i like when it is really loud and you can feel it in your chest. i like that sound can hit you like that and you can actually feel it.
3. also reading. i like to read literature. there is this russian author, viktor shklovsky. he wrote a book that are just letters but the writer could not write about love so he writes

around it. i thought about it when you tried to write not about hockey because you still wrote a lot about hockey.

4. also kids. it is good to be near ofeliya, my niece. she is six now. she wants to be an animal doctor so i take her to the zoo a lot. there is a bear we like to see but we agree his cage is too small. also he is alone. so sometimes it is sad but we go anyway.

no big updates. how you say in english i think, same old same old.

- rozanov

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
09/02/2014 20:45:12 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Not hockey

Rozanov,

Wow, I didn't know you were so smart. I mean like, obviously you're smart because I can tell when you play hockey, but I didn't know you were like, chess and literature smart. I was more of a math and science guy in school, I think that's another reason I like architecture so much. Maybe I can learn chess and we can play together. Aren't there websites or something where we can play online?

I don't really like dancing or anything. It's usually too loud and I get overwhelmed. It can be fun going out with the team every once in a while, but I really have to be in the mood, and I definitely am not dancing haha. I barely listen to music at all honestly. I have the same workout playlist from when I played in juniors. Do you have music recommendations? Maybe I can update my playlist.

Is your mom still around? Sorry if you don't want to answer that. You just said she "was" smart and I didn't know what you meant by that. You can ignore that question if you want to.

Good luck at your first game (that's not about the NHL!)

- Hollander

P.s. Yeah, you're right. A lot of things are nebulous.

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
09/20/2014 02:11:19 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Not hockey

i am not that smart. i am just bored so i play hockey and then i play chess and i go clubbing and i read. is just something to do.

there is a good russian song, Светлана! by nextime. title is "svetlana" in cyrillic so obviously sveta loves it. could be good for your playlist. also, she says hi to you. she likes you a lot.

my mother died when i was 12. she was very smart and very beautiful. also very sad.

tell me about your parents.

- rozanov

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
09/22/2014 16:59:10 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Not hockey

Svetlana knows about me? I guess tell her hi back.

I'm sorry about your mother. I can't imagine what that would be like.

My parents are great. Like I said, I'm their only child so they gave me a lot of attention. I was kind of a difficult child, I was actually diagnosed with autism when I was 6. I don't tell a lot of people that because sometimes they treat me differently because of it or think it's weird or something. But anyway it means I just required a bit more support sometimes and they were

great with that. And then they both loved hockey so it was an easy thing to fall into. It gave me a lot of structure in my life which I needed and I liked the challenge. Anyway, they've been super supportive and my mom is really good at getting me brand deals and stuff so I can save money for my future. Her family had a hard time when she was growing up so it's important to her that I'm financially stable. And my dad is great, we like to do the crossword together and sometimes he takes me fishing which I kinda hate lol but it's nice to do something with him where we just sit next to each other and don't feel like we have to talk. I'd do anything for him, for both of them, so I think I understand your decision to go back to Russia.

Hope that wasn't too much, haha.

- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
09/25/2014 21:04:57 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Not hockey

you do the crossword and go fishing with your dad? so the boring is genetic?

that was not too much. and no, i don't think you understand my decision.

yes sveta knows about you but do not worry, only that i email you. at first i used your joke and said it was jane but she saw over my shoulder the other day. she thinks you are very beautiful and very good at hockey. i agree with her but i had to act offended that she would say that about you straight to my face. besides, you are not as beautiful or as good at hockey as me so i had to remind her.

i did not know much about autism. thank you for telling me. i did some reading about it and it makes sense you are so good at hockey. very disciplined. i was also a difficult child, but not for any reason. i just behaved badly. lol

it is ok about my mother. it has been a long time.

- rozanov

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

09/26/2014 18:48:26 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Not hockey

Roz,

Sorry, I didn't mean to assume I understood your situation. I bet it's really hard. And you're right, I wouldn't know what it's like. For the record, I think it's really fucking brave to do what you did. I think a lot of players forget that this isn't just about hockey, this is, like, our *lives*. You know? Like at the end of this we can have awards and medals and cups or whatever and then we'll still have to keep on living. And like I said, it's kind of scary for me to think about. And you deciding to go back to take care of your father shows that you kind of, like, get it, I guess. Anyway. Just wanted to say that I admire that about you. You're a really good person.

So Svetlana isn't your girlfriend? Sorry, it's just the way you talk about her makes it sound like she is. And I saw pictures of her online, she's really pretty, and you like girls, right? So it just sounds like you two would be good together.

- Hollander

P.s. I'm not that boring??

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

10/08/2014 09:02:23 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Not hockey

you apologize too much.

no, svetlana isn't my girlfriend. we are like soulmates but without romance. she is beautiful yes but we would not be good together, not like that.

and yes i like girls but i also like guys. it is simple. do you like girls?

- rozanov

P.s. yes you are

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

10/15/2014 11:27:15 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Not hockey

I'm Canadian, I'm supposed to apologize too much.

Yeah, of course I like girls. I guess I just wouldn't say it's simple. Idk.

Anyway I stole your idea and Hayden and I are taking his kids to the aquarium tomorrow. It's not a zoo but it kind of is in a way. We're giving Jackie a day off to go to the spa with her friends because we're gonna start traveling soon. I can't imagine being so far from the person you love all the time like that. They're so perfect together. If I had a relationship like theirs, I would never leave them alone haha.

- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

10/20/2014 01:38:09 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Not hockey

you can't imagine it? even just as pretend?

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
10/21/2014 06:07:44 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Not hockey

What do you mean?

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
10/29/2014 02:13:28 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Not hockey

i mean nothing. sorry.

here is a list of things i do not like.

1. menthol cigarettes. gross.
2. spinach
3. shoelaces
4. movies that make me cry
5. losing
6. winter when it gets dark too early

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

11/01/2014 22:52:14 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Not hockey

What did shoelaces ever do to you?

Here's mine:

1. All cigarettes. Gross.
2. Tomatoes on sandwiches
3. When my socks get wet in the snow
4. Pillows that are too squishy
5. Also losing
6. Being far away from someone you really want to see again

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

11/19/2014 06:58:54 MSK

Subject: wow

shane hollander gets into fight with solovyov? what did he say to you? it was very hot. i will watch it before i go to bed tonight ;)

- rozanov

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

11/19/2014 00:09:20 EDT

Subject: Re: wow

You saw that already? Do you have a Google alert set up for my name or something?

It was stupid. He said some dumb homophobic shit. Nothing I haven't heard before. I don't know why it bothered me that much. I'm usually good at just letting it roll off my back and not getting distracted. I don't know. Whatever.

- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

11/20/2014 22:58:54 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: wow

no, i do not have "google alert." how do i do this.

and that is a good reason to fight. even more hot now.

- rozanov

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

11/21/2014 13:50:20 EDT

Subject: Re: Re: Re: wow

Have you been following my season?

- H

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

11/24/2014 22:58:54 MSK

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Re: wow

Of course.

- R

From: shane24hockey@yahoo.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

1/15/2015 13:50:20 EDT

Subject: Advice

Hey Rozanov,

Okay I know this is kind of weird but I don't know who else to ask and I know you go out and date a lot of people or whatever so I thought maybe you would have some advice. How do you know if someone likes you? I've been talking to someone for a bit now and I think

they're interested in me but I don't know if it's like, romantic or anything. Like maybe they just like me as a friend. I don't know. I'm so bad at things like this.

Also, and okay you can't laugh, how did you know you liked both guys and girls? I'm just curious. I've always been so obsessed with hockey that I guess I never really sat down and thought too hard about it. So I was just wondering. How you knew. Or whatever.

Anyway, if you have any advice, I'd really appreciate it. I value your opinion on things. I think you have good perspective.

- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
1/16/2015 22:58:54 MSK

Subject: Re: Advice

hollander has a crush? have you tried pulling their pigtails on the playground?

i dont know, you can always just ask them. worst thing that happens is they dont feel the same and you move on, best thing that happens is you fall in love get married have babies live happily ever after. easy.

you are too scared of everything.

i guess i always knew i liked both? i like sex, so liking both just doubled my options ;) but it was just about meeting people that i liked and letting myself like them. it was pretty easy, i think.

good luck.

- rozanov

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shane24hockey@yahoo.com
1/27/2015 22:58:54 MSK

Subject: (no subject)

ah, so you were asking me how to hit on rose landry. if i had known that i would have given you better advice. i hope she is good for you.

Chapter End Notes

ilya following shane's season even though he asked shane to stop talking about hockey is this universe's tuna melt i fear.

also, Светлана! is a real song but it was released in 2025. but who cares! this is fiction! i am not bound by space or time!

Chapter 4: no wrong answer

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

04/15/2015 11:28:51 EDT

Subject: Great game

Hey Rozanov,

Watched your game against Severstal. That was an incredible shot at the buzzer. You've been looking really good lately. Your team is really coming together.

Hope you're doing well.

- Hollander

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

11/20/2015 23:55:45 EDT

Subject: Please read, I'm sorry

Hi again,

Sorry if you don't want to hear from me. I'd understand, but I would really appreciate if you heard me out anyway. I wanted to apologize for how I left things last year. I shouldn't have just emailed you that shit out of the blue and then never respond. I was really confused. It's not an excuse. It's just what was happening. I'm sorry.

I wanted to tell you about Rose myself. I don't know why I didn't. Well, I do know why, but. Anyway. Rose and I ended things a while ago. We never released anything to the public about it, but we've been just friends for a bit now. We weren't compatible in other ways.

I'm gay. I guess I should just say that. Rose helped me figure that out. Actually, she just kinda sat me down and told me I was gay, which was really embarrassing haha. Especially considering the whole....you, of it all.

I guess that's why I'm telling you this. I know it's stupid, and I know you're in Russia, and yeah, I know, okay? I get it. Maybe I totally misread this whole thing and I was just a fuckbuddy and a fucking penpal or whatever. But I don't think that's true. Last year you said something about liking people and letting yourself like them, and how easy it was, and I hated that you said that, and I hated *you* for saying it, because you were right. There's only been one person that has ever been easy for me to like, and I've only been with him twice, and he lives in fucking Russia, and I watch every fucking game of his on repeat just for the chance to see him a bit more, and I watch so many stupid fucking KHL interviews that I'm starting to pick up hockey terms in Russian like honestly it's ridiculous. I really like him and I wasn't letting myself like him. You. I wasn't letting myself like you. That wasn't fair. To either of us.

I tried to ignore it, I really did. I wanted to want girls and then I wanted to want any other guy but it's been almost a year since I've heard from you and I'm sick over it. I kept thinking maybe one day this feeling will go away, but it's just been getting worse and so I had to at least tell you. I had to at least try.

You had said once that I made things harder, but also better. You make things so much better for me. You make *me* so much better. If there's any chance we could make something work, or I don't even care, just any way I can keep you in my life, I want it. I don't care how hard it is. I want that. I want you.

I hope you're doing well. I think about you all the time.

- Shane

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
11/22/2015 02:12:30 MSK

Subject: Re: Please read, I'm sorry

We cannot be anything, hollander. you know this.

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

11/22/2015 08:02:16 EDT

Subject: Re: Please read, I'm sorry

Would you want to? If we could?

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shanehollander@gmail.com

11/23/2015 00:58:05 MSK

Subject: Re: Please read, I'm sorry

It doesnt matter.

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

11/23/2015 06:12:33 EDT

Subject: Re: Please read, I'm sorry

Doesn't it?

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
05/04/2016 03:22:40 MSK

Subject: (no subject)

Fuck hollander, are you okay? Please be okay

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
05/04/2016 14:58:17 MSK

Subject: (no subject)

News says you are stable but in hospital. I need to know you are okay.

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
05/06/2016 22:07:07 MSK

Subject: (no subject)

Email me when you can

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
05/10/2016 02:26:56 MSK

Subject: yes

Yes, i would want to, if we could. I want to be something

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
05/16/2016 10:28:28 EDT

Subject: Re: yes

Hey Rozanov,

Sorry, my screentime has been limited so I haven't been able to respond until now. Concussion and a broken collarbone. Out for the playoffs. Fucking sucks. All part of the game though, I guess. Were you watching it live?

I'm okay. Spending a lot of time with my parents. Some might even say too much time, haha. They're being good to me though.

- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
05/17/2016 09:10:39 MSK

Subject: Re: yes

Yes i was watching it live. you scared the shit out of me.

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
05/19/2016 09:40:21 EDT

Subject: Re: yes

Yikes, yeah, I'm sorry. I haven't watched the clip back, I don't really want to see that right now. If it looks as bad as it felt, that must have been a tough watch, haha. I'm feeling better now. More screen time allowed, don't have to wear sunglasses inside anymore, basic low impact exercise.

How is everything? How's your father doing? How are you doing?

- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
05/29/2016 21:47:54 MSK

Subject: Re: yes

There he goes again. apologizing for nothing.

My father is not great. I am not great. It is okay. As you say, all part of the game

At least i do not have broken collarbone. Get well soon.

- rozanov

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

06/02/2016 12:38:32 EDT

Subject: Re: yes

I'm sorry to hear that, about your father and about you (and sorry for apologizing again lol).
Do you want to talk about it?

- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shanehollander@gmail.com

06/13/2016 22:09:10 MSK

Subject: Re: yes

Not really. Id rather talk about how good you look in the new calvin klein campaign. Almost makes me want to buy boring grey underwear

- rozanov

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
06/16/2016 08:20:18 EDT

Subject: Re: yes

Haha, oh my god it is so weird having those pictures everywhere. I'm glad you like them though.

Do you want to talk about what I said earlier? Or what you said? About us or whatever?

It's okay if you don't. We can talk about other things too, I just like hearing from you. I want to hear about how your niece is, how Svetlana is, what you've been reading. I want to hear how the fuck you came up with that killer shot you did against Shanghai.

- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
08/01/2016 04:01:46 MSK

Subject: Re: yes

I dont know what to talk about. About us. You are still in canada and i am not. I still have to be here. You are not here. So i dont know. It still doesnt matter.

Ofeliya is good. She is very smart in school. I do not know how she came from my brother. She is a angel.

Svetlana is also good. She asks about you sometimes but i told her we dont talk anymore. I miss her now that she is back in the states more often. It feels like all the good things in my life end and all the bad things go on forever.

I am reading short story collection by Gaito Gazdanov. It is okay. He was from russia but he left and never came back. He writes a lot about trying for happiness and also death. Most russians do though, so i guess its nothing special.

The shot was at first kind of an accident. Defender on Navgorod cut me off and i had to turn quickly and no teammates around to pass. But it worked so i practiced and now i can do it a lot. I would teach you but like i said, you have bad backhand. Would not be as effective.

I do have one question for you. If that is okay.

- rozanov

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
08/02/2016 19:12:51 EDT

Subject: Re: yes

Yeah, of course, you can ask me anything.

- H

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
08/14/2016 01:24:57 MSK

Subject: Re: yes

Why do you like me

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

08/18/2016 22:50:15 EDT

Subject: Re: yes

Oh. Well, to start, you're absolutely gorgeous. So that's an easy one.

You're also an amazing hockey player. For me, hockey has always been about discipline and optimization and speed, but you make it look like dancing. Watching you for the first time made me realize there were other ways to play, other ways to be. I didn't know that before you showed me.

I like that you're kinda an asshole. A bit because I think it's kinda hot, haha. But also, like, you stick up for yourself, I think that shows a lot of self-respect. And you know when to be tough and when not to be. I've read the interviews, other players really respect you, but speaking from experience, you're scary as hell to play against. I wish I could have done it more. Although, you're definitely someone I rather have on my side, haha.

I already told you this, but I think it's really incredible what you did for your father. You must really love him, to give up Boston to help him. I can't think of anything I'd give up playing for the Metros for. And the way you love your niece is really sweet and I'm glad you get to be there for her.

Also, and I don't really know how to say this one, but I like how you listen to me. It's kinda a weird one I guess, because most of our talking has happened over email. My whole life is scheduled out basically down to the minute, I always know what's expected of me and I do it really well. It's not a bad thing for me. I built it that way, that's how I like it. But with you, I feel like I can say whatever and do whatever and you'll still listen to me. Like there's no wrong answer, and then I'm not so scared of trying. I've always hated surprises, but you surprised me, and now every time I talk to you it's like I find new ways to surprise myself. It's nice.

Also you're really fucking hot. Did I already say that?

Haha anyway. I hope that answers your question.

- Hollander

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
10/05/2016 05:56:20 MSK

Subject: Re: yes

Hi hollander

I am sorry, i have been busy. My father died three days ago.

Thank you for your email. I have read it many times

- rozanov

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
10/05/2016 16:02:30 EDT

Subject: Re: yes

Ilya, I'm so sorry. Please let me know if there's anything I can do. I'm thinking of you.

- Shane

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
10/06/2016 00:14:15 MSK

Subject: Re: yes

Do you have skype?

INCOMING CALL: Shane Hollander

CALL ENDED: 42 minutes, 26 seconds

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
10/06/2016 01:02:25 MSK

Subject: Re: yes

Goodnight, shane.

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
10/05/2016 15:03:14 EDT

Subject: Re: yes

Goodnight, Ilya.

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

12/22/2016 19:52:38 EDT

Subject: Just checking in :)

Hi Ilya,

Just checking in. Are you doing okay? How is everything?

I'm at my parents' for the holiday break, but I can sneak away if you need to call. Anytime. Just let me know.

- Shane

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shanehollander@gmail.com

12/26/2016 20:17:38 MSK

Subject: Re: Just checking in :)

I am okay. My brother and i do not get along. I thought it would be easier between us without my father but it is not.

Thank you for your offer. I cannot think much in english right now though. I am sorry.

- Ilya

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

12/26/2016 17:20:54 EDT

Subject: Re: Just checking in :)

Now look who's apologizing for nothing, haha.

That's okay. If you just want to type it out, that might help. I like to journal when things get hard, so maybe it will be nice to get everything out? If I can help, I want to.

No rush though. Take your time.

- Shane

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shanehollander@gmail.com

12/28/2016 03:15:24 MSK

Subject: Re: Just checking in :)

Okay i can try.

I wish i was more sad. I am mostly relieved, and angry. It was very hard for the past few years. Actually, it was very hard for my whole life. I wish it had been different. I wish he could have known me.

I am angry because i gave it all up for him. I gave up more than i realized, i think. I moved all the way home so he could be comfortable and the past couple years he couldnt even remember that i did that. He wasnt doing so bad back then, in 2010. I could have played 1 or even 2 seasons in Boston and then still gone home to help him. My father didnt like that i chose nhl over khl anyway, so i thought it would be what was best. Now i do not know what is best.

I also thought that it might go away, my dream of playing for the nhl. You asked me a while ago if i always wanted to be a professional hockey player and i dont think i did, but i did want to move to north america. Dont laugh, but i had a dream of going to American

university, like in the movies. I liked hockey and i was good at it and it could help me get out of russia so it seemed like the perfect opportunity. And i loved winning, and i won a lot. I earned my spot in Boston. It was mine. I didnt know what to do. I tried to make the best decision. Now i am so fucking angry all the time.

My father was not a good man. He was mean and he has made my brother and me also mean. We are terrible to each other but we are all we have left. Well, he has his wife and i have svetlana. And we both have ofeliya. I am glad i can be near her.

But i am so far from you, shane. I figured, back in 2010, there is nothing in north america for me yet so there is nothing to be leaving behind. Only hockey, but i would have that in russia too. I was wrong. I had dumb stupid luck and had already kissed you by the time i went back. It was too late for me, now knowing what i would be missing.

I watched all your games and your interviews. I had to watch you break records and dominate every game you played knowing that i could have challenged you, that that could have been me. Its ridiculous, i had a stupid fantasy of winning the stanley cup and mvp award and making you come up to my hotel room to congratulate me. Stupid fucking childish dream from a boy with a crush.

In Sochi, i thought maybe if i could have it one more time, for one more night, then i would be okay. You were so beautiful that night, and so gentle, i wanted to cry. For you and for myself and for this stupid fucking thing we cannot have. This stupid fucking beautiful thing.

Now I dont know what to do. I have hardly thought about myself and what i want in years. I dont know anymore. That writer i told you about, Gazdanov. He has this line in his novel, *Призрак Александра Вольфа*, about life (sorry if i translate wrong):

"When I wake up every morning, I think to myself, Today my life will begin in earnest."

But for me, that day never comes. So i dont know.

Thank you for listening to me. Im sorry i cannot be with you.

- Ilya

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

12/27/2016 20:36:22 EDT

Subject: Re: Just checking in :)

Oh, Ilya. You have me, too. You will always have me. Wherever we are in the world.

Get some rest. It's late over there.

- Shane

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
12/28/2016 03:42:44 MSK

Subject: Re: Just checking in :)

I know it is late. i have a clock.

Can you call?

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
12/27/2016 20:50:04 EDT

Subject: Re: Just checking in :)

Yes

INCOMING CALL: *Shane Hollander*

CALL ENDED: *8 hours, 24 minutes*

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

12/31/2016 05:00:52 EDT

Subject: HNY!

Happy New Year, Ilya.

How is it in 2017? Should I be looking forward to it?

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shanehollander@gmail.com

01/01/2017 00:06:54 MSK

Subject: Re: HNY!

Happy new year, Shane.

Yes. It is beautiful in 2017. Best year yet i think.

yuna made shane change his email address :/

Chapter 5: many homes in a life

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

02/03/2017 21:04:19 EDT

Subject: Call Sunday?

Hey Ilya,

I'm in Tampa this week for the All Stars game, it's a nice escape from the Montreal weather. I've been getting to know Cliff Marleau from the Raiders while I'm here. He said you two met briefly before you went back to Russia? He's really cool, super nice, really intense on the ice so I'm glad he's on my team for once, haha. Anyway, we talked briefly about you, all the guys on Boston were really excited to draft you and they were so bummed you left for Russia. I might have mentioned that you and I are kind of friends lol and Marleau told me to tell you he says hi and he hopes you're doing well. He also says if you're ever in Boston, to let him know and he'll "take you to the best clubs in Boston, because Hollander won't go with me" haha. He's been trying to get me to go out with him tonight, but I'm more of a one-drink-in-a-sports-bar kind of guy. But you should actually take him up on the offer someday, I think you two would be good friends.

I'll be back in Montreal on Sunday if you wanted to call then. I have an idea for it but it's kind of stupid.

- Shane

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shanehollander@gmail.com

02/04/2014 11:09:44 MSK

Subject: Re: Call Sunday?

Hi shane,

I liked Marleau when i met him. He seems too cool to be hanging out with boring hollander (i am joking but only kind of).

What is your idea?

- Ilya

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

02/04/2017 17:20:54 EDT

Subject: Re: Call Sunday?

Okay I was thinking that maybe we could call at around 8 your time? And we could both seperately get dinner (or i guess lunch in my case) and then like eat "together"? Basically I want to take you out on an actual dinner date but obviously that's kind of hard when you live halfway across the world. So I thought maybe we could pretend?

Like I said, it's kind of stupid haha but I thought it could be nice.

- Shane

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shanehollander@gmail.com

02/05/2017 13:09:33 MSK

Subject: Re: Call Sunday?

Very romantic. Are you going to bring me flowers too? Light some candles? Just so you know hollander i do not kiss on the first date.

Yes i would like to do that.

- Ilya

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

02/05/2017 19:05:58 EDT

Subject: Re: Call Sunday?

Great, I'll pick you up at 8 ;)

- Shane

INCOMING CALL: Shane Hollander

CALL ENDED: 2 hours, 36 minutes, 19 seconds

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shanehollander@gmail.com

03/28/2017 12:30:43 MSK

Subject: (no subject)

What are you doing tonight?

- I

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

03/28/2017 08:23:26 EDT

Subject: Re: (no subject)

My parents are in town visiting, so probably just hanging out with them. Did you want to call? Is everything okay?

- S

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shanehollander@gmail.com

03/28/2017 15:45:10 MSK

Subject: Re: (no subject)

Everything is okay. Just wanted to see your pretty face. Also svetlana is visiting and she wants to meet you. I told her we are just friends but i dont think she believes me. She knows i like men sometimes so its probably a little obvious. I'm sorry if that makes you uncomfortable. I can tell her seriously that it's nothing between us and she wouldn't push. I told you she is a big fan of yours though so i promised her id ask.

How are yuna and david? Do your parents know about you? Being gay?

- Ilya

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

03/28/2017 11:37:17 EDT

Subject: Re: (no subject)

Yuna and David are good.

Yes, I came out to them after Rose and I broke up. They took it really well. It was really hard for me to tell them at first, but they've been really supportive. Like I had a panic attack and everything, but then it was all over and I couldn't remember what I was so worried about. Now my mom keeps buying things for pride and I have to tell her that if she keeps doing that it won't be long until everyone just assumes that her chronically single only son is gay, haha. But they're great, I'm so lucky.

I can try and sneak away for a little bit. I don't know what I'd tell them though, haha. *"By the way, do you remember that asshole Rozanov? I have a big stupid crush on him! No, yeah, he's still in Russia! But we've been emailing for seven years!"*

I would love to meet Svetlana. Why is she in Moscow? Just visiting?

- Shane

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shanehollander@gmail.com

03/28/2017 18:59:03 MSK

Subject: Re: (no subject)

I am glad you have good parents.

She is helping me with family things. We are also talking about citizenship, for me. It is not serious, but she has offered to marry me so i can be in america sometimes. It is more

complicated than just that though so i dont know. Is a good option though if i want to.

- I

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

03/28/2017 12:20:45 EDT

Subject: Re: (no subject)

Oh. Yeah, that makes sense. I'm glad you have her.

I'm kind of busy today actually, but maybe another time?

- S

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shanehollander@gmail.com

03/28/2017 21:08:15 MSK

Subject: Re: (no subject)

Of course. Maybe another time

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

04/16/2017 20:13:13 EDT

Subject: Am I allowed to talk about the NHL now?

Hi Ilya,

Okay, don't be mad. I was thinking about what you were saying about still wanting to play in the NHL, and I thought that maybe now you don't have any responsibilities in Russia maybe you would be able to. So I asked my agent about teams that are looking for a new center. Don't worry, I didn't say anything about you, and she was skeptical because she knows I would never leave Montreal, but she said there were a few teams that were shopping around. LA, I think, and maybe Vancouver.

I would be happy to connect you two if you're interested. I know you probably have an agent over there, but I saw that your contract extension is expiring and I haven't heard anything about you resigning with CSKA so I thought you could at least talk to her about it.

Let me know. No pressure though.

- Shane

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shanehollander@gmail.com

04/19/2017 08:22:55 MSK

Subject: Re: Am I allowed to talk about the NHL now?

Hi Shane,

Thank you for your offer. I don't know if I can though. I still have many responsibilities here. It is complicated.

- Ilya

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

04/19/2017 06:23:09 EDT

Subject: Re: Am I allowed to talk about the NHL now?

Of course, no problem. Well let me know if you change your mind. Always, I want to help if I can.

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shanehollander@gmail.com

04/19/2017 00:15:10 MSK

Subject: Re: Am I allowed to talk about the NHL now?

You can help by calling me tonight

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

04/19/2017 17:20:01 EDT

Subject: Re: Am I allowed to talk about the NHL now?

Yeah, absolutely, give me half an hour?

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
04/19/2017 00:27:38 MSK

Subject: Re: Am I allowed to talk about the NHL now?

Wear your glasses.

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
06/12/2017 21:42:06 EDT

Subject: (no subject)

Holy shit. Are you watching the final game? Scott Hunter???

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
06/12/2017 04:46:10 MSK

Subject: Re: (no subject)

Yes, stream cut out but after, i saw new york won. He played okay for an old man i guess?

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

06/12/2017 21:52:16 EDT

Subject: Re: (no subject)

Oh shit, so you didn't see. Ilya, Hunter was kissing a man on the ice. I swear to fucking god I know it sounds like I'm making it up but I swear. I think it's his boyfriend?? The team was celebrating on the ice and Hunter invited this one guy down and just started kissing him. Like full on making out. There's no fucking way they're not together. Holy shit. This is actually fucking insane. What the fuck!!

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shanehollander@gmail.com

06/12/2017 04:56:41 MSK

Subject: Re: (no subject)

Call me

CALL INCOMING: *Shane Hollander*

CALL ENDED: *4 hours, 19 minutes, 32 seconds*

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: farahjalali@ctamanagement.com

Cc: roz818181@aol.com
06/18/2017 14:15:00 EDT

Subject: Agent introductions

Hi Farah,

I'm CC'ing the player I was telling you about. You might know him, Ilya Rozanov? Haha, we've kept in touch over the years. He's a free agent and wants to try and come play in the NHL. Anyway, Ilya meet Farah, she's the best. Let me know if either of you need anything else from me!

Best,

Shane

From: farahjalali@ctamanagement.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
Cc: roz818181@aol.com
06/18/2017 16:22:17 EDT

Subject: Re: Agent introductions

Thanks, Shane!

Hi Ilya! So great to (e)meet you, that's so exciting you want to come play over here. I know some teams that would love to hear that. Are you able to hop on a call soon and we can talk about some next steps?

- Farah

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
06/22/2017 17:20:54 EDT

Subject: Call?

How was your call with Farah?

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
06/23/2017 00:49:01 MSK

Subject: Re: Call?

It was good. She was very helpful. She was telling me about La, it sounds like they might want me.

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
06/23/2017 09:28:09 EDT

Subject: Re: Call?

Rose lives in LA! She loves it there. I could introduce you two :) I think she would like you. It's fun out there too, always warm, the beach is right there, and good nightlife I think? Which you would like a lot.

That sounds like a really great option. How do you feel about it?

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
06/24/2017 10:19:48 MSK

Subject: Re: Call?

ah yes. i would love to be friends with your ex girlfriend rose. how perfect. yay.

La would be nice i think. I would maybe have to play wing but that is fine.

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
06/24/2017 19:23:16 EDT

Subject: Re: Call?

How are you feeling about the rest of it? About maybe leaving Russia and all that.

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
06/25/2017 08:16:20 MSK

Subject: Re: Call?

I am excited, mostly. It has been a long time since i made a decision for myself. I took ofeliya to the zoo the other day. I would miss that a lot. I visited my mother, too. I have a friend, ivan, on my team and i told him i might be leaving. He was happy for me and i wasnt sure he would be. I dont know why i thought he might be mad but he wasnt. We only talked about it for a little bit and then we went and lost many games of chess to some old guys in the park.

I am trying to say russia is seeming a bit nicer lately but i dont really have the words for it. I dont know if its just because i might be leaving or because its always been like this and i never noticed. I have wanted to leave for so long but also this is home. So i dont know. It is weird.

Anyway. Excited, mostly. Haha.

How are you feeling about me maybe coming to north america?

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
06/25/2017 17:20:54 EDT

Subject: Re: Call?

Ilya, you know how I'm feeling about that.

Russia will always be home for you. You can have many homes in a life, I think.

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
06/26/2017 00:22:16 MSK

Subject: Re: Call?

Yes i think so too.

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com

07/20/2017 14:02:17 MSK

Subject: good news

Hi Shane. I have good news

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
07/20/2017 14:56:18 MSK

Subject: good news

Hollander did you hear me i said i have good news

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
07/20/2017 15:28:01 MSK

Subject: answer me

Hollander respond so i can tell you the good news

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
07/20/2017 08:47:55 EDT

Subject: Re: answer me

Oh my god Ilya. Hi to you too.

What's up? What's so important that you email me three times in two hours?

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
07/20/2017 16:01:29 MSK

Subject: Re: answer me

Okay I will tell you. But first. What are some good restaurant recommendations in Ottawa?

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
07/20/2017 09:04:54 EDT

Subject: Re: answer me

Ilya. Why are you asking me about restaurants in Ottawa.

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
07/20/2017 16:07:44 MSK

Subject: Re: answer me

Why do you think i am asking about restaurants in Ottawa shane

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

07/20/2017 09:09:12 EDT

Subject: Re: answer me

I have a guess but I need you to tell me.

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shanehollander@gmail.com

07/20/2017 16:12:25 MSK

Subject: Re: answer me

Okay fine.

Shane hollander, you are speaking to the new center for the Ottawa centaurs))))

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

07/20/2017 09:15:02 EDT

Subject: Re: answer me

Shut the fuck up. No fucking way. Ilya!! Are you being serious? I thought you were looking at LA? What the fuck??

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
07/20/2017 16:20:38 MSK

Subject: Re: answer me

I was talking to La too but i wanted to see if there were any other options. Okay don't tease. I looked up how far La was from montreal and also Boston, for sveta. and Ottawa was closer. Plus they do not already have star center like La so now i am star center for Ottawa))

I didnt want to tell you i was talking to them before because i wasnt sure if it was going to happen. I think knowing that it could be a possibility and then it not happening is worse than it just not happening. So i had to be sure.

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
07/20/2017 09:22:56 EDT

Subject: Re: answer me

Oh my god that is so sweet.

Ilya!! You're coming to fucking Canada??!! You're playing for my fucking hometown team!!

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com

07/20/2017 16:24:57 MSK

Subject: Re: answer me

It is not sweet! I am not "sweet." I only know two people in north america so i want to be close to them. Is that so bad

I am coming to canada))) now you will definitely have to get signed poster of me for your wall.

From: shanehollander@gmail.com

To: roz818181@aol.com

07/20/2017 09:27:51 EDT

Subject: Re: answer me

You are very sweet, Ilya. Not so bad at all.

Holy shit this is crazy. I'm so excited for you!! I had plans to go to Hayden's for dinner tonight but I could cancel if you wanted to call and celebrate?

From: roz818181@aol.com

To: shanehollander@gmail.com

07/20/2017 16:31:04 MSK

Subject: Re: answer me

No, dont cancel. Call me after))

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
07/20/2017 09:34:33 EDT

Subject: Re: answer me

It will be late for you though?

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
07/20/2017 16:39:42 MSK

Subject: Re: answer me

I will be up. I am celebrating tonight)) some teammates are taking me out, they are all really happy for me. That surprised me a little because i am leaving them, but it is really nice. They are all a bunch of idiots but i will miss them.

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
07/20/2017 09:44:07 EDT

Subject: Re: answer me

Fun! You deserve it. I can call after dinner :)

When do you come to Canada?

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
07/20/2017 16:48:40 MSK

Subject: Re: answer me

I come first week of september

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
07/20/2017 09:55:12 EDT

Subject: Re: answer me

Okay. Question. You can think about it so don't worry about answering right now, but would you want to come a week early? We could go to my cottage, it's really private and we could have some time just for the two of us. I thought it might be nice. Just an idea. Like I said, you can think about it and figure everything out in Russia first. Just let me know.

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
07/20/2017 16:56:40 MSK

Subject: Re: answer me

Yes, i would like that.

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
07/20/2017 10:00:12 EDT

Subject: Re: answer me

Okay, great! Just make sure to send me your flight information when you book it and I can pick you up from the airport. Also send me a grocery list, I can grab some things for us to have at the cottage so we don't have to leave if we don't want to. And please let me know if there's anything else I can get for you before you come. Do you have any allergies? I feel like I should know that by now.

I'm so fucking excited, Ilya. You fucking deserve this. Have fun tonight, I'll call you later.

CALL INCOMING: *Shane Hollander*

CALL ENDED: *3 hours, 12 minutes, 47 seconds*

From: shanehollander@gmail.com
To: roz818181@aol.com
07/21/2017 00:12:46 EDT

Subject: one more thing

Hey Ilya,

I didn't know how to tell you this when we were talking so I'm decided to write it to you instead.

I was reading back our email threads and at one point I made a comment about not being able to imagine getting married or having kids or whatever, and I really couldn't at the time. I

couldn't admit to myself that I was gay, and so there was no future where I was married with a family and also happy. So the default was just hockey, forever, and I knew it wasn't realistic, but I couldn't think of what else it could be. I'm not saying lets get married or whatever, but I just wanted to say you've shown me what might be possible for me. For my life. So I just wanted to let you know that that means a lot to me. The future is a bit bigger now. Less scary. So anyway. Sorry if that's a lot. I just wanted you to know.

Goodnight, Ilya.

- Shane

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
07/21/2017 07:14:10 MSK

Subject: Re: one more thing

You want me to put a baby in you shane?

The future is bigger for me, too. Thank you for that.

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
07/23/2017 19:02:17 MSK

Subject: Fw: You're All Booked! SVO to YUL

Dear Mr. Rozanov,

Your flight is confirmed for your upcoming trip to Montreal! Please find your flight details below. Thank you for choosing Air Canada!

Flight #: AC1410

Departing: Moscow (SVO) August 19th, 2017, 21:50

Arriving: Montreal (YUL) August 20th, 2017, 06:20

Confirmation #: INS2481

Chapter End Notes

there is no direct flight from moscow to montreal. so i just made one up. also i did so much research on khl to nhl moves and i am 90% sure this is relatively realistic but if it's not, do NOT tell me.

the cliff marleau bit was fan service to me bc i panicked when i realized i accidentally made an au with no Good Friend Cliff Marleau (big thank you to user TRaena for giving me the idea to have shane meet him somehow!)

Chapter 6: i do (reprise)

Chapter Notes

I know all y'all wanted to actually see the cottage, but this is an email fic! They wouldn't email while at the cottage!

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

July 10, 2021

"My beautiful boy. Look at you."

Shane's mother looks over his shoulder adoringly and meets his eyes in the mirror. He smiles back, laughs softly.

She turns him to face her, adjusting his tie gently and smoothing out the lapels of his coat. "How are you feeling?"

"Good. Great."

He can see the tears start to pool in her eyes. "*Mom*," he teases, gently.

"My boys. Getting married." She cups his face in her hand. "I almost can't believe it."

"I almost can't either." It comes out a whisper. His mind flips through all the moments where he and his mother had stood just like this; the first time she strapped on his helmet when he was four, his first game playing up an age group when he was twelve, draft day, awards night when he won Rookie of the Year, and then all the awards nights after. The day he came out to her as gay. The day he came out to her as gay for Ilya Rozanov. The day he showed her the ring, told her he was going to propose. Now, today.

He felt the sharp prickle of tears behind his eyes. Bites the inside of his lip and smiles at her, thankful.

"Hey, Shane?" He hears Hayden's voice from the hallway.

"In here," he calls back, quickly wiping his eye so a tear doesn't fall. Hayden pops his head around the doorway, gives a low whistle when he sees Shane dressed in his white coat.

"Lookin' good, buddy. I'm a little jealous of Roz."

Shane laughs. "Don't let him hear you say that."

"Oh my god, never. Hey, he told me to tell you to check your email."

"My email?" Shane turns with a confused look on his face.

Hayden shrugs. "Yeah, I don't know. He wouldn't tell me anything more, just that you need to check your email."

"Right now? Why?"

"I guess? Dude, I don't know, I'm just the messenger."

Shane goes to over to the desk where his phone sat, mostly neglected through the chaos of the morning.

There are a couple unread notifications; one from Rose asking him how he's feeling, a missed call from Hayden, some Centaurs team group chat he was added to and forgot to mute. And then, also, a notification from roz818181@aol.com. Subject line: Hey :).

His breath catches in his throat, and suddenly he is eighteen again. He clicks on the email.

From: roz818181@aol.com
To: shanehollander@gmail.com
07/10/2021 11:11:24 EDT

Subject: Hey :)

Shane,

My dearest Shane. My darling, моя любовь, my angel, моё солнышко, my sweetheart, мой котёнок, the absolute love of my life, my *husband*.

"What to write about! My whole life is a letter to you."

I stole that line from Shklovsky. Remember, I told you about him? Way back in 2014, I found the email. That is how I feel trying to sit down to write this. My whole life is a letter to you.

I went back to read our old messages. I haven't done that in a while. For a bit, it was too sad to read back, to remember what we were doing, what we had to do. I had wished things were different so badly. I remember being so frustrated, and so adoring of you, it was overwhelming. Reading my emails, they feel so tame in comparison. It is like I am reading something from somebody else.

Did you know back then I would read my emails over and over before I sent them to make sure nothing was spelled wrong? I didn't want you to think I was stupid so I didn't say much. I would walk in the park and I would think about what to say back to you. I would write and rewrite it in my head until it was perfect, and then I would go back and I would translate it, and I always lost things in the translation, and so I started to read more in English.

Every time I emailed you back I told myself that that would be the last time I responded, but I always knew I was lying. You would send me something and I would think about it for days before I responded. I loved that feeling, knowing there was something I could respond to. Every time I replied, a sadness would settle and I would return to waiting, never knowing if I would ever hear from you again. At that point in my life, everything felt like I was just waiting. But you always wrote back. Every time.

I remember the day you came up to introduce yourself to me, in Saskatchewan. Do you remember that day? I thought you were going to be rude but you weren't. It surprised me. I would have been rude to you. I was so nervous to be there, at the championship, even though I didn't really have a reason to be. At that point, I had already decided I wanted to play in the NHL. It felt so close and I was scared to want it so bad, like if I wanted it too much, it would be taken away from me. Then I was right, and I hated myself for wanting.

I felt less hesitant when I first kissed you. I mostly just felt lucky. I couldn't believe it, I still sometimes can't. You were so beautiful and I felt like the entire world was just in reach. Shane, my love, you could have asked anything of me that night and I would have said yes. How could I not? You with your beautiful freckles and sweet laughter and eager heart. I almost wanted you to ask me to stay, I didn't care how long. I probably would have done it.

When I was faced with the choice to go to Boston or to return to Moscow, I was embarrassed that I thought first of you. It was stupid and I surprised even myself with it. But I did. I told myself that it didn't matter, that even if I did go to Boston, we wouldn't be able to be together, not like how I wanted. Even so, going back to Russia destroyed all but a small bit of hope about *one day, one day*.

Then you emailed me and when I saw it I think I actually laughed out loud. I was relieved, I think, to know it wasn't just me. And then I was a bit shattered, to know it wasn't just me. That maybe it was all so fucking hard not because of unrequited feelings, but because of some stupid chance circumstances. It was easier to blame you than the fucking universe.

But neither you nor the universe had abandoned me—I came to Canada. Shane, I cannot write about the feelings I had when I first saw you again in 2017, or any time since then, really. Not in English and not in Russian. Every time I am with you I forget what I was so scared of. You are so gentle, so forgiving, so strong, so honest, so funny, so fucking sexy—Shane, I am hopelessly in love and I have been for a long, long time.

During my walks in the park in Russia, I would watch all the chess players, and I would think about how each move could change the game completely. Do you know how many chess games are possible? I looked it up: infinite, basically. Infinite games are possible, as far as our small, human brains can comprehend. I kept wondering what moves I could make to get back to you. That would be like winning the game for me. It felt so unfair, that I could do one stupid thing and lose you forever. One stupid thing and the game ends totally different.

I thought that I was playing a game with life, always needing to make the best move, always at risk of getting it wrong. I was scared and I was careful and I was guarded. I don't think I realized that it was not me playing a game with the universe, but me playing a game with you. No matter what I did, what choices I made, what mistakes I made, at the end of it, I would sit back and look up and you would be there, playing with me. Always us, together, I think. I hope.

Does this make sense? How I can't see this life ending any other way than with you across from me, challenging me, encouraging me, loving me more than I could ever deserve? That no decision would separate me from that stupid, lovely possibility?

Do you think that, too?

Shklovsky's funny; he writes about not writing about love, and his novel reminds me a lot about our emails, back and forth for seven years. I read it first when we were younger, and it sickened me how much I related to this Russian man, separated from his home, but not quite, being confined to just letters to someone he maybe-loved and the expectation he never says it outright. I think the whole time I— or, I hope, *we*— were writing around love, not quite ever getting close enough to touch it. But now I can, Shanya, I can tell you what Shklovsky's protagonist says, finally:

"I can't hold back the words!
I love you. With rapture, with cymbals."

Yours always, always, always,

Ilya

P.s. You said you wanted to see those CCM pictures? Well, I was right. You do look very, very pretty in them.

Attachment: ccm-hollander-rozanov-2010-1

Attachment: ccm-hollander-rozanov-2010-2

Attachment: ccm-hollander-rozanov-2010-3

Attachment: ccm-hollander-rozanov-2010-4

It's four in the morning and Shane and Ilya are still wide awake. They should be exhausted after the day's events, but instead they're just laying in bed, giddy, laughing like kids at a sleepover.

"We really should go to sleep." Shane looks up at Ilya, eyes so sweet and gentle, and Ilya swears he could stay here forever.

"No, Shane." Ilya pouts, grabs Shane and shakes him lightly. "Then our wedding day is over."

Shane's eyes darken for a moment, and he moves so he's hovering over Ilya. "I know how to make the night last longer."

"Again?" Ilya raises his eyebrows. They took no time to consummate the marriage, and then again and again and again. Fucking his boyfriend is one thing, but it turns out that fucking his *husband* is something completely different.

Shane crawls slowly over Ilya, pausing briefly to kiss his lips, his jaw, his neck, before reaching to grab the laptop on the bedside table. He flops back over on his stomach and opens it, pulling up the email Ilya had sent earlier that day.

"Again," Shane nods, just as bratty as ever.

Ilya groans, teasingly, and rolls his eyes. "How many times are you going to read that today? It's already been like twelve."

"Only five so far!" Shane protests. "And at least that many more before I go to sleep. It's beautiful, Ilya."

"Hazy helped me edit it," Ilya deflects, sheepishly.

"Take the damn compliment, Rozanov. I know Wyatt didn't write about my beautiful freckles."

Ilya just smiles fondly at Shane, kisses him softly on the cheek and rolls to his side, props himself up on his elbow, and watches his husband intently. Shane's eyes flicker from the screen to Ilya and back a couple times, a slight grin on his face. It widens.

"You wanna see something?" he asks, almost conspiratorially.

"Yes, always."

Shane opens a new tab and goes to sign into his email. His other email, the Yahoo one with the ridiculous username. He navigates to the drafts folder, where there are 21 unsent emails. Shane smiles sheepishly and turns the laptop towards Ilya.

Ilya just looks back at Shane, eyebrows raised slightly, before he's prompted with a slight head nod.

"Go on. Read them. Maybe in chronological order, start with the bottom." He points towards the draft at the bottom of the list.

Shane buries his face in Ilya's shoulder, planting quick and light kisses on his skin.

Ilya clicks on the draft and begins to read.

To: roz818181@aol.com
08/26/2010 10:12:34 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: Hey :)

Hey Rozanov,

I just heard about you going back to Russia to play in the KHL. That's a bummer, I know you were excited to play for Boston. Are you okay? I'm gonna miss playing against yo—

To: roz818181@aol.com
08/30/2010 13:50:20 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: Hey :)

Rozanov,

Just heard you signed in the KHL. Best of luck over there, you're—

To: roz818181@aol.com
09/02/2010 21:34:20 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: Hey :)

Hey Rozanov,

I just saw that you're going to play for the KHL. I'm gonna miss playing against you, but I bet you're happy to be closer to home. Is it true your dad made you go back? If so, that really sucks. I hope you're okay, I'm worried about y—

To: roz818181@aol.com
11/20/2010 23:09:11 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: Training question

Rozanov,

What do you do for upper body training? I've been doing the same thing for a while and wanted to switch it up and you always look—

To: roz818181@aol.com
1/15/2012 00:24:56 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: Just wondering

Do you ever think about that night in the hotel? I'm thinking about that right now, haha. I miss you. Fuck.

To: roz818181@aol.com
05/27/2013 18:50:13 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: Advice?

Hey Rozanov,

We just got a Russian rookie on our team and I was wondering if you had any advice on how to make him feel more at home here?

To: roz818181@aol.com
10/27/2013 07:33:19 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: Boston game

Roz,

We're playing Boston again tonight. They're not fun to play against if you're not there. Not much of a challenge, if I'm being honest. Sometimes I think about how different things would be if you didn't leave for—

To: roz818181@aol.com
03/13/2014 21:55:15 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: What the fuck!!!!!!

How fucking dare you fuck me like that and then completely fucking ignore me, do you know what you're doing to me???? And I thought you actually liked me, jesus fucking christ.

Do you have any idea how you make me feel? How badly I want you? How fucking lucky I felt to get to see you? How much I care about you, like, seriously and shit?? Do you know that? Do you feel any guilt at all? You fucking asshole I can't fucking believe this.

To: roz818181@aol.com
04/02/2014 09:29:05 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: Ouch :(

Nasty hit in the third period. Get some ice on those ribs.

To: roz818181@aol.com
04/19/2014 20:44:12 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: Charity night

Hey Rozanov,

Today we submitted ideas for where our charity game nights proceeds go, and I chose Montreal's Zoo Ecomuseum, for Ofeliya. I couldn't think of anything else, and I was thinking about how she would probably love it there. Sorry, I don't know how—

To: roz818181@aol.com
06/15/2014 13:50:20 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: HBD

Happy birthday, Rozanov.

To: roz818181@aol.com
07/07/2014 13:50:20 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: (no subject)

Do you ever miss me?

To: roz818181@aol.com
08/15/2014 12:04:20 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: Book recommendations?

Hey Rozanov,

I've been trying to read Anna Karenina but it's so long. I keep wanting to ask you if you've read it but I'm afraid you're going to think I'm kinda dumb for not getting it, haha. Do you have—

To: roz818181@aol.com
10/15/2014 00:50:04 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: (no subject)

I think I'm falling in love with you and I don't know what to do about it.

To: roz818181@aol.com

11/20/2014 13:50:20 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: (no subject)

Is it agony for you too?

To: roz818181@aol.com

12/20/2014 22:00:49 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: Question

Hey Rozanov,

How did you know you like both guys and girls? I've been talking to this girl, Rose, and I love spending time with her, but I don't know if—

To: roz818181@aol.com

02/15/2015 01:29:30 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: I'm sorry

Fuck, Ilya, I'm so sorry. I fucked up. I don't know how to fix this.

To: roz818181@aol.com
02/18/2015 21:57:51 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: fuck

All I fucking think about is you.

To: roz818181@aol.com
04/30/2015 13:50:20 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: DONT SEND THIS

Hey Ilya,

This is so stupid. I just need to tell you everything.

I've been going to therapy, and my therapist told me I should write people letters even if I don't send them. I laughed because I've been doing that with you for so many years now. But anyway. I probably won't send this to you. Actually, I definitely won't send this to you, because I plan on telling you that I love you, and I definitely don't want you to know that. I don't know why I'm so scared of you knowing that, because the worst thing that could happen is you just never reply and I never have to see you again. It's not like I'll run into you on the ice, haha. Sorry, that's probably not funny for you. Not that it matters, I won't even be sending this. Anyway. I love you. Weird.

How did this even happen? We've just been emailing, fuck. Am I insane? I might be crazy. I think about you all the time. I check up on all your games. I keep opening my browser and staring at blank email drafts hoping that I'll think of some genius idea to get you talking to me more. Every time we play Boston I get angry you're not there. Angry! I never get angry! But I'm pissed that you were taken away from me like that. As an opponent and maybe something more, too. Fuck.

I wish it was different. Do you think there's a universe in which we end up together? Is there a universe where you even want to?

I hope there is. I hope we're happy there. I hope it was easy.

I don't know what else to say. I wish you were here. And I love you.

Yours (ew, sappy, but true),

Shane

To: roz818181@aol.com

06/12/2015 02:46:12 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: (no subject)

Did you see me holding the cup? ;) Thinking of u rn

To: roz818181@aol.com

11/14/2015 03:46:20 EDT

[DRAFT] Subject: (no subject)

i'm durnk and i'm watching ur game and i'm gonna fuckng marry you

Chapter End Notes

What a joy it has been to write for you all! Thank you so much for all the love and support on this silly little fic.

Big thanks to Viktor Shklovsky's novel, *Zoo, Or Letters Not About Love*, and my Mormon ex-boyfriend going on his mission so I had to email him for two years straight for all the inspiration.

I have read and adored every single comment you all have left, and I promise to respond to each and every one left on this chapter :)

Like I mentioned above, I plan on writing the Sochi scene, some of the Skype calls, the pickup from the airport, a cheeky cottage scene, and another wedding scene in a Part 2 of this series, so please sub to my user to get notified when I do!

Also, you can find me on [Twitter](#), [my HR TikTok](#). Come say hi!

Yours always,
wormie <33

P.s. hollanov grandmasters au, perhaps??

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