

You've got mail

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You've got mail

by Anonymous

Summary

While trying to write to his friend studying abroad in Moscow, Shane Hollander accidentally reaches Ilya Rozanov.

Chapter 1: YEAR 1

Chapter Notes

Found this [tutorial to make a dynamic letter](#) and decided to have some fun and mess around with it.

Desktop: put your mouse on each letter (and keep it on them while you read!) to see the content inside

Phone: click on the letters (**if the text still looks off/overlaps, try switching to desktop mode on your browser!**)

/\ If you have an AO3 site skin on, it might mess up with the formatting!

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

Shane HOLLANDER

90 University Private, R140
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H3
Canada

Tim WALKER

Moscow State University
Apartment No. 5, Room 341
Moscow, 119991
Russia

Dear Tim,

Hey! How are you doing?

As per your request before you left, here I am, writing to you. Like I told you, I'm not really used to sending letters (unless it's to my extended family, and even then, maybe once a year). But I guess I can see the appeal. It does feel more thoughtful than a text. Even if, honestly, waiting days and weeks for a reply is kind of nerve-wracking, haha.

Anyway, how's life at MSU? I hope your semester's going well so far. Your replacement on the team is a bit rough around the edges, but we'll figure it out. How's the hockey team over there? I'd be curious to know how different their play style is from ours. Are they giving you minimal ice time, since you're not staying long term? Though knowing how you play, any decent team would be stupid not to use you.

Also, turns out I didn't manage to find a new roommate. Everyone I talked to either ghosted me after a few messages, or I had to veto them. One guy straight-up told me he "needed" to bring someone home every night. No, thank you.

It's fine for now, even if things are a bit tight financially. But all that to say... if you didn't already have plans for when you come back, the room's yours if you want it. If you could let me know as soon as possible (maybe by message, not letter...), that'd be great.

I think that's all for now. I'll let this get to you, and hopefully we talk soon.

Take care,
Shane Hollander

Илья Розанов

МГУ им. М.В. Ломоносова
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Россия

Shane Hollander

90 University Private, R140
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Canada

Shane Hollander,

Hello. You are looking for a roommate in uOttawa? My name is Илья (Ilya) and I am interested.

I received your letter today. Sorry to have read something not meant for me, but Tim used to live here, it is true. He moved out a week after classes started, to stay with a girl he met. I do not think it was real love, but I just wished him luck anyway, since I got the place to myself after that.

I almost threw your letter away. I thought, "boring letter, weird handwriting" but then I thought "no, is perfect!" You see, I want to move to North America. Ottawa is not my first choice, but it will do. So I am very interested in your offer.

About me: I am 185cm, hot, muscular, funny, sexy. I will probably bring people home at night, but not every night. And I can cook. I include picture for proof, to show I am real. Are you? I hope so. You play hockey, right? I do too. That is why I was living with Tim. I am captain and best player on the team.

Let me know when I can move in. I can figure out my school enrollment once I have a place to stay. I look forward to hearing from you, Hollander.

With love,
Илья Розанов

PS: Мне пришлось воспользоваться словарём, так что и тебе стоит.

Shane HOLLANDER

90 University Private, R140
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H3
Canada

Илья Розанов

Moscow State University
Apartment No. 5, Room 341
Moscow, 119991
Russia

Dear Mr. Ilya,

First of all, I am sorry. I tried to translate your last name, but I was not sure that I got it right. Rosanov, maybe?

But more importantly, and more sincerely, I deeply apologize for the confusion caused by my previous letter (that wasn't addressed to you at all). As I mentioned, I did not manage to find a new roommate, but I am also no longer actively looking for a new person outside of my circle. I'm deeply sorry if what I wrote gave you the wrong impression.

I managed to get in contact with Tim, and he gave me his new address outside of the campus, so I will not bother you further. I simply did not want to leave you hanging with hopes that I could not fulfill (besides, if you truly do want to come to uOttawa, you should do researches before deciding anything. There is a lot of necessary paperwork). I hope, once again, that you can look past this misunderstanding. I'm honestly a bit embarrassed.

I wish you the best of luck with your plans to move abroad.

Best wishes,
Shane Hollander

P.S.: I did look up how to translate your sentence. Et ça, tu peux le lire avec l'aide de ton dictionnaire?

P.P.S.: You shouldn't sign off your letters to strangers with "with love". In English, it is meant for people you are close to. It could get you into trouble.

Илья Розанов

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Shane Hollander
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Canada

Mr Shane,

So formal. Is it a Canadian rule to apologize at least three times per letter?

You are missing out on the best roommate you could ever have. Did I mention I am hot and muscular? Also very helpful with chores, if that is important to you.

But fine. Too bad. I will find another way to North America. Maybe it will be easier to wait after uni to find a job there, I can be patient.

But it does not mean we can't keep talking. Is fun, no?

You know things about me, and you said nothing about you in return. Boooo! So, you have to write back again to keep it fair. I will tell a little bit more about me, and you will do the same.

I am Ilya. 21. I study economics, because my father would not accept anything else. That is part of why I want to leave. Classes are fine, but boring, so I will not talk about them.

Since my last letter my friend Sasha moved in with me. So I have a roommate again. My other friend, Sveta, her dad is famous hockey coach in Boston. She travels there often and it is where I would like to go.

Also, I looked up your name. Mr team captain. We could have been a good team, too bad we are both playing center. Would not work. I would have to kill you (joke!).

I drew you, since you did not send a picture back. You will now, yes? Is only fair. I also drew a dog I saw.

Write back, Hollander. Don't be boring.

Целую,
Ilya RoZZZZZanov

Shane HOLLANDER
90 University Private, R140
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H3
Canada

Илья ROZANOV
Moscow State University
Apartment No. 5, Room 341
Moscow, 119991
Russia

Dear Mr. RoZanov,

I'm not boring. I'm surprised that you searched my name, though I suppose that's fair curiosity in this kind of situation where you do have my full name.

Since you want to be fair so bad, I looked you up too. Did not find much I could understand, sadly. A bit about your father. He's an important guy, right? Would explain why he would be strict with your major, I guess. I'm sorry that you're not studying what you want (Which is what, exactly? You did not say).

I told my friend about how I ended up sending a letter to the wrong person, and she encouraged me to keep the conversation going. And I suppose that I can admit that you make me curious.

Do I make you curious?

So, fine, some information about myself: I'm also 21, from Ottawa. I study sports medicine. I've been skating and playing hockey for most of my life. I honestly don't know what to say about myself that doesn't revolve around that.

I'd rather not send a picture. We're still, technically, strangers. But I liked your drawing, so I tried drawing you. Sorry, it's not great. Like I said, most of my time goes into hockey.

Kind regards,
Shane Hollander

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Shane Hollander
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Mister Artist Shane,

I love this drawing!!!!

But is still unfair, you have my picture in good quality for reference, and I have nothing but grainy online pictures! Come on, Hollander. We are not strangers anymore, I think. Weeks of writing and sending, we are bonded now.

And yes, you also make me curious. Obviously. A lot.

Even if your life in Ottawa sounds very very boring, but it is what it is. Can't expect much more from a Canadian, I suppose. But i am, i guess, a bit fond (is the right word?) of it.

I did not tell you what I would rather study because I do not know. For long long time I didn't think I would ever have the choice to pick something I like, so now I think that there are many things to try. Like you, I like hockey, but i also like literature (Russian literature, of course, i do not care for English). My father and brother would really laugh if I told them this, I am sure.

Maybe I will just do sport medicine so I can be better than you at hockey AND job.

XOXO,
Ilya

PS: Maybe you will stop thinking we are strangers if you really really see me, so here is another picture. Just for you ;)

Shane Hollander

90 University Private, R140
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H3
Canada

Hollander,

Saw funny postcard, maybe you will like it.
I bought second one for myself, so we match.

XOXO Ilya

Илья Розанов

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Россия

Shane Hollander

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Busy bee Hollander,

Hello, it has been a long while since I sent last postcard, but I guess you might be busy. I am too, but I will take time for you.

I thought maybe my last letter got lost?

Or maybe the picture was too much? I am sorry. I did not mean to assume you would enjoy it and make you uncomfortable. I did not mean anything by it, it was just teasing.

But I did mean that I do not think we are strangers. I enjoy talking to you (or writing and reading) so I would much prefer if you enjoy it too. Is just for fun, no?

I put with letter a USB key with some of my best hockey games that were recorded. I thought that since you are a hockey nerd you would enjoy watching tapes, maybe. Make you understand me better, get closer.

Send some back, or I will assume you are studying my play to defeat me later (impossible).

Please write back. I like your letters, even the boring parts. This semester is a bunch of nothing, even more than usual. I'm going to die of boredom soon.

Waiting for your reply,
Ilya

Shane HOLLANDER
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Ilya ROZANOV
Moscow State University
Apartment No. 5, Room 341
Moscow, 119991
Russia

Ilya,

I'm sorry for taking so long to write back. As you guessed, things have been busy.

One more little fact about me, since you seem to like those, is that I tend to overthink, and new situations overwhelm me sometimes. And I didn't expect to get attached to receiving letters from the other side of the globe. It hasn't been that long. And we're just so far apart, you know? So I freaked out a bit, I guess.

Reading this back, I'm not making much sense. But basically, I just needed some time to think about some things.

I'm sorry again (and you can laugh at me for being very Canadian, again).

And you, how have you been?

I did receive all your letters. The card was funny. And thank you for the tapes, I genuinely enjoyed them. You're an incredible player. It's very satisfying and motivating to watch you move on the ice. Your team is obviously struggling behind you.

Still, now even more than before I am convinced that I would score against you. But at least it would be a good fight.

Like you asked, I found and put together some tapes of my own, so I hope you enjoy watching them. Let me know what you think, I'd love to know your thoughts.

Best,
Shane

Chapter End Notes

Imagine that in the time where Shane stopped responding he freaked out about Ilya's shirtless picture, freaked out about wanting a guy so bad, freaked out about said guy being unattainable, and freaked out about whether he should stop responding at all or send a picture back.

Chapter 2: YEAR 2

Chapter Notes

I had so much fun with this and I felt so encouraged by the comments on the first chapter that I have decided to lock in. Yay!!!

Иля ROZANOV

Moscow State University
Apartment No. 5, Room 341
Moscow, 119991
Russia

Иля,

Happy holidays! Russian Christmas is in January, right?
I couldn't think of a gift that would fit inside a letter, I'm sorry.

Best, Shane

Илья Розанов

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Shane Hollander

90 University Private, R140
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H3
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Shane,

Thank you for the card, it is so cute! I put it above my desk in my apartment.
If you really really want to make me happy and send me a gift, I will accept a new picture of you. I like getting reminders of how you are doing.

Happy holidays to you too. You are right, in Russia Christmas is in January, very different.
But in my case, my family has not had a real Christmas in a really long time.

I can remember a little bit of the last one I had. My mother had crocheted me a hat for cold weather and little mittens as a gift, and she went to the rink with me the day after to play. We stayed there

for hours, it was so much fun.

Now I get little gifts from my close friends, but no real celebration. Is fine like that. I will cherish your card (and your picture, do not forget it).

What about you, Mr perfect Hollander? I bet you have big party with big tree, big family, big gifts. Maybe you have girlfriend that you bring with you to see family?

There is probably so many people in the same room talking at the same time. Does your family all like each other? I think you get gifts that you do not enjoy, but you wouldn't say it because you are so polite.

Don't worry, when I come to America I will get you boring gift and it will be best that you will ever have. Promise!

Very jolly,
Your Santa

Shane HOLLANDER
90 University Private, R140
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H3
Canada

Ilya ROZANOV
Moscow State University
Apartment No. 5, Room 341
Moscow, 119991
Russia

Dear Santa,

I think your view of Christmas is maybe a bit glorified. Or at least, it's not really like this is my family. I celebrate with my Mom and Dad, no other family members. We're not close to any of them, and they live far away, so we rarely see them.

We mostly just have a bit of a fancy dinner and exchange gifts (and no, I did not get anything that I didn't enjoy. We tell each other what we want in advance, so there isn't a risk of bad surprises. You are correct that I would not be a fan of that.)

Also, no girlfriend. I broke up with the one I had a few months ago. Well, more like she broke it off with me, but it's fine. We weren't really clicking anyway. And you? Do you have a girlfriend? You mentioned that you live with someone now. Sasha, right? And your friend Svetlana. ~~(Do you have something for the letter S? Haha)~~

Sorry, that was weird and invasive of me. Please ignore that.

In other news, I found a roommate. Hayden (my teammate) was looking for a room, so we worked things out. I had gotten a bit used to having the place to myself, but it's fine. At least I don't have to worry about rent anymore.

Warmly,
Shane

P.S.: Here's your picture. Where's mine?
You suck at being Santa.

Илья Розанов
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Россия

Shane Hollander
90 University Private, R140
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H3
Canada

Shane!

I am single. No girlfriend. Also, you wear glasses?

I was confused when I read your letter, but then I understood your mistake. You think Sasha is a girl, хахаха. No, Sasha is annoying friend from when I was little, and a boy. School would not allow me to live with a girl, I think. And Sveta is my best friend, we mess around for fun, but nothing serious. She is great, you would like her I think.
Sasha, not so much. Too vain for you.

Also, congrats on not living alone anymore. I still think you should have accepted my offer, we would have had so much more fun. Hayden sounds like a stupid name, so is probably a stupid guy. I tried searching a Hayden on uOttawa hockey team, and there was no result. Is all I need to know.

I would make a much better roommate, but maybe is more fun this way, yes? I am glad that it has come to this.

Since you are so demanding, here is new pictures, of me with Svetlana. So now, you can understand when I talk about her.

Целую,
Илья

Shane HOLLANDER
90 University Private, R140

Ottawa, ON K1N 1H3
Canada

Ilya ROZANOV
Moscow State University
Apartment No. 5, Room 341
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Russia

Ilya,

I'm so sorry, I did believe that Sasha was a girl. After thinking about it, you're right, it does sound unlikely that they would allow co-ed apartments on campus. I don't know what I was thinking.

My roommate, Hayden, is fine. He wasn't studying here before, which might be why you can't find anything online. He's a pretty good player!

He's not at the apartment much anyway, he's kind of always visiting his girlfriend.

Her name is Jackie. She's nice, too. We've become friends, so it's going alright.

And I don't think that I could handle having a rowdy roommate (which I think you would be). If I can feel your energy via letters, I cannot imagine how tiring you could be to be around in real life.

I think you're the type to speak too loud, or slam doors.

Well, maybe I will find out if it's true someday. I'm not forgetting that you promised me a gift.

Also, I do wear glasses, but they are mostly for when I'm at home. I need them for reading and to look at screens, so I always have them on when i'm writing to you.

Best,
Shane

Илья Розанов
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Shane Hollander
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Captain,

First of all, I do not slam doors. I am nice, and a gentleman.

More important, I checked NHL news and saw that Ottawa did not make it to the playoffs this year. Like last year, and the year before, and before, and.....xaxaxa. This is your team? You like supporting losers?

They are lucky that you are not playing pro and humiliating them.

I drew you crying over the Centaurs' loss. Is how I imagined you were in front of your TV when it happened (with hockey stick in hand, yes, because you are a nerd) (and with glasses, because I like them).

Boston is going to win the Stanley Cup, I think! My team does not agree, but they are a bunch of idiots who giggle and fall on the ice more than they play.

Is another reason why I have to get to Boston. It is a place for winners.

Always winning,
Captain Ilya

Shane Hollander

90 University Private, R140
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H3
Canada

Hi,

Could not wait to have enough to say to send full letter. I found little Снупи stamps! They reminded me of you, so I bought a lot and I am also sending you some.

Целую, Илья

Shane HOLLANDER

90 University Private, R140
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H3
Canada

Илья ROZANOV

Moscow State University
Apartment No. 5, Room 341
Moscow, 119991
Russia

Woodstock,

I love the stamps, thank you!
Sadly I can't actually use them.

But they are very cute, so I put one on the letter itself.

Things have been a lot lately. I have so many projects for school, and exams coming up, and the team isn't clicking as it should so we're getting losses after losses. It's a bit rough, and I've had a lot on my mind.

Do you mind if I use this letter to let some things out? I've been rummaging over it a lot, and my friend told me that maybe I should talk to someone about it all. And it is all less daunting to write a letter than it is to actually hold a conversation in real time.

So, here goes. I don't think I like girls. Romantically. My friend that I just mentioned (Rose) kind of guessed it for me. We tried going out, and it was a disaster. I always thought that someday I would simply find the right girl and be happy, but I don't think that's possible anymore. I really tried, and it feels like a failure.

I'm scared to tell my parents. I can't imagine saying it to the team. I'm shaking writing this to you. I hope you do not hate me for this. Having the words on paper, in front of me, helps me accepting it, and I might as well send it now that I have written all of this.

I would understand if you chose not to respond. I just wanted to at least stop lying to someone.

Take care,
Shane Hollander

Илья Розанов

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Shane Hollander

90 University Private, R140
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Canada

Shane,

Hello. Thank you for writing to me, and telling me all of this. I would not stop writing to you because of this, ever. You are also my friend, and I am glad that you are sharing this with me.

So, I will be brave and share with you too. I am бисексуал, bisexual. I like girls, yes, but I also like guys. I have known this for a long time. In truth, when you asked about Sasha I panicked a bit, because we do fuck sometimes.

He is the only other one who knows, is safe with him because we have the same secret. Sveta is my closest friend, but I cannot bring myself to tell her. But I think she figured it out.

Is dangerous, here, to reveal something like this. I could get in trouble for living how I want, and my father will surely kill me. If he even remembers me, that is. He is very sick, and losing his mind more every day. I am stuck here now, because it has gotten worse this year and I do not want to leave him alone to die. My brother would not take care of him, I know.

But now we have each other, yes? Is scary to be alone, and hiding. If your parents are nice like you describe them to me, maybe they will be nice about this?

If anything, I will always read your letters, and send back. I promise. You are fine.

In your corner,
Ilya

PS: So, you think I am hot?

Shane HOLLANDER
90 University Private, R140
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H3
Canada

Илья ROZANOV
Moscow State University
Apartment No. 5, Room 341
Moscow, 119991
Russia

Dear Ilya,

I was so relieved to receive your letter. I said that I would understand if you decided to stop writing, but to be more honest, I really do not want you to stop.

Thank you for telling me, too. What are the chances of us having so much in common and getting into contact? I should thank Tim.

I am also in your corner. Obviously. I wish there was more that I could do. I feel silly about freaking out when your situation is much more serious than mine, but thank you, really, really, for

your reassurance.

I'm sorry, as always, to hear about how your father isn't good to you. And sorry, too, that he is sick. I hope things don't get too difficult for you, and that the situation gets better.

You're probably right about my parents, but still, the risk kind of paralyzes me. I just need to work up the courage to do it.

You will be fine, too. Let's be more honest with each other in these letters, alright? I want to help you feel better as much as you are helping me.

Talk soon,
Shane

P.S.: Do I have to say it?

Chapter 3: YEAR 3

Chapter Notes

The part in Russian is machine translated, I apologize for any mistake. Feel free to correct me!

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

Shane HOLLANDER

90 University Private, R140
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Canada

Ilya ROZANOV

Moscow State University
Apartment No. 5, Room 341
Moscow, 119991
Russia

Ilya,

What will you do first, when you move abroad? You said you want to live in Boston, right?

I've never had the chance to go, but one of my classmates has family there, so he recently traveled to spent the holidays with them. He keeps telling me that Boston is "the best". A very busy city, very lively. From the sound of it, it would fit you well.

I can't really imagine living in a place like this. Or at least, not in the middle of the city. I don't know where I will end up after I've graduated. I want to apply to join the Centaurs' medical staff (yes, I saw how terrible their season is going, you can stop laughing) but you never know if that will work out. Not that I'm not confident in my skills, but you know.

My parents have a cottage near Ottawa, and I really like it here. When I'll have the funds, I would like to build and have my own. Obviously, it would need a gym. I'd love to have a dedicated yoga room, too.

My mom is a big fan of the Voyageurs, in Montreal, so maybe I'll also apply to their team. We went to see them play against Winnipeg recently, it was awesome. They're killing it lately, my mom

thinks they're going to get the Cup this year.

I got you a pin from the stadium, so you can remember a real winning team.

Best wishes,
Shane

Илья Розанов

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Shane Hollander

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Canada

Mr real estate,

Boston is great, Sveta tells me. She loves it there. Sad for me that she isn't often in Russia anymore, but she is trying to build her own business in the city.

I have a great plan, thank you for asking. When I get in America, I want to try to eat all the gross American food possible, to compare with Russia. Important research. I will forget about hockey diet for a little bit. I want the milkshake with the fries, you know? Americans are so funny.

Then, I want to see and visit TD Garden, of course. I will go to games to support a real team, because EVERYONE with a brain knows that the Bears are far better than the Montreal losers. Come on, Hollander, what is up with you? Are your grades so bad that you would have to be stuck living in Montreal? I do not know much about sport medicine, but I think you can do a lot better.

Even the team's logo is ugly (but not uglier than the Centaurs. Maybe you should draw them a new one). Ask your friend to bring you a Boston pin and send it to me, I will just throw the other one.

And that is all of my plan. Unlike you, I like to live a little and surprises. I want to discover a lot of things. Sveta knows the city very well anyway, so she will show me all the best places.

And then, when you will come visit, I will also show you. But we will start the visit with TD Garden, of course.

Byebye,
Ilya, Bears Captain

Илья ROZANOV

Moscow State University

Apartment No. 5, Room 341
Moscow, 119991
Russia

Ilya,

This reminded me of the first card you sent me!
I got a matching one, too.

Best,
Shane

Shane HOLLANDER
90 University Private, R140
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H3
Canada

Ilya ROZANOV
Moscow State University
Apartment No. 5, Room 341
Moscow, 119991
Russia

Ilya,

I haven't received any news in a while, so I wanted to ask more directly if things are alright.

Not that you owe me any news. But still, I would like to hear from you, whenever you have time to write me back.

I'm doing fine. I finally talked to my parents, about being gay. You were right, they were really nice and supportive about it. Sometimes I wonder why my brain dramatizes every possible situation so much. Again, thank you for your support with this, it meant a lot. Things are good now.

I also told them that I've been writing regularly to a guy in Russia, and I think that shocked them more, haha. So, my parents say hi.

They were really curious about you, so I told them that you're a hockey player (a good point) and that you want to move to Boston + is a Bears fan (a bad point).

Really hope you're doing good. I wonder how your team has been doing lately. We've been on a winning streak, and I'd love to know that there are worthy rivals out there.

Let me know soon?

With love,
Shane

Илья ROZANOV

Moscow State University
Apartment No. 5, Room 341
Moscow, 119991
Russia

Hi,

Went to Montreal and thought you would love a postcard.
I guess the gloomy weather shouldn't be too different in Moscow.

Shane

Илья Розанов

МГУ им. М.В. Ломоносова
Квартира N.5, комната 341
Москва, 119991
Россия

Shane Hollander

90 University Private, R140
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H3
Canada

To Shane Hollander,

Hi Shane, I hope this letter gets to you with no problem. I meant to send you some things sooner, but I could not.

You told me we should be honest with each other, yes? So I will be. Things have not been good. Terrible, really.

My father died. I knew this was coming. His illness was getting much worse so fast. I do not know how I feel about it.

But this is not why I am doing so bad. I told you about my brother, yes? When I was arranging things for the funeral, this хуй с горы took my keys and came to my apartment. He said he needed father's car keys, the ones I kept since father stopped driving. I told him I would bring them myself, but he did not wait.

When he came, he saw all your letters, because I keep them all in my room. Called me all kind of stupid names, over some letters. He burned them all, so there is nothing left of you. I do not even know if I remember your address correctly enough to send this to you.

I am upset. And sad. I will graduate because the diploma will help to get a job, and then I leave Moscow. There is nothing here for me anymore.

I am moving to a new apartment, and will not give my brother the address. But it means that right now, I cannot receive anything. You have email, yes? Here is mine. I will wait to hear from you.

With love,
Илья

I remembered when you said that writing your thoughts helped you with them. So I wrote some things. I am sending it to you, because it is the most honest I can be. I know you are curious but please do not translate. I just needed to see the words.

Я очень-очень устал и грущу. Я думаю о маме. Они не прислушались к моей просьбе не хоронить отца рядом с ней. Она застряла здесь, с ним, даже после всего, что он ей причинил. Мне кажется, что я снова подвёл её.

Я всего лишь студент, но все вокруг слишком многого от меня ждут. “Ты должен больше помогать, Илья”. “У тебя есть сбережения, так что ты должен давать деньги, Илья”. Снова, и снова, и снова, и снова.

Я не думаю, что у меня еще есть брат. Если честно, у меня его давно уже нет. Я ударил его в лицо, когда он показал мне сожженные письма. Назвал меня хуесосом за то, что я переписываюсь с тобой. Забавно, как он прав, знаешь? Называл тебя ужасными словами, ничего не зная.

Единственное, что мне помогает, это Светлана и ты. Каждый день я думаю о том, чтобы сесть на самолет и приехать в скучную Оттаву, чтобы увидеться с тобой.

Я хочу тебя увидеть. Ты мне очень, очень нравишься, и я не знаю, что делать со всем этим. Я ничего не знаю. Поможешь мне, Shane? Я не могу потерять и тебя тоже.

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Hi

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Dear Илья,

Hello. I got your letter. I was very happy to hear from you, and very distraught from what I read. I'm so sorry about everything that happened. I wish that I was closer to you right now, I feel powerless to help you.

Your brother is a real piece of shit. Fuck him. I'm glad that you could choose to move to a new place, and hopefully you don't have to interact with him much anymore.

Also, you have to tell me once you get your new address, I will make sure to make up for the loss by sending more letters. And doodles, since you're apparently turning me into an artist.

But e-mails can also be nice, don't you think? This way we don't have to wait so long to hear from each other. I look forward to getting more news from you. I hope they will be happier.

Now that all of that has been said: boringshane? really? Are you 12?

Waiting for your reply,
Not boring Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Hi

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

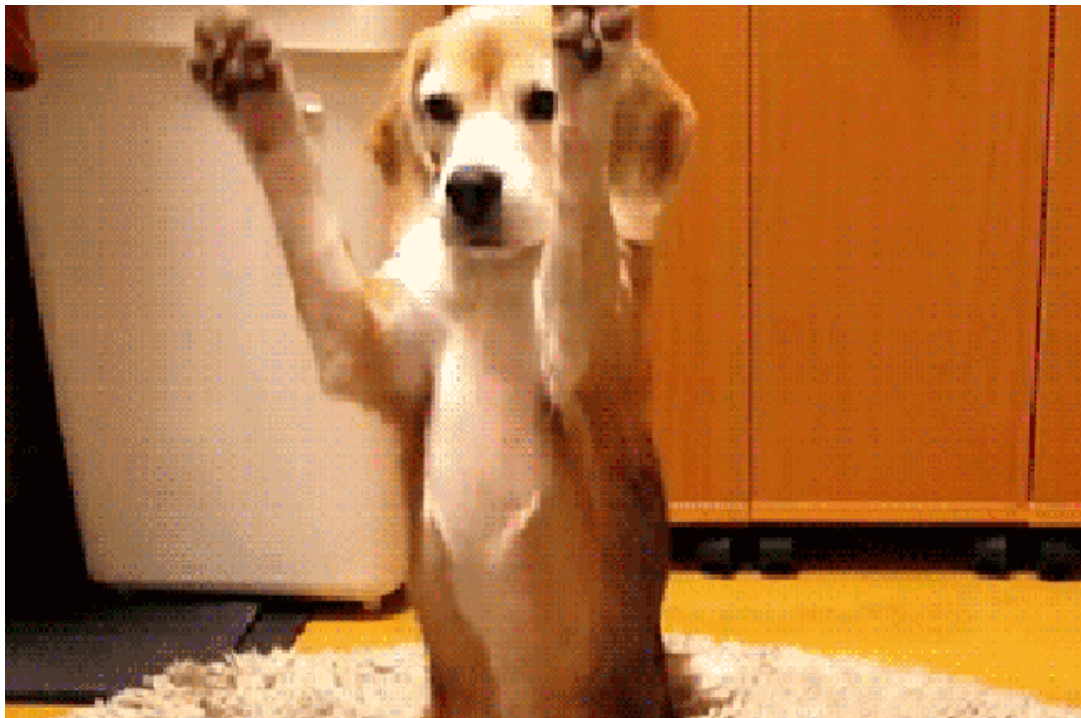
most boring shane,

hi :)

i am doing much better, now that i am talking to you. my brother does not matter, his family does not matter. but, if you want to make me feel even better, send me new picture of yourself?

emails are really great, i agree. so much we can do that is impossible on paper.

look:



so cute. you like? i can send you more.



i can also send many many emails without having to worry about having enough paper or stamps.
is very great, really.

with love,
Ilya

PS: what even is a loon? i searched, and it showed me ducks. you are a duck fan? i didn't know.

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Re: Re: Hi

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Attached: Shane_picture.png(70.3 KB).

Ilya,

I am very happy to know that you feel better. :-)

To answer your question, loons are a type of aquatic birds. The common loon is the provincial bird of Ontario, and there are a lot of them living near my parent's cottage. I do like them, I think they look neat.

Plus, I know how to make a loon call, so it's like I speak a third language.



You can find attached to this mail a picture. "Just for your eyes", as you would say.

Have a nice day,
Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Hi

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Attached: [gdsbsbgs.png \(96 KB\)](#) [hfhfhfhfh.png \(95 KB\)](#) [ezfggrgr.png \(78 KB\)](#) [lkiuukfbki.png \(78 KB\)](#) [fecgfrhy.png \(87 KB\)](#)

Shane,

so you are extra boring, now with a boring canadian bird. i should have known.

thank you for the picture. you look great, even if your fashion is a bit ehhe. i can give you tips, maybe.

you did not ask for a picture back, you do not want to see me? i am hurt.

all you will get now is pictures of all the the dogs i saw today.

you kind of look like the tiny one that is doing an angry face, lol.

целую,
Илья

Chapter End Notes

The attached pictures in the emails aren't supposed to open/be clickable - it's just text :)

The [How to mimic email windows](#) tutorial

Chapter 4: YEAR 4

Chapter Notes

I managed to fix the fic so that it doesn't look weird on the phone!
The postcard's texts look a bit off on desktop now, but I think it's fine enough for now.
I also changed the font of the letters while i was at it, I think it makes it all look more readable.

I'm a bit afraid that maybe phone readers have already been put off by how weird the 1st chapters looked when first uploaded, and won't click on this update. It's not the end of the world, but if you like the fic, consider sharing it? :-)

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Share from THE HOCKEY NEWS: NHL Rumor[...]

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Check this out from **THE HOCKEY NEWS**:

<https://thehockeynews.com/news/nhl-rumor-roundup-the-latest-speculations>
<https://thehockeynews.com/news/admirals-rookie-breaks-NHL-record>
<https://thehockeynews.com/news/exclusive-interview-with-voyageurs-ex-coach>
<https://thehockeynews.com/news/bears-vs-voyageurs-projected-lineup>

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: no

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

shane

you send the morning paper now? i am not clicking on your links. what if it sends virus to my computer?

you are trying to hack me, hollander? or maybe just trying to bore me to death with articles.
impossible to know which one is worse!

falling asleep,
Ilya

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Re: no

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Ilya,

These are just some hockey related news, which I thought you might enjoy.

There have been a few promising rookies with a lot of eyes on them, despite only being drafted recently. Some of their stats are truly impressive already. I'm curious to see how well they'll do in the long run, or if they'll crash.

I also linked you to an interview recently published with the Voyageurs' old coach, the one that retired last year. I found it pretty insightful. He shared a lot about his habits with the team and some training exercises he used to make them do, so I took some notes to share with my team. You could do the same.

So, I guess that the answer to your question is that I am boring you to death. I wasn't actively trying to.

I'll come to your funeral.

Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Re: no

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

mr nerd :)

i said that you were trying to bore me to death, not succeeding. yes, you only have hockey in your brain, but i know this. is fine, i think you know i do not really mind at all.

i found an article too, for you. did you know that they are trading a buffalo forward to ottawa?

see here:

<https://thehockeynews.com/news/surprising-trade-buffalo-ottawa>

what do you think?

Ilya

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Fuck you

To: boringshane@gmail.com

You asshole. Fuck you.

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: you wish

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

shane,

lol. got you)))

Ilya

Ilya ROZANOV
76 Ostozhenka Street
Moscow, 191171
Russia

Ilya,

I'm on break, on my way to go to my parent's cottage.
I thought that it would be a good opportunity to start back your letter collection.

Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: just for you

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

hollander,

selfie for you!



Ilya

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Re: just for you

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Rozanov,

What?

Why does it look like that?

Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Re: just for you

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca



Ilya

Ilya ROZANOV
76 Ostozhenka Street
Moscow, 191171
Russia

Ilya,

I'm in Detroit to visit my friend Rose. I've never been before, but she's mostly taking me to clothes stores and cafés, so not a lot of actual visiting.

Shane (and Rose, she says hi)

Shane Hollander
90 University Private, R140
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H3
Canada

Shane,

Was sad that I lost my lizard stamps when I moved to new place, but I found this funny card! Hope you like it.

Ilya

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: (no subject)

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Illily, a

Can you bring me food thank you Thank you please also you are so pretty

Can you get me a little cheese?

i threw up and it hurts:-)

It's Sahne

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: Re: (no subject)

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

shane, what? what is happening? are you okay?

did you get hacked for real? you should not click on more links.

but really, are you fine?

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: Are you ok?

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Shane,

It has been a day and more since last email, and I am worried. Answer back, please.

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Re: Are you ok?

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Ilya,

God. I'm so sorry. I got more drunk than I meant to (which is, not at all. I don't usually drink) at a team party, and then I had the worst hangover sickness of my life. I don't even remember getting up and sending you an e-mail.

I guess I was craving food and tried to ask for help. Don't ask me why I thought it would work via long distance and e-mail. My mind feels so foggy still.

This is really embarrassing, please delete the message. I'm doing better now.

Let's just forget this.

Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: cheesed

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

ah, i see. lol. is good that you are doing better now, i was very confused. get some more rest, yes?

unfortunately i cannot erase my memory, so i will not forget the message or that you are a whiny needy drunk))

did you get the little cheese?



dr Ilya

PS: i am not the pretty one, you are.

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: boooooored

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

mr hollander,

i'm bored. you will not send any more morning paper? keep me entertained, please.

Ilya

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Re: boooooored

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Rozanov,

Fuck you, I'm not sharing anything with you anymore. I thought it was all so boring? You said you didn't want to read any of it.

Find a way to keep yourself entertained.

Good day,
Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Re: boooooored

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

shane,

what. i never said that. liar told you that, please tell me what you are reading about.

Ilya :(

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Share from HEALTH HELP: Spotting the[...]

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Check this out from HEALTH HELP:

<https://health-help.ca/spotting-the-signs-of-mythomania>

Shane HOLLANDER

90 University Private, R140
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H3
Canada

Ilya ROZANOV

76 Ostozhenka Street
Moscow, 191171
Russia

Dear Ilya,

It's been a long time since my last real letter.

I've been meaning to write for some weeks, but since we've started to talk more frequently, I find it harder to come up with interesting things to say that you don't already know.

But here's a simple one. I'm not telling you in advance that I'm sending this, so It will be a little surprise to you, since you like those.

Hayden has been trying to set me up on dates with every one of Jackie's friends. And her friend's friends. How hard is it to accept that I'm not interested? He says that he's worried about my love life, but why is it anyone's business but my own?

Also, mind you, I have been on some dates. But I don't want to tell him, I'm not ready for this conversation. He's a good guy, but you know.

Not that the dates have led to anything worth talking about anyway. They were all kind of awkward.

I was also a bit distracted, maybe. By some things.

Anyway, I drew you a lizard, since you like them. Did you know that there are over 6000 species of lizards? I got stuck into a rabbit hole while looking for a drawing reference.

Talk soon,
Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: some news

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Attached: [nkhjhjlrk.png \(72 KB\)](#)

shanya,

i think i will be moving away soon.

i am graduating in a few months, and sveta has told me that she could get me a job in her business. i told you she sells cars, yes? is very successful, and she is still in boston.

is not my dream project, of course. but it is a good place to start, and i am so thankful to her, like always.

still many details to think about before it can become real, but things are moving forward. soon, i will say goodbye to moscow, and to russia. i do not know if i will ever go back, after this.

lots of not really sweet feelings about it, but many more happier ones. we wouldn't be so far away when I am in boston, right? you will come visit like we talked about.

Ilya

PS: super super cute dog i saw today, see pic

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Re: some news

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Attached: [Picture_beagle.png \(80 KB\)](#)

Ilya,

Wow, this is big news.

I've never really left my home town, so I can't really understand what it would feel like, to go so far away. Even more so with your complicated situation. It's a big step.

But you've talked so much about wanting this, so I am happy to hear that things are finally moving along.

You said you would move soon, how soon after graduation do you think? Have you already started looking for a place to stay? It would be hard to find something good on a short notice. What job would you be doing, exactly? How hard is it going to be for you to move all of your stuff across different countries? Will Svetlana help you?

I will come visit, of course. But you will travel to Ottawa too, I hope? I promise I can find interesting things for us to do. We could go to the rink, finally try our skills against each other.

Shane

P.S.: I also saw a cute dog today. I took a picture for you.

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Re: some news

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

моя думающая машина,

you have so many questions.

it is only an early plan for now, so not a lot has been decided for good. i talk with sveta often so that she can help me find a place. if i don't have anything in time, i will stay with her until i do.

it is too long to type all of this, maybe we can call? if you have free time? easier to share everything about this. you have whatsapp? is so we do not have to worry about calling fees.

call me when you are ready, if you want: +7 9XX-XXX-XX-XX

Ilya

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Good night

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Attached: [Cottage1.png \(90 KB\)](#) [Cottage2.png \(89 KB\)](#) [Cottage3.png \(94 KB\)](#)

Илья,

It was very good to hear you. I'm really excited for you, and your plans, and to eventually meet you for real.

See attached to this mail pictures of the cottage, like I told you. It'll be fun, I promise.

Please consider it.

Целую,
Shane

Chapter 5: YEAR 5

Chapter Notes

I have been floored by how this fic has taken off since last chapter. It's crazy!! I have absolutely loved reading all the comments. So incredibly honored by everyone who said they've left their first ever ao3 comment on this fic, or read it without even knowing the show/books/characters. Thank you all so much. It has motivated me to try to add even more fun things, so I hope you all enjoy that!

I'm also super happy that this fic has made a lot of people discover the wonders of CSS/HTML coding within AO3. There are so many great fics with incredible coding, and guides to do things that look like magic. I'm nothing without them.

If you're interested, I recommend taking a look at the [HTML Tryhard](#) tag (or any CSS and HTML related tags) there's a lot of cool, impressive stuff.

Try it yourself and have fun!

If this fic has inspired you to do so, I would love love love to see the results, no matter the fandom, so let me know :)

But by far the best thing that happened is that I managed to rickroll so many of you in 2026. All according to Ilya's plan

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

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: Invitation: call? @ Jan 5[...]

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Sat, Jan 5

8:00 - 9:00 PM

call?



in house



boringshane@gmail.com - Organizer



i want to call



On your calendar

YesNoMaybe

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Call invitation?

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Ilya,

I've accepted your invitation, but I don't think we need a planned meeting for every call?
At least, you can call me when you want.

Also, why aren't you answering my texts?

Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Call invitation?

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

hollander,

emails are still fun, no? is like the letters, is our thing.
when i get a notification i get happy like i am собака павлова

since we are so far away we always take hours to answer any text anyway, is not very instantaneous
(stupid word that i had to look up)

and i get sooo many texts every day that your messages get lost, you know?

xoxo

Ilya

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Re: Re: Call invitation?

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Mr Popular,

I didn't say that I disliked the e-mails. I also check them more often than I ever used to.

I guess that we do need to keep talking here, or your entire e-mail address would become obsolete, since you created it just for this.

It would really be a shame to lose "boringshane".

xo
Shane

P.S.: You told me like two weeks ago that you only get messages from me, and Svetlana. So who's harassing you?

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: can we call now

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

shane,

no, you misunderstand something. i have been using this email for a lot of things lately. is the one i give to all the real estate guys i talk with for boston and also when i create new accounts for different websites.

is been very useful!

love,
BoringShane

PS: fuck you

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Yes

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Ilya,

I can't tell if you're messing with me. You have to tell me if you are joking or if I have to strangle you through the screen right now.

Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: :)

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

strangle please)

Ilya

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Watch "Unlikely animal friends: the[...]"

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Check out these videos on **YouTube**:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?the-chihuahua-and-the-chicken>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?the-tale-of-a-cockatoo-and-a-kitty-cat>

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Watch "Unlikely animal friends: the[...]"

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

hollander,

you watch so many of these videos i am going to start thinking your are not 100% made by hockey and have other interests. imagine that i am doing a really shocked face right now (is not a complaint, i love the videos. please keep sending them. the little chicken and chihuahua are so small and cute)

we are kind of unlikely friends in a way, no? we could be the story of the awesome wolf and the little cat.

awoo,
Ilya

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Re: Re: Watch "Unlikely animal friends: the[...]"

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Ilya,

Why am I a cat in this scenario? I don't think that's right.

But also, how are you a wolf? If anything, I thought you would say that you're a dog?

I guess that we are unlikely friends, yes. Maybe this is why I've been really into these types of videos.

Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Re: Re: Watch "Unlikely animal friends: the[...]"

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

little kitty shane,

what you are saying is really nice but it will wait because i need to correct you. dogs are the best ever but i need to protect them all so i am the stronger scarier creature (wolf).



is me!

Ilya

Shane HOLLANDER

350 Montgomery St
Ottawa, ON K1L 7X2
Canada

Ilya ROZANOV
76 Ostozhenka Street
Moscow, 191171
Russia

Dear Ilya,

Things have been pretty calm lately with school, so I have time to write again. Great timing for a new letter, since I have a bit of a weird story that didn't feel fitting for an e-mail.

I don't know if you remember from a few years back, I mentioned that I had a classmate from Boston. We've been talking more, lately.

I saw him at a house party I got dragged into by my hockey team, and you would not be able to guess what happened. At least, I didn't see it coming.

I wasn't drinking but my friend, Alex, was, and we ended up just talking in a room together. I don't even remember what we were discussing, but at some point he suddenly moved from his seat and kissed me.

I was so surprised that I got up and left. I was afraid all night that he thought I was being homophobic for leaving, or that I would be too gay if I told him it was okay that it happened.

He ended up coming out to me the day after. He's bi, just like you. I had no idea. He told me that he "kind of guessed" that I was gay. I don't know what it means.

Can everyone tell? I remember my parents also telling me that they had an inkling, before I told them. I haven't told any of the guys, except Hayden. I don't want them to know like this.

He asked me if I would like for us to have some fun together, and I haven't answered him yet. I don't really feel anything for him. But we're friends, and he likes hockey. Am I messing everything up?

I don't know. Sorry for rambling.

Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: (no subject)

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

hollander, you are doing this on purpose?

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Re: (no subject)

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Rozanov,

Doing what? You have to be more specific, I don't know what you're talking about.

Is something wrong?

Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Re: (no subject)

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Shane,

Nevermind. Is nothing. I wanted to make a joke, but it was not really funny, so forget it.

Ilya

From: boringshane@gmail.com

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

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

hollander, i do not want to hear about your stupid dates and the people you will have sex with.

you do know how it hurts to be so far, that i cannot do anything about it? i have not been with anyone in a while, because all i think about is you. have you? do you not feel the same? i cannot pretend that it is not serious, not with you.

it would break my heart, i think.

i lov|

Delete draft?

Are you sure you want to delete the draft mail?

DeleteCancel

Илья Розанов
Улица Остоженка, 76
Москва, 191171
Россия

Shane Hollander
350 Montgomery St
Ottawa, ON K1L 7X2
Canada

Мой Шейн,

Surprise, a letter! I will bet that you really missed getting long notes from me.

Letters will always be nice, I think. Sometimes, when I do not know how to say something to you, my first thought is "this would be easier by mail".

By the time I am writing this to you, I am going over the details for Boston with Sveta. She came here to help me, because there are a lot of annoying things to do, and things to think about.

For example, I will be moving to the US with a work visa, of course. But that means that it is not a permanent way to stay here, and not what I want. I want to get rid of my Russian citizenship, so that I cannot risk being sent back if the job does not work out, or something else goes wrong. I do not want to be forced to hide and be careful forever.

Sveta has double citizenship, so we could get married. We did not talk about it much, but I know she would agree to help me, if I really asked.

It would be the easier way, yes?

But there is a problem. Because even when I know that it would solve everything, she is not the one I am always thinking about, and not the one I want.

I find that when I close my eyes, I am always thinking of freckles, and hockey, and stupid Ottawa, that is still so far away.

Is it a funny problem, no?

Ilya

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Art café

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Ilya,

I spent some time with Rose today, and she dragged me to an "art café". It was basically a painting atelier. Have you ever been to something like this?

I wanted to paint a puck and hockey stick, but Rose said it would be boring. I told her that sometimes I doodle animals and she got really excited about it, so I ended up making a dog. And

then I had a lot of space left on the canvas so I added you, petting the dog. Because I thought you would do that if you saw the dog. I don't know.

Rose said that she liked it, but she said it with the same face she does when we go eat somewhere and she doesn't like the food, but doesn't want to offend the waiter.

Anyway. I think it's really bad but maybe it'll make you laugh.



Sorry for messing you up. Someone has to be the one to bring your ego down.

Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Art café

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

hollander мой художник stop talking so much you need to mail this to me right now!!! i love it!!!

i am smiling big like in your drawing :)

i do not have paints but i drew artist snoopy, but as you!



maybe we should consider opening an art museum together, no?

Ilya

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Letter

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Ilya,

I got your letter. You are right, I have missed getting them.

Do you want your problem to go away?

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Letter

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

no. never. do you want to date your boston classmate?

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Re: Re: Letter

To: boringshane@gmail.com

No. I never did.

Don't marry Svetlana. Don't ask her about it.
We'll figure something out.

Yours,
Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: call now?

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

okay. i won't.

yours,
ilya

Ilya ROZANOV
76 Ostozhenka Street
Moscow, 191171
Russia

Ilya,

Congratulations again, for graduating. I've been saving up this postcard for the occasion, I hope it reaches you in time.

Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: newsss

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

shane!

i have set a date for when I will be leaving for america.

i have to give back my apartment in two weeks, and it will leave me enough time to take care of my last businesses in moscow and then be done.

i will have to say goodbye to mama, since i am not sure if i will come back here. is the only thing that is making me very sad, leaving her here.

but i am also very excited. i count the days until i leave.

and then the days until i see you.

hopefully, not too long.

целую,
Ilya

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Re: newsss

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Oh, Ilya,

Your mom would be proud of you, for doing what you want, and what's best for you. She seemed like a beautiful person, how you've described her to me in the past, so I'm sure that she would understand.

I'm also proud of you.

Hopefully not too long, yes.

Shane

Ilya ROZANOV
76 Ostozhenka Street
Moscow, 191171
Russia

Ilya,

A last card to Moscow.

I'll be waiting for your Boston address to keep sending these.

With love,
Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: BOSTON SOON!!

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Attached: [plane_hjvjhh.pdf\(645 Ko\)](#)

shanya,

here are details of my flight, like you asked. since you are creepy stalker now.

but is time for very sad news now: i will probably be too busy to talk much for a little while, until i am moved in completely. i have a lot of things to buy for the apartment i got, and boring meetings with boring paperwork to take care of.

also, once i have arrived, i will get a phone with US phone number.
since the time difference will not be a problem anymore, we could text more.
i mean that i want to text more.

i will let you know when i am done being busy.

will talk to you soon,
Ilya

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Re: BOSTON SOON!!

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Ilya,

Thank you. Have a safe flight, and I hope all goes well with your arrival in Boston.

I'll talk to you soon too,
Shane

Shane Hollander
350 Montgomery St
Ottawa, ON K1L 7X2
Canada

Shane,

First card from Boston!

They tried to sell me the card for much more money than normal, like I am a stupid tourist. I like the city.

XOXO Ilya

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: How are you?

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Ilya,

I received your postcard. How are things going? Not too difficult to adjust?

Did you follow the Bears' news? Very rough start of the season for them. I'm not sure if now's the right time to go to TD Garden.

I'll be waiting to hear from you,
Shane

From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: very good

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Attached: [frezqfe.png\(81 KB\)](#)

shane,

why did you not share ottawa news, too? last i saw they were doing so bad an article called one of their players a baby on ice.

i did go see a game already, with sveta, against new york. thanks to her dad she has tickets for so many games.

i know that you know that boston did not win this game, but everyone was screaming so it was fun.

there are a lot of weird things here, but is ok. i am doing good. even better now that i have time for моя гусеница.

i got a new phone, like I told you. so now we can text!

i did not save any number from my old phone, so you will need to message me. we could also call?

i have many things to tell you.

+1 617 XXXXXXXX

xoxo

Ilya

PS: first picture for you of puppy from boston!

PPS: boringshane is full of spam because i signed up to a weird website to have movies for the plane(

←  Whatsapp chat with: +1 617 XXXXXXXX   

Today

Sent Message: Hi, this is Shane Hollander. 17:25 ✓✓

Received Message: Hi? I'm sorry, I think you have wrong number. I don't know any Shane Hollander. 17:31



Type a message



From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Re: very good

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Ilya,

I'm very happy to get some news, and to hear that everything is going great. The dog is really cute. No comment about what you said about the Cens.

I tried messaging the number you gave me, but I think you might've made a mistake? Here is mine again, send me a message: 613-XXX-XXX.

xo
Shane

←  Whatsapp chat with: Ilya   

Today

Sent Message: Hi, this is Shane Hollander. 17:25 ✓✓

Received Message: Hi? I'm sorry, I think you have wrong number, i don't know any Shane Hollander 17:31

2 UNREAD MESSAGES

oh wait, i just remembered 17:36

shane hollander, canada's most boring man? it is an honor 17:36

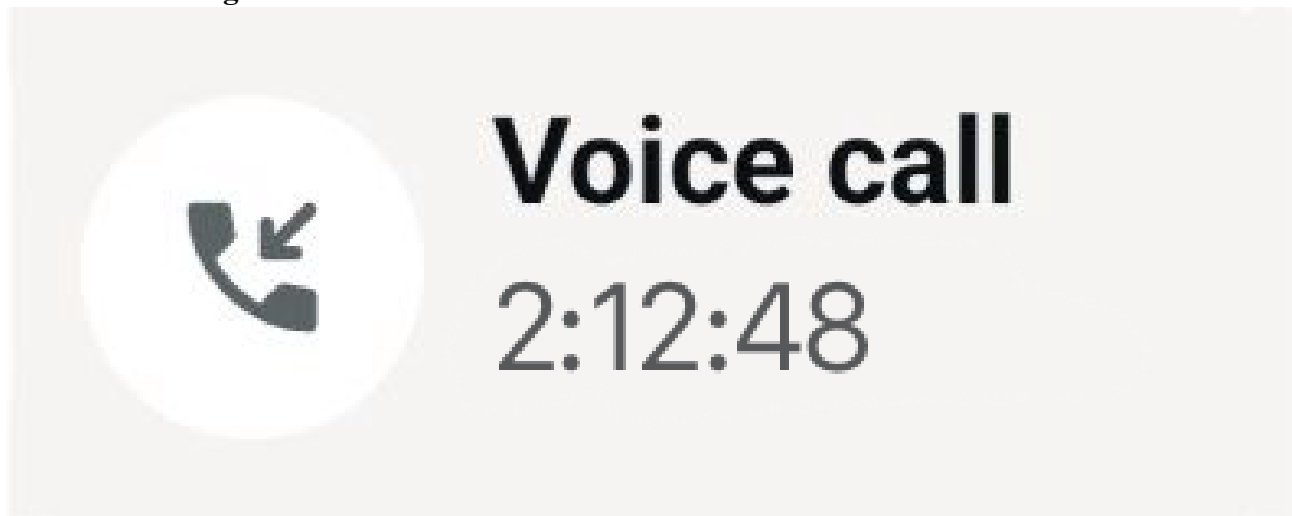
Sent Message: Fuck you. You're such a kid. 17:38 ✓✓

Reactions: ❤️

Why is this your profile picture??? 17:38 ✓✓

Reactions: 🙄

Received Message:



17:39



Type a message



Chapter End Notes

Made Ilya say that he needed to look up how you write "instantaneous" because I too, needed it

The text in Ilya's draft email is pretty hidden on the phone, but you should be able to see some more of it on desktop/desktop mode ;)

[Whatsapp Work Skin Template](#)

Chapter 6: YEAR 6, PART 1

Chapter Notes

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

←  Whatsapp chat with: Shane 🐱💌📞⋮📺

Today

Sent Message: work is killing me hollander, i will die soon 17:12 ✓✓

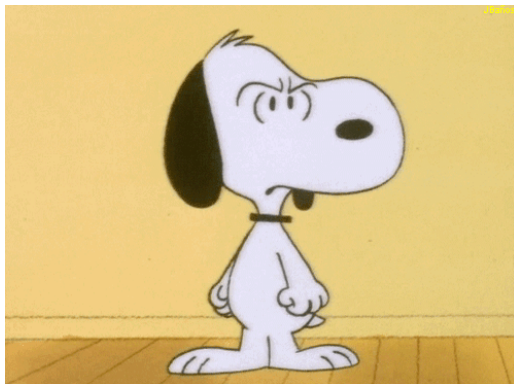
Sent Message: 🐱 17:12 ✓✓

Received Message: I thought that it was going alright? 17:36

it is fine but also is annoying. crazy customers always unhappy and yelling and i cannot yell back
17:39 ✓✓

also they keep talking slow to me like i am stupid because of my accent 17:40 ✓✓

i tell them i speak english just fine and i had years of practice (😁) but they all just continue to treat me like baby who doesn't understand 17:41 ✓✓



Sent Message:  17:43 ✓✓

i want to sleep 17:43 ✓✓

I'm sorry, that sucks. 17:45

Is there any way I can help? 17:45

i do not need help. is just stupid work things 17:46 ✓✓

just wanted to complain 17:47 ✓✓

I know you don't need help, but I want to. 17:48

You get off soon, right? We don't have to call if you're tired. I'll let you sleep. 17:49

get off)) 17:53 ✓✓

Reactions: 👍

no hollander, i will call you 17:54 ✓✓

is relaxing talking to you 17:54 ✓✓

Okay. Good. 17:55

Call me when you want. 17:56

Reactions: ❤️



Type a message



←  Whatsapp chat with: Shane 🐱💌📞⋮🖨

Today



Sent Message: 10:02 ✓✓

Sent Message: Can't you send the picture without the bear thing? 10:08

no is part of the charm 10:15 ✓✓

you do not like it? 10:15 ✓✓

Received Message: It's hard to see your face like this. 10:18

you want to see my face that badly hollander? 😊😋😈 10:19 ✓✓

Received Message: I do. 10:20

oh 10:24 ✓✓

Received Message: So? 10:26



Sent Message: 10:27 📱

Reactions: 😊



Type a message



Ilya Rozanov
635 Tremont Ave
Boston, MA 02124
United States

Ilya,

I just had to get this card for you.
Sadly I tried adding your mole on Woodstock but it smeared, so I kind of ruined it. I'm sorry.

Shane

←  Whatsapp chat with: Shane 🐱💌📞📺

Today



Sent Message: 13:44

oh no 13:45 ✓✓

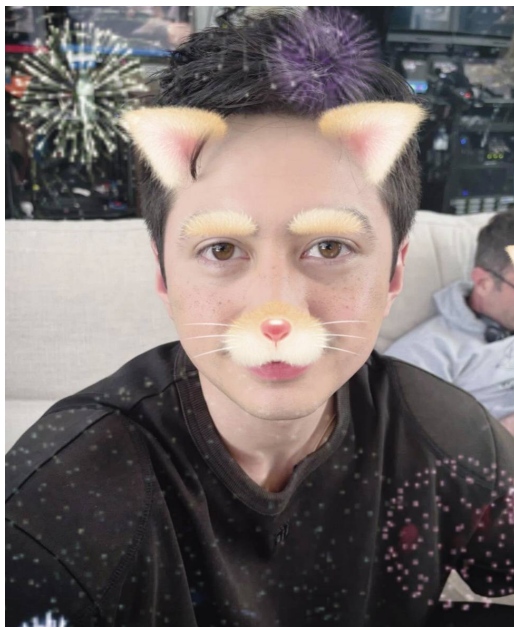
Received Message: What?? Jackie showed me how to make these. 13:47

Received Message: And you said I was like a cat, once, remember? And sometimes you say I'm an artist to make fun of me, so I thought it would be funny. Maybe not. 13:49

Received Message: This looks stupid, forget it. 13:49

no is perfect reasoning very perfect i love it i'm sorry i understand the joke it is funny 13:50 ✓✓

looks great!! 13:50 ✓✓



Sent Message: 13:56

wow 🐱🎆 13:57 ✓✓



Type a message



← 🐱 Whatsapp chat with: Ilya 📞 ⋮ 📄

Today

My residency interview went terribly. 18:34 ✓✓

Received Message: what happened? 18:35

Received Message: you are okay? 18:35

One of the interviewers completely stopped listening while I was still introducing myself. Maybe he concluded as he saw my face when I walked in that I wasn't worth the time. He was on his phone and it was distracting me that he wasn't paying attention. 18:39 ✓✓

Reactions: 😡

I got so frustrated that I wanted to hit my head on something. 18:40 ✓✓

Also the lightning in the room was so strong it was making my eyes hurt. And my ribs have been bothering me since last game. 18:41 ✓✓

It was all just bad. And I feel like i'm going nuts now. 18:41 ✓✓

you are home now? 18:42

Yes, I just got back. I was supposed to hang out with my friend JJ but I'm feeling sick so I had to cancel. 18:44 ✓✓

okay 18:44

good 18:45

take a shower? or sleep? it will help calm you, yes? 18:45

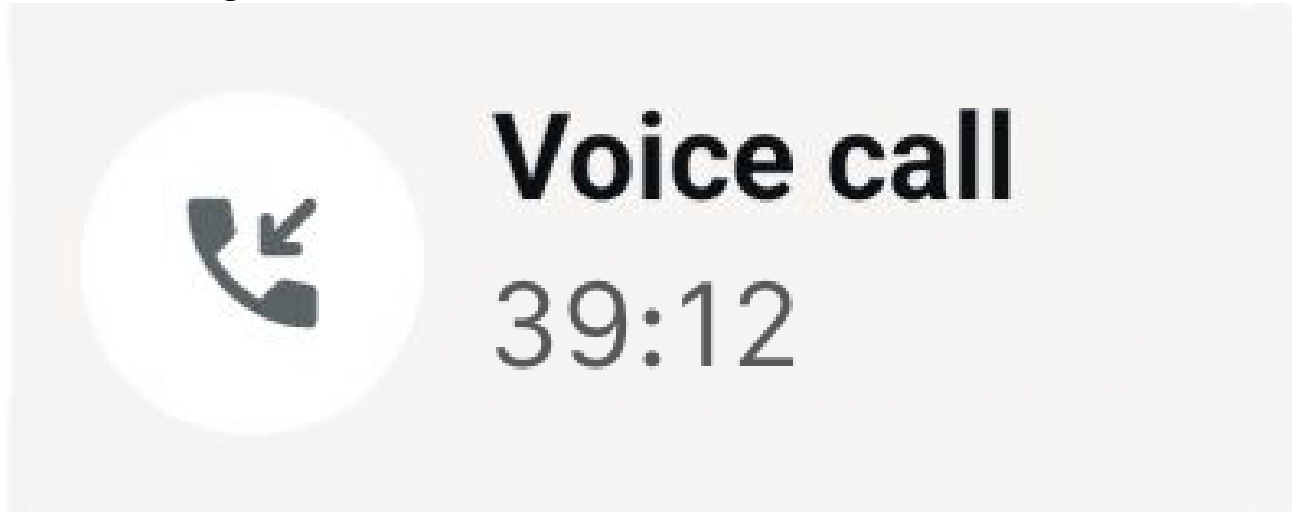
you have eaten? you should eat something, maybe 18:45

I will, later. 18:46 ✓✓

Can we call? 18:46 ✓✓

of course, give me a sec 18:46

Received Message:



18:48

Thank you, really. 19:32 ✓✓

2 UNREAD MESSAGES

no need for thanks 19:33

go eat now shane 19:33



Type a message



From: irozanov@etrovoscars.com

Subject: help

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

hollander,

there is no one here and i have nothing to do. do something.

Ilya Rozanov

Luxury car salesman - Assistant financial manager

Vetrova's Cars

59 Clarendon St. - Boston, Massachusetts 02116

(617) 292-5100

www.vetrovascars.com

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Re: help

To: irozanov@vetrovascars.com

Mr. Rozanov,

I don't believe that you should use your professional e-mail address for personal matters.
How can you have nothing to do? Surely there are some things for you to at least look over.

Please stay focused. I don't think I need to remind you that you need this job.

Best,
Shane Hollander

From: irozanov@vetrovascars.com

Subject: Re: Re: help

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

mr hollander,

you are my boss? no? you will snitch?

you can relax, is not the end of the world. i will delete the emails after if it makes you happy.

now help me not fall asleep and come play: agar.io

Ilya Rozanov

Luxury car salesman - Assistant financial manager

Vetrova's Cars

59 Clarendon St. - Boston, Massachusetts 02116

(617) 292-5100

www.vetrovascars.com

From: irozanov@vetrovascars.com

Subject: Re: Re: Re: help

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

shane how are you so good at this game

Ilya Rozanov

Luxury car salesman - Assistant financial manager

Vetrova's Cars

59 Clarendon St. - Boston, Massachusetts 02116

(617) 292-5100

www.vetrovascars.com

←  Whatsapp chat with: Shane     

Today

Received Message: Today Hayden asked me if I had a boyfriend because I keep checking my phone like a “hormonal teenage girl”, whatever that means. 22:01

Received Message: Which made me realize that all of our messages have been very bad for my screen time. Do you know just how badly constant exposure to blue light affects your eyes? 22:02

Sent Message: lol 22:11 ✓✓

Replying to: Shane  

Hayden asked me if I had a boyfriend because I keep checking my phone... well, do you? have a boyfriend? 22:11 ✓✓

I don't know, do I? 22:23

fuck. yes. you do 22:24 ✓✓

and i think it is serious, yes? 22:25 ✓✓

Yeah, it is pretty serious. 17:27

good 22:28 ✓✓

amazing 22:28 ✓✓

i like you very much 22:30 ✓✓

Good. I like you very much too. Sometimes so much it scares me. 22:31

but me more 22:32 ✓✓

No, and we're not doing this. 22:33

ugh so boring (i also like this) 22:34 ✓✓

Sent Message: ❤️❤️❤️ 22:34 ✓✓

Sent Message: ❤️ 22:35



Type a message



Whatsapp chat with: Ilya



Received Message:

Butterball the Pembro[...]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kQnrKvOTNg>

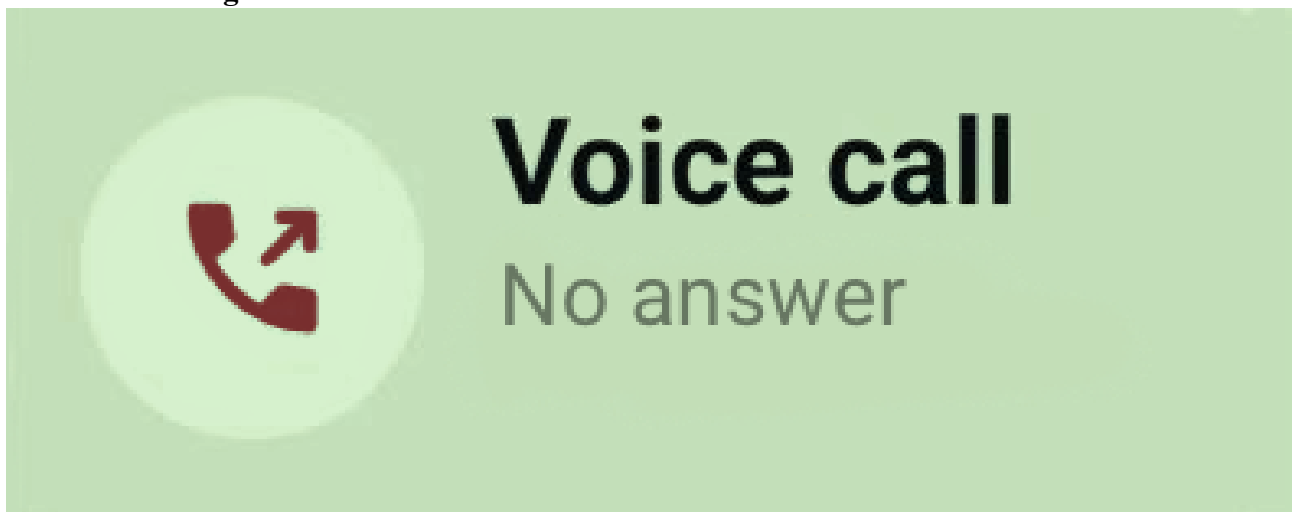
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kQnrKvOTNg> 02:29

Butterball Downstairs

Reactions: 😊

Today

Received Message:



19:00

Received Message: sorry, cannot call. i am spending time at sveta's 20:33

Received Message: unless it is something important? i make time for you 20:34



Y|



←  Whatsapp chat with: Ilya   

Received Message: unless it is something important? i make time for you 20:34

1 UNREAD MESSAGE

Received Message: hollander i can see you typing for the last 5 minutes 20:39

I left my phone open by accident. I wasn't typing. 20:40 ✓✓

It's fine, it's nothing urgent, just thought we'd call. Go spend time with Svetlana. 20:41 ✓✓

Received Message: you are jealous? 20:42

Of course not. 20:42 ✓✓

Received Message: you know there is no reason to be jealous, yes? 20:43

I just said that I wasn't. 20:44 ✓✓

Reactions: 🤔

I'm not! I'm really glad that you have Svetlana with you and that you can spend more time with her than before. 20:46 ✓✓

It's more that I'm frustrated that I can't also be there. 20:49 ✓✓

Received Message: ah shanya 20:50

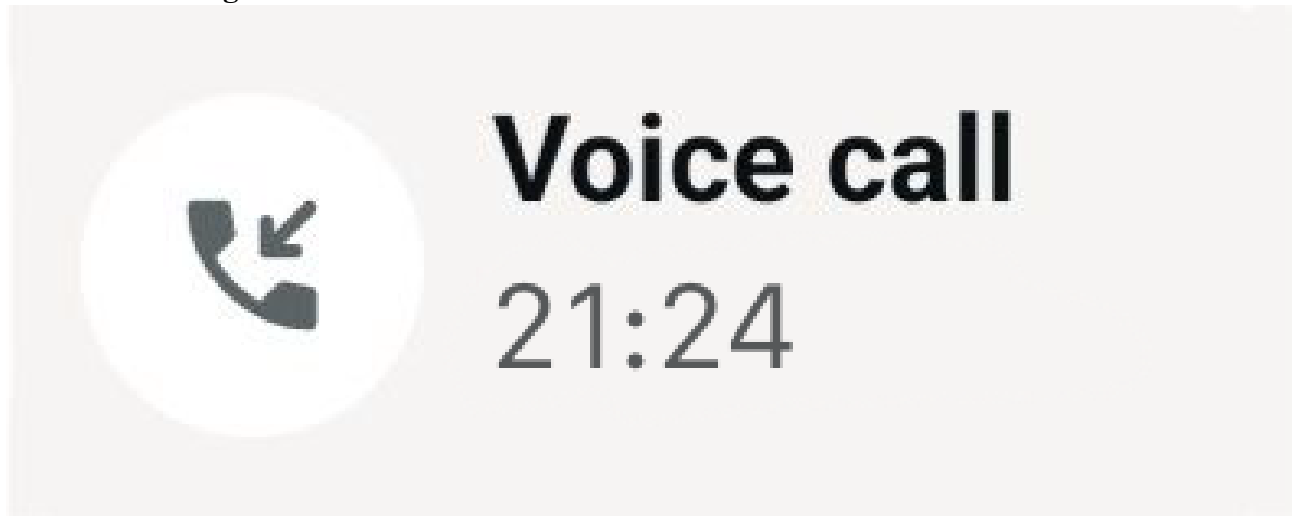
Received Message: you cannot say that and expect that i will not want to call 20:51

Received Message: give me five minutes 20:51

No, it's fine. I don't want to call anymore. 20:52 ✓✓

Received Message: sure 21:01

Received Message:



21:01



Type a message



Shane Hollander

350 Montgomery St
Ottawa, K1L 7X2
Canada

For мой Шейн

Shanya,

It is a lucky day for you! It is much easier to send bigger packages from the US to Canada than it was from Russia.

I went to a store the other day, and I saw this duck plush. Is your loon duck! So of course, I had to get it for you. It is pretty cute, when it is a plush. You would not believe they make the devil sounds you showed me.

Do loons get lonely, you think? Maybe they move in a pack, like wolves (since they are stupid canadian wolf birds). I don't know, you are the expert.

I ask because I get lonely, sometimes, you know? I was lonely in Moscow, you know this, but now here I am meeting more new people, and Sveta introduced me to her nice friends, and I have you, and we talk very often. So I am not really alone, but I feel lonely. On some days, more than others. I do not really know why.

I got you two loons because this way they will be less lonely, together. And I also bought two for myself, so you will be less lonely, not being the only weird guy with two loons.

One day we bring them together and they will form a wolf bird pack, yes?

Yours,
Ilya

PS: You never sent me the Bears pin I asked for, so I will be the one to give to you. No need to thank me.

←  Whatsapp chat with: Ilya   

Today

Ilya, what the hell. 09:16 ✓✓

I just got your package. You didn't have to. 09:16 ✓✓

The loons are very cute. Thank you, I really like them). 09:17 ✓✓



Sent Message:

09:19

I put them on my desk at home. They're near my box with the postcards. 09:20 ✓✓

Replying to: You

I just got your package. You didn't have to.
you got it!! 09:27



Sent Message: 09:29

Received Message: i have them next to me 09:30

Received Message: what about the bears pin? you like? 09:30

I don't want to throw away a gift but it hurts me to have to look at it. 09:32 ✓✓

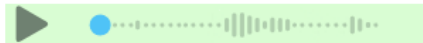
Received Message: perfect)) 09:33

Received Message: you really like the duck plushies? 09:34

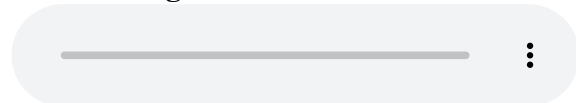
I really do. That was really sweet of you. I wish I had thought of sending something to you first.
09:36 ✓✓

Received Message: is because i am the best 🐱 09:37

Received Message: can you make the wolf bird noise again please 09:38



Sent Message: 0:02 09:42 ✓✓



Received Message: crazy noise 09:43

Received Message: what does it mean in bird language? 09:43

Wouldn't you like to know. 09:44 ✓✓

Reactions: 😬

Loons don't live in groups, by the way. But I think these ones can. 09:46 ✓✓

Received Message::) good 💖 09:48



Type a message



←  Whatsapp chat with: Shane 🐱💌📞⋮🖨

Today

Sent Message: what are you wearing 18:50 ✓✓

Sent Message: Some sportswear. I'm going out for a run in a bit. 18:53

Sent Message: mmh and what underneath it 18:54 ✓✓

Sent Message: What? I don't have any layers. It's just a shirt and some shorts. 18:55

Received Message: fuck 18:56 ✓✓

Received Message: are the shorts like short shorts 18:57 ✓✓

Sent Message: They're normal length sport shorts. I also have some Reebok sneakers on, I forgot to mention them. 18:58

Received Message: shane 18:59 ✓✓

Received Message: i am trying to sext 18:59 ✓✓

Sent Message: Oh 19:05

Received Message: so are the shorts really short or not 19:06 ✓✓

Sent Message: I guess they're kind of short. You can see most of my thighs. 19:09

Sent Message: Rose said they were kind of "slutty" once but I don't see it. 19:10

Received Message: fuck 19:11 ✓✓

Received Message: also do not talk about rose right now 19:12 ✓✓

Received Message: you do not ask me what i am wearing? 19:12 ✓✓

Sent Message: What are you wearing? 19:13

Received Message: nothing 19:13 ✓✓

*Received Message:*and i'm in bed 19:13 ✓✓

Sent Message: Fuck 19:14

*Received Message:*yeah. do you want to video call and see for yourself? 19:15 ✓✓

Sent Message: Yes but I really do have to go on a run or it's going to mess up my routine. I'm already late. 19:17

*Received Message:*hollander you are making this so hard 19:18 ✓✓

*Received Message:*fine, you go on your run. you will call after? 19:19 ✓✓

Sent Message: Yes. 19:19

*Received Message:*good 19:20 ✓✓

*Received Message:*imso ecexited 19:20 ✓✓



Type a message

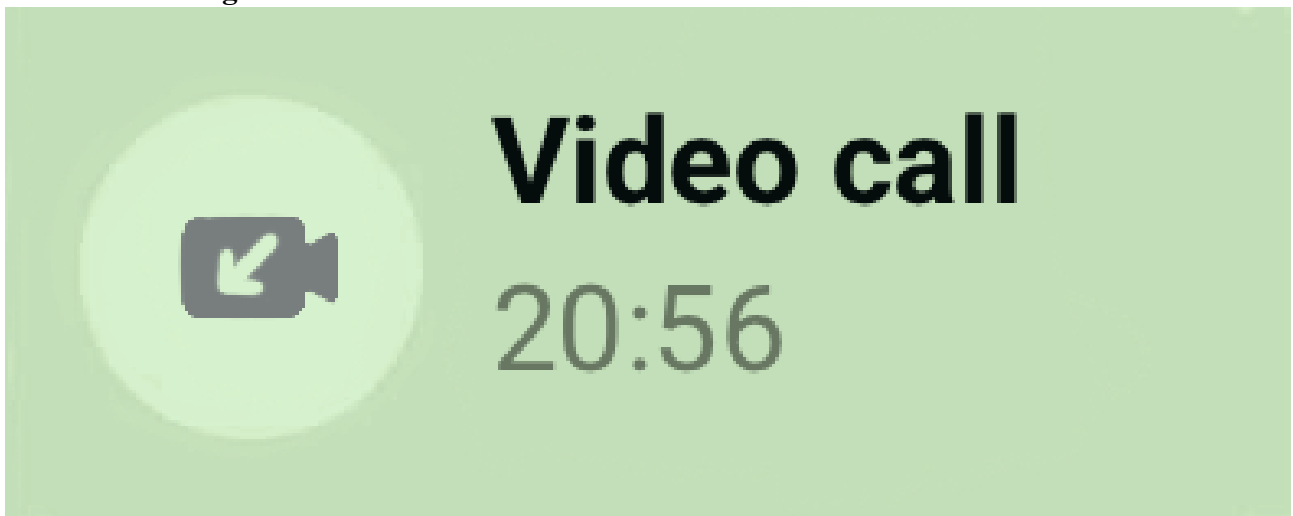


Whatsapp chat with: Ilya



Sent Message: imso ecexited 19:20

Received Message:



20:37

Sent Message: That was so hot. 20:59 ✓✓

2 UNREAD MESSAGES

Sent Message: you are so hot 21:00

Sent Message: you liked? 21:00

Sent Message: Obviously. 21:01 ✓✓

Sent Message: You're so hot too. 21:02 ✓✓

Sent Message: i know 21:02

Received Message: Always so humble. 21:03 ✓✓

Sent Message: 💕💕💕 go sleep now малыш 21:04

Received Message: I have to clean up before that. You should too. Talk later. 21:06 ✓✓

Sent Message: “talk later” he says, after i made him wet his dick 21:07

Reactions: 👉



Type a message



Shane Hollander

350 Montgomery St
Ottawa, ON K1L 7X2
Canada

Shane,

Went to New York this weekend. Ate a pizza with so many strange things on it I think you would have hated it. It was great!

XOXO Ilya



Whatsapp chat with: Ilya



Today

Received Message: hollander 11:31

Received Message: when is your next break 11:31

Received Message: i have been saving rest days 11:32

Received Message: maybe i come to you then? or you come to boston. but i would like to visit the cottage 11:33

Received Message: if you still want, i mean 11:40

Of course I want. 11:51 ✓✓

I have a small break next month. I will send you the actual dates. 11:52 ✓✓

My parents haven't been at the cottage recently so I will need to come in advance to go clean it. 11:53 ✓✓

And buy groceries. 11:54 ✓✓

Do you have any food allergies? Anything that you do not like to eat? Food textures? 11:55 ✓✓

Reactions: ?

Also, I will come pick you up from the airport, but I will also send you a map with the itinerary just in case. It's a bit hard to get there and if you take a cab, chances are that they will get lost. 11:57 ✓✓

shane 11:57

I don't think we can swim at this time of the year, but the view with the lake is nice, you will like it. Also we can still do a barbecue, we have a nice patio and I can cook burgers if you like that. 11:59 ✓✓

who doesn't like burgers? 12:00

shane slow down 12:01

burger is nice 12:01

anything is nice 12:01

i just want to see boring canada 12:02

and you, maybe. you are okay 12:03

Haha, asshole. 12:04 ✓✓

Reactions: ❤️

Can't wait to see you малыш. It'll be fun. 12:06 ✓✓

Received Message: малыш? 12:07

Received Message: охуеть 12:08

Received Message: охуеть you cannot keep speaking russian to me hollander it will kill me 12:08

I've been taking notes. And I think it's fitting. You like being my baby? 12:09 ✓✓

Received Message: ksnld.; 12:09

Received Message: sorry dropped my phone 12:10

Received Message: you make me crazy 12:11

Received Message: can't wait to see you 12:11

Sent Message: ❤️ 12:12 ✓✓



Type a message



From: boringshane@gmail.com

Subject: Invitation: meeting @ Sep 14[...]

To: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Fri, Sep 14

All day

meeting



your cottage



boringshane@gmail.com - Organizer



is been a long time coming, no? see you very soon)



On your calendar

YesNoMaybe

From: hollanderloon24@northmail.ca

Subject: Re: Invitation: meeting @ Sep 14[...]

To: boringshane@gmail.com

Attached: Cottage_Map.pdf(834 Ko).

Ilya,

Shouldn't I be the one sending an invitation in this case?

Either way, I've accepted it. You're officially invited, and it was already on my calendar.

See attached to this e-mail the itinerary I've mentioned, just in case. Please let me know as soon as you get your flight infos so that I can plan accordingly.

See you very soon :-)

Yours,
Shane

Chapter End Notes

I just realized that I've been using "Voyageurs" and "Bears" for the hockey teams but also showing the logos from the show, which do not make sense with these names. Let's all ignore that and be happy

Also, the wait between this chapter and the next will probably be longer, in part because I'm still brainstorming some things, but mostly because I do need to take a break from all this writing and coding at some point or I will lose my mind lol

Please be patient with me! Thank you again and again for the support and kind words!

While I'm away I'm putting here again the big three tutorials I've been using and tweaking, much much love and all my thanks to them once more:

- [Opening a Letter Animation](#)

- [How to Mimic Email Windows](#)
- [Whatsapp Work Skin Template](#)

Chapter 7: YEAR 6, PART 2

Chapter Notes

Since it seems that I cannot focus on anything else, we're back earlier than I expected.

There's a little more Russian dialogues in this chapter, hover (on desktop) or click on it (on phone) (it might be a little wonky in some places sorry) to see the translations!

The [Hover to Translate](#) tutorial I used

And make sure to click on the colored "POV tabs" you will see, to make the text appear :)
Hope you enjoy reading! It will get really mushy.

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

< Voicemail

Shane 🐱💌

mobile

September 14, 20XX at 10:41 AM



◀ 🐱 Whatsapp chat with: Ilya 📞 ⋮ 📄



Sent Message:

10:43

It's one like this. 10:43 ✓✓

1 UNREAD MESSAGE

Received Message: please tell me is a joke and you do not drive that car 10:47

What's wrong with it?? Where are you now? 10:48 ✓✓

shane 10:49

do you have a hidden family with kids? is it a big surprise reveal for today? 10:49

you have a boring dad car 10:50

Fuck off. It's practical, and great for the snow. 10:51 ✓✓

My parents got it for me and I like it. There's no reason for me to drive anything else. 10:52 ✓✓

Now can you answer me? Where are you? 10:52 ✓✓

Sent Message: 🙄 10:53

boring car for boring man. you are hurting me 10:54

Reactions: 👉

Replying to: You

Now can you answer me? Where are you?

i am getting in the airport hall. i will be there soon 🐱 10:55

Okay. Stop looking at your phone then. 10:55 ✓✓

Reactions: 😊



Type a message



[POV: Shane Hollander](#) [POV: Ilya Rozanov](#)

Shane Hollander has always been a little self conscious.

He is not always an insecure person, don't get it twisted. He is someone that believes in his own skills, that is confident in what he can achieve in the fields he excels in (which are, mostly, anything hockey and sport medicine related). In that, he rarely has any doubt that he's among the best.

But some things outside of those areas of expertise are more of a struggle. Social situations, mostly, have always easily tripped him up. Shane is quick to get anxious, to feel inadequate and to spiral when things slip out of his control. He's aware of this, more than he was as a child, and he thinks that he's gotten pretty good at hiding it from others. It doesn't mean that it stops it from happening.

And right now, waiting alone inside his car in the Ottawa International Airport parking lot, his left leg that won't stop bouncing is a sure sign of this.

Because really, how does one greet their long distance correspondent, turned friend, turned confidant, turned boyfriend that they've known for nearly seven years but are only just now meeting face to face for the first time?

The more Shane thinks about it, the more convoluted the situation gets in his head. How did they let this get so far?

What if it's nothing but awkward once they see each other, and Shane is ultimately so boring that Ilya has nothing to say to him? What if Ilya, after being in the same space as Shane for more than a few hours, decides that he's done. *'Goodbye Hollander. Was fun, but actually I think I will leave early. Maybe we just go back to letters and not really see each other again, yes?'*

Shane doesn't think he could handle that happening.

As he starts to get lulled by the repetitive motion and noises his leg make, Shane sees an influx of people suddenly pouring outside. No doubt mostly passengers that were on the same flight as Ilya.

Shane presses his face closer to the window, eyes darting rapidly between random strangers reuniting with their loved ones as he tries to find the one person that matters to him right now.

And then he does. At the entrance of the parking lot, still distant enough that he's not much more than a human-shaped blur, stands Ilya Rozanov.

Shane feels his breath catch and his heart stutter all at once. It's like his brain is finally catching up on the fact that this is really happening. Here stands Ilya, in the flesh, *tangible*, and only a few meters away from Shane.

Shane gets out of his car at an impressive speed, door slamming shut behind him as he half-stumbles onto the pavement. He lifts a hand to wave slightly in Ilya's direction. An amazing, not at all awkward, start.

It's enough to catch Ilya's attention, because his gaze locks onto Shane almost instantly. And then he's moving, taking one, and two, and a few more large steps in Shane's direction, before he's finally (*finally!*) standing in front of him.

"Hi," says Ilya, and his voice is real, *my god he's so real*. He then adds "Shane Hollander," like this is a formal meeting, and with a smile stretched so wide that Shane cannot help but mirroring it.

"Ilya Rozanov," Shane replies with similar intensity. "Hello. You had a good flight?"

Ilya doesn't answer him right away. He just keeps staring at Shane, his smile unwavering.

He's so beautiful. Ilya doesn't agree when Shane calls him pretty, saying that he's more *'like, hot, and sexy, you know?'*. He's always quick to brush it off, to throw the compliment around, but he is so pretty in Shane's eyes. There's no way the entire world doesn't also see it.

And then all at once Ilya drops the single luggage he'd been holding, letting it fall with a *thud* as he launches himself at Shane, engulfing him into a hug.

Shane only has time for a "*Oof*" in reaction, as he hurries to open his arms to catch the other and return the embrace. "Hey."

"Hi," Ilya repeats once more, his voice muffled against the curve of Shane's neck. Shane can feel his warmth on his shoulder, and knows that it is creeping all the way up to his cheeks. "Shane. I'm really happy to see you."

And suddenly, Shane is no longer worried about any part of this meeting going wrong, about them not fitting well together in person. He's no longer worried about Ilya not wanting to stay, not about anything at all. Really, how could he even have entertained these thoughts? That's his Ilya. Of course it will go well.

His only concern now, softer but no less important, is that he's afraid that with Ilya now within his grasp, he's not sure he'll ever want to let him go. Shane is concerned about his love growing so big (*because he knows it's love, it's been love for so long, he's never been more sure about anything*), that he will not be able to contain it, and he will end up choking on it.

"Me too," he manages to answer, fighting to keep his voice steady. "So much." And he hopes that it conveys enough of what he feels.

Shane insists on helping Ilya load his bag into the trunk, even though he doesn't need the assist. He also pointedly ignores Ilya as he starts to make fun of his car, again.

They get settled into the front seats soon after, still smiling like two idiots in his (normal, useful, very practical) Jeep Cherokee.

For Shane, it feels like a piece of himself clicking into the right place. It's like something that was always a little off finally slid where it was supposed to go. He also feels like he kind of needs to climb into Ilya's lap, like, right now.

He feels overwhelmed, but not in the way he's used to. There's no creeping stress, or any bout of anxiety that threatens to overcome him. There's just a flood of feelings, too big for him to hold neatly, caused by finally being able to see Ilya here.

Shane means to ask if they're all ready to go but his traitorous heart decides to do the talking, and all he ends up blurting out is a whisper of "Can I kiss you?"

And Ilya's already looking at him. Shane is not sure if he stopped looking at him once since they spotted each other. Ilya's looking, and he's grinning, and Shane is so busy staring back at all the details of his face that he nearly misses his answer. "I don't kiss before the third date."

Shane huffs a quiet laugh. "Oh, really? But you seem like an easy guy."

Ilya scoffs at this, shaking his head in mock offense. "Me? No, no. You do not know me at all, Hollander."

"Well," Shane starts back, and they're both leaning in now, like gravity is inevitably pulling them closer to each other, "How am I supposed to learn if you don't let me get close?"

"Mmh," Ilya hums. Their lips are barely a breath apart now. "Smartass."

And then Ilya's right hand is gripping the front of Shane's shirt, tugging him in.

And then they're kissing.

Shane swears he could see sparks flying around, before he closed his eyes and leans fully into the kiss. Ilya Rozanov feels like he's vibrating out of his own skin.

The flight from Boston to Ottawa couldn't have been longer than an hour and a half, yet it had felt never-ending.

Ilya spent it all thinking about Shane, unsurprisingly. About seeing him for real, about how it might go down, about how he should act to be sure that Shane isn't put off by him. He can be good and go slow, if needed. He can adapt. Whatever Shane wants.

He really, really wants this to go well. Obviously he does, that's his *boyfriend* that he's meeting. Ilya still can't believe he gets to say that.

He thinks about all of this as he makes his way inside the Ottawa International Airport, walking in a city that, if you had asked Ilya a few years ago, he would not have been able to give you a single fact about.

It only takes Ilya a second, upon entering the parking lot, to spot Shane Hollander.

Well, more like it only takes Ilya a second to see the stupid black Jeep Cherokee Shane had told him that he would come with, and then see the guy climbing out of the driver's seat, a little stiff, a little awkward, who then lifts a hand and starts waving in his direction.

Ilya grins instantly, and waves back at him. Trust Hollander to look as uncomfortable as humanly

possible when meeting his lover for the first time. Ilya is so fond of him it hurts.

And he needs to let him know that immediately, so he doesn't waste another second standing still. Ilya starts walking, long strides carrying him forward until he finally (*finally!*) reaches Shane.

"Hi," he says, and then adds "Shane Hollander," just to remind himself that this is indeed real. He's here, in front of Shane Hollander. Shane Hollander, his boyfriend.

Shane Hollander, who he's known for years, who knows him just as well, and who looks impossibly prettier in person. An impressive fit, seeing as Ilya already thought him so beautiful through screens and grainy photos.

He spent hours over the years looking at Shane's face, and still, none of it compares to the real thing. Nothing does justice to the scatter of freckles across his face. Ilya immediately starts cataloguing the ones he's only now discovering.

He only wishes that Shane could have come here with his glasses on. All in due time, he tells himself.

He's so mesmerized, and so happy, that he kind of misses what Shane answers back to his greeting. He's buzzing out of his skin even more than before, the itch to get closer to Shane still here. And now that he can, he might as well go for it.

So, he lets his bag drop to the floor without ceremony, and closes the last bit of distance between them by pulling the other into a hug. Shane, obviously startled but always so sweet, fumbles to open his arms and let him in.

"*Oof*," Shane exhales at the impact, "Hey."

Ilya can hear the smile in his voice, clearer than ever before. He feels so lovestruck. He feels so lucky.

"Hi," Ilya says again, giddy and smiling stupidly, words pressed into the crook of Shane's shoulder as he squeezes tighter, "Shane. I'm really happy to see you." It's really a massive understatement.

Shane squeezes back. It's not often that Ilya is on the receiving end of a hug, he's not much used to it. He remembers, more vaguely as the years go by, his mama holding his tiny body, making the world feel safe and contained. He thinks about Sveta, by his side since forever, enveloping him and caring for him, just as he cared for her.

Being in Shane Hollander's arms in the middle of a crowded airport parking lot feels like all of these, at once. It feels like being safe, and being cared for, and loved. It feels like he's coming home.

"Me too," Shane answers. Ilya can hear the tremor in his voice. He's sure his own sounded just the same. "So much," Shane finished, and Ilya thinks it might also be a terrible understatement.

"I do not need your help to put my one bag in your car," Ilya insists, even as Shane continues to

ignore him and deposits said bag into the trunk. “Is embarrassing enough to be seen in your dad car,” he quips, a taunt he knows that Shane will not engage with.

Whatever. He’ll get him to look at better cars during his stay.

They get inside, settling into their seats, both so obviously excited to be here.

Ilya glances briefly at the center console between them. He wonders if he should make a move, simply take Shane’s free hand in his as he drives. But he knows that Shane is particular about some things, and maybe he’s not much of a “*we need to always be touching*” kind of guy. Ilya doesn’t want to spook him already by being needy.

“Can I kiss you?” asks Shane out of nowhere, the question effectively bringing a stop to Ilya’s thoughts.

For a moment, Ilya can do nothing but stare at him.

“I don’t kiss before the third date,” he idiotically answers, because if there’s one thing he will always enjoy, it’s messing with Shane.

Shane grins at this. Evidently, he expected nothing different. “Oh, really? But you seem like an easy guy.”

So fucking easy for you. I’d do anything for you. But he scoffs, and he says, “Me? No, no. You don’t know me at all, Hollander.”

“Well,” Shane drawls out, as he brings his face closer to the middle of the car. Ilya does the same. “How am I supposed to learn if you don’t let me close?”

“Mmh,” Ilya fake-ponders, toying with the idea of teasing Shane further. But really, he’s also a simple man with a simple want. So he just murmurs “Smartass”, takes hold of the front of Shane’s nice shirt that he obviously picked just for this occasion, and kisses him.

Ilya thinks, a bit deliriously, that it’s the most at peace he has ever felt.

POV: Ilya Rozanov

“So, here we are,” Shane announces, pushing open the massive front door of the cottage.

Ilya would argue, if he didn’t know that Shane would immediately disagree, that calling it a *cottage* is a stretch. If anything, it’s more of a big summer house, or something shy of a mansion.

He had seen the pictures, a long time ago, that Shane had sent him. And now finally being here and stepping inside gives him a strange feeling of familiarity. It’s like walking into a place he somehow already knows, another piece of Shane that is finally accessible.

It’s great, and the house is undeniably beautiful with all of its high ceilings and wide windows, but Ilya barely registers any of it.

As soon as Shane closes the door and steps further inside, Ilya is on him, shoving and caging until Shane is pressed between Ilya and the nearest wall.

Shane exhales sharply at the sudden manhandling, evidently happy to let it happen. “I could give you a house tour,” he offers while looking at Ilya, deceptively innocent.

“Later,” Ilya decides to humour him. Because Shane probably has some rules and little details about the cottage that matter to him. Some do’s and don’ts that Ilya will not fuck up.

But it all can wait. “I need you right now.”

Shane is the one closing the distance between them this time, kissing him with no more prompting or hesitation. “Okay,” he breathes, his mouth still on Ilya’s, “Yes. Please.”

This is something pulled straight out of Ilya’s dreams. He takes the time to kiss Shane deeper, lick into his mouth, kiss the corner of it. He moves alongside his freckles and his jaw, before backing away just enough to see the other’s eyes. “Get on your knees.”

It only takes half a second for Shane’s face to slide out of view, and to hear his knees make contact with the floor.

Oh, wow, Ilya thinks, before all logical and comprehensible thoughts leave him.

←  Whatsapp chat with: Светочка 🐻 Svetochka 🐻   

2 UNREAD MESSAGES

Sent Message: Ты без проблем добрался? Did you get there without any problem? 10:56

Sent Message: Не игнорируй мои сообщения. Просто дай мне знать, что ты в безопасности Don't ignore my texts. Just let me know you're safe 11:43

Sent Message: со мной всё в порядке. я с шейном, мы добрались до его дома i'm fine. i'm with shane, we made it to his house 14:12 ✓✓

Sent Message: я не пишу тебе раньше, потому что мы были заняты didn't answer you earlier because we were busy 14:13 ✓✓

Sent Message: 🍆 🍑 🤔 🍷 🍷 🍷 14:13 ✓✓

Received Message: Eww. gross 14:18

Reactions: 🍷

Received Message: Давай без подробностей! Keep that to yourself! 14:19

Reactions: 🍷

Sent Message: Веселись со своим мужчиной. Не рассказывай мне ничего, пока я не спрошу Have fun with your man. Don't tell me any details unless I ask 14:20

Received Message: Я рада за тебя I'm happy for you 14:20

Sent Message: ❤️ 14:21

Received Message: спасибо) я тоже рад thank you :) i'm happy too 14:24 ✓✓

Sent Message: i'll talk to you later 14:25 ✓✓

Reactions: ❤️



Type a message



[POV: Shane Hollander](#) [POV: Ilya Rozanov](#)

The first day went great. More than great, really, if you were to ask Shane.

Being with Ilya in person feels exactly like it did when they called, or texted, or even when they sent letters back and forth. That is to say: it is easy, talking to Ilya, and being around him.

The shift between long distance and this closeness felt so seamless, like they had always been side by side. Shane's never felt like this about anyone else before.

Of course, Shane loves his friends, and his parents, and even his teammates. But standing here now, he realizes that he's never truly been so at ease with anyone else. There's always some sort of worry gnawing at him, a quiet but persistent dread of being annoying, or too strange. A small fear of disappointing them all, that pushes him to always try harder, to adjust to be a better version of himself, someone who is easier to like and be proud of.

There's none of that with Ilya, he notices. There isn't, because even if Ilya does push him to be better, it's never truly to make himself to be more likeable in Ilya's eyes. Ilya likes Shane as he is, just like Shane likes Ilya as he is, and for once in his life, his brain accepts that it is unconditional.

They've barely left each other's side since they made it to the cottage, and it's amazing. It's already everything that Shane ever wanted from this visit and more. All of his frustrations from the long distance melted away the moment Ilya touched him.

And they're still glued to each other now, standing closer than necessary as they go through their separate evening routines in the bathroom.

Shane moves through his few small skincare steps with careful precision, the same ritual he follows every night without fail. While he does so, he keeps half his attention on Ilya, who is quietly

moving around him.

It just feels so natural to have him here, in his space. It's like he was made to fit in Shane's home, and to be next to him.

Shane gets lost in the now familiar swell of emotions that accompanies his every thoughts about Ilya, and gets startled when he hears the other say, in a small voice, like he was reading Shane's mind, "Я тебя люблю." "I love you."

Shane whips around his head so fast that he drops the towel he was about to dry his face with.

He knows those words, of course he does. He didn't want to share this with Ilya, it's supposed to be a secret, but Shane has been taking Russian lessons. Just to be able to communicate better with the other.

So of course, he had looked up this particular sentence along the way. There's no way he could have misheard that.

His heart slams hard in his ribs as he gapes at Ilya. The other looks just as startled, like he hadn't meant for the words to escape him, and... And Shane can't have that. He can't risk Ilya deflecting right now, or taking it back.

"Я тоже тебя люблю. Я тебя очень сильно люблю," "I love you too. I love you so much," he blurts out, louder, and slower, to make sure he gets each word right. He hopes *so much* that he's saying it right.

Ilya's expression twists in response, and for one horrible second Shane thinks *shit, I fucked it up*.

"Fuck. Of course," Ilya breathes, face breaking into a disbelieving smile, "Fucking show-off."

Relief floods Shane so fast it almost makes him dizzy. Good. This is good. "Ты для меня всё," "You're everything to me," Shane adds, more sure of himself, because this one sentence he specifically searched for. He memorized it a while back. Just in case.

"Shane," Ilya's stare is so piercing. Shane can see the small tears gathering in his eyes, despite his own vision blurring. "I love you."

Suddenly, the small distance between them is too much. Shane reaches for Ilya, hands coming up to cup his face and pull him closer. "I love you too," he says again, because he can, and because he wants to say it a hundred times more.

And then he kisses Ilya. It's slow and gentle, so different from how they were holding each other just a little earlier.

When Ilya pulls back, it's only far enough to murmur, a little breathless, "But me more."

Shane chuckles fondly at how childish he can be. He nudges Ilya's shoulder in admonishment before reeling him back closer, unwilling to let go.

"Shut up," Shane says, "Not true, and we're still not doing this."

But me more, Shane thinks in the back of his head, just as stubborn. *I love you and more, more, so much more*. Ilya tries, he really does, to dial his affection down to a level that would be normal for when you're meeting your boyfriend in person for the first time. Whatever that strange level might be.

He had a whole plan about wooing Shane during his stay here, be as charismatic as possible, and properly declare the full extent of his love at the end of it. No more dancing around it, just complete honesty, truth laid bare. Which he, obviously, hopes will charm the other into reciprocating the words.

It's a great plan. Yet none of it matters in the end.

It's his own toothbrush, on his first ever night at the cottage, that gets him.

It's when they're standing side by side in the en suite bathroom, both in pajamas and worn-out t-shirts as they're getting ready for the night, that it all seizes Ilya.

Ilya splashes his face with water, looks up in the mirror to see Shane applying some sort of cream on his face (he stops himself from making a joke about how that looks), and it is all just so domestic in a way that Ilya barely recognizes.

He's never had a person he considers *his* before. A romantic partner that he could imagine spending the rest of his life with, who he is so sure would make him feel content.

He watches Shane wash the cream away, something so mundane that Ilya never thought he would get to see without whole countries separating them, and thinks '*you're it*'. *You're so obviously meant for me*.

And then Ilya's gaze drops to the countertop, and he sees his toothbrush propped up beside Shane's. He put it here just minutes ago, without thinking much about it. The picture it makes feels so right, like it was always meant to be this way, and it all overcomes him so fully that he cannot help the words that slip out of his mouth.

“Я тебя люблю,” “I love you,” he ends up murmuring, still looking at the stupid green and pink plastic toothbrushes.

He hears something fall next to him and realizes that Shane has dropped the towel he'd been holding.

He's staring at Ilya with his mouth wide open, face still damp, and Ilya stares back, frozen in place. *Shit, this is absolutely not how he wanted this to go*. Shane is still looking at him like maybe he's waiting for Ilya to translate what he just said, and—

“Я тоже тебя люблю. Я тебя очень сильно люблю.” “I love you too. I love you so much.” Shane cuts his spiraling short.

“Oh,” is what escapes Ilya's mouth. Adrenaline is coursing through him and his heart squeezing as the words, said with Shane's near perfect Russian accent, register. “Fuck. Of course. Fucking show-off.”

Shane lets out a small laugh, soft and obviously pleased with himself. Ilya distantly thinks that this man is really going to kill him someday. “Ты для меня всё,” “You're everything to me,” Shane continues.

“Shane,” Ilya struggles to get anything past the lump in his throat. Fuck everything, fuck all of his plans, and all the careful waiting. *You're it*, the words keep bouncing in his head. *You're it, you're it for me*. “I love you.”

And then Shane's hands reach forward, gently taking hold of Ilya's face to reduce the distance between them. Up this close, Ilya can see his teary eyes and his flushed face. There's never been anyone more beautiful.

“I love you too,” Shane repeats, in English this time.

And then he's being kissed. It's slow, and careful, and adoring, and so many more things that Ilya cannot find the words to describe, be it in English or in Russian.

But he does find the force to pull back just for a moment, just enough to stubbornly say, “But me more.”

It makes Shane snicker. His smile is bright, showing his teeth, as he lightly pushes Ilya on the shoulder before bringing him right back in, like he can't stand being away for even a second.

“Shut up,” he says, “Not true, and we're still not doing this.”

Ilya cannot bring himself to tease him for being boring this time. It's all perfect.



Mom, Dad >

Today 7:43 PM

Hey, you guys are back at home from your trip, right?

Would you want some burgers? I made too many. I can keep them in the fridge tonight and drop them off tomorrow.

Mom

Hi baby. Yes, we're home. How do you even end up making too many burgers?

The recipe was for 8 burgers.

Mom

Why not cut it at least in half?

Dad

Recipes can be tricky when you change the measurements even by a little.

Yes, exactly. That's what I told Ilya too.

Mom

Fine, we can take your burgers. Now tell us, how is it going with Ilya? Everything ok?

More than ok.

Mom

That's all you're going to share?

Yes.

It's really great.

Dad

That's good, son. Do we get to meet him?

Maybe later, he's here until the end of next week. I'll talk to him about it.

Please do not come here uninvited.

Mom

Why would we do that?

Dad

We won't.

Just don't.

Dad



iMessage

⬅️  Whatsapp chat with: Ilya   

8 UNREAD MESSAGES



Received Message:

Vetrova's Cars

www.vetrovascars.com/lotus-evora-400

www.vetrovascars.com/lotus-evora-400 15:02

LOTUS Evora 400



Received Message:

Vetrova's Cars

www.vetrovascars.com/porsche-718-cayman

www.vetrovascars.com/porsche-718-cayman 15:05

Porsche 718 Cayman



Received Message:

Vetrova's Cars

Alfa Romeo 4C

www.vetrovascars.com/alfa-romeo-4c
www.vetrovascars.com/alfa-romeo-4c 15:11



Received Message:

Lotus Elise 2015

Vetrova's Cars

www.vetrovascars.com/lotus-elise-2015
www.vetrovascars.com/lotus-elise-2015 15:13

*Received Message:*are you ignoring me 15:17

*Received Message:*i can see you on your phone 15:17

*Received Message:*hello 15:20



Received Message:

Porsche 911 Carrera

Vetrova's Cars

www.vetrovascars.com/porsche-911-carrera
www.vetrovascars.com/porsche-911-carrera 15:22

Stop it. 15:22 ✓✓



Type a message





POV: Shane Hollander

“Would you consider moving to Canada?” Shane asks a little out of nowhere. It's been nearly a week since Ilya got here.

The weather's been good all day, so they've settled outside, stretched out in the yard by the lake. As Shane expected, Ilya had liked it immediately. Shane already had to talk him out of attempting to go swim in water that was too cold for them to handle.

“Yes,” Ilya replies, without hesitation. Then he seems to attempt to course correct his enthusiasm by adding, “Even if Canada is really boring. For you, I would.”

Shane doesn't think his heart has stopped doing somersaults ever since he laid eyes on Ilya in the airport. “Really? What about Boston?”

Shane doesn't know what he expects the answer to be. He knows what he *wants*, of course, but he also remembers Ilya being so excited about going to Boston, all the things that he had wanted to do for years, being in the same city as his childhood friend... It feels like a lot to even suggest pulling him away from all of that. To ask him to start over somewhere new and unknown to him, once more.

Ilya seems to think about his words for a minute. “I like Boston. I am happy that I could move there and live in the city like I had wanted for a long time.” He pauses for a moment, then goes on, “But it is not my forever home, I think.”

He shifts slightly, gaze drifting to the lake before settling back on Shane, “Sveta, she has her whole life there. I do not have all that. And it is great to have her close to me, but I know that I will have her no matter where I move. And the job she offered me, is not something I want to do forever, either.”

“You would have me no matter where you move, too,” Shane interrupts quickly, feeling the need to make that part clear.

Ilya smiles at him, like he's being silly. “I know,” he says, “But I don't think I could live so far from you.”

“Oh,” Shane replies. *Thump, thump, thump*, says his heart. “I don't think I could either.” Then, after a second, “What would you like to do, then? If you could go anywhere you want, right now.”

Ilya stretches himself downwards until his head is resting in Shane's lap, “I would follow you to the boring city of Ottawa. Or stupid Montreal, if you go there for work, like you once said. I do not care. I would look for a job wherever.”

He goes quiet for a second before carrying on, voice closer to a whisper, “I did not think I would miss hockey,” he admits. “My father made it hard for me to really like it, for a long time. But now I

think that I do, you know? Maybe like you, I search for a job connected to that.”

Shane, obviously, lights up immediately at that. “Really? That would be... Yeah, that would be great. Really great.” He nods to himself, his mind already racing ahead. “Okay. Yes. My mom has a lot of contacts with teams through her job. I could ask her if she knows if any of them have job openings in their management? Or ask her who would you need to talk to, to make yourself known? Wait, let me just—”

Shane tries to get up to go pick up his phone, but Ilya stops him by keeping his weight on him.

“Shanya,” he says, “It does not need to be figured out right now, yes? We can talk more about this later. And to your mom after.”

Shane settles back down, forcing himself to be more calm despite all the very exciting possibilities this conversation just opened. “Yes,” he says, threading his fingers through Ilya’s hair, “Okay.”

←  Whatsapp chat with: Shane     

Sent Message: come back to bed 11:23 ✓✓

Sent Message: The sauce isn't going to cook itself. You can come downstairs if you want to see me. 11:25

Sent Message: nooo come here 11:26 ✓✓

Sent Message: i found an interesting box with toys in your stuff 11:27 ✓✓

Sent Message: explain? you were hiding this from me? 11:27 ✓✓

Sent Message: i did not know you had sex things here 11:28 ✓✓

Sent Message:))) i did not hear what you just yelled 11:30 ✓✓

Received Message: I said do NOT touch this. 11:31

Received Message: You asshole why are you going through my stuff!! 11:32

Received Message: Give me a minute. 11:32

Sent Message:    11:33 ✓✓



Type a message



←  Whatsapp chat with: Ilya   

Today

What are you doing? I'm waiting for you in the car, and now we're going to be late. 16:49 ✓✓

*Received Message:*we will not we're literally going to be there 30 minutes early 16:51

*Received Message:*but maybe if it is already ruined we do not go? why waste our time on hayden 16:52

Because he and Jackie are my friends and I want them to meet my boyfriend. 15:53 ✓✓

Are you delaying this on purpose? Why aren't you there? 15:54 ✓✓

i'm not! 15:55

i told you i will meet them for you 15:55

my curls are just not doing what i want them to do, is annoying(15:56

i want to make a good impression on your stupid no good hockey player friend 15:57

He's not a bad player. 15:58 ✓✓

Okay. I'm coming back in to help you baby. 15:59 ✓✓



Type a message



←  Whatsapp chat with: Ilya   

Today

*Received Message:*i am cold and alone 08:31



Sent Message: 08:31

You said you were too sleepy to come grocery shopping with me! 08:32 ✓✓

Received Message: yes мой тостер because who goes shopping for food this early in the morning?
08:33

My toaster? 08:35 ✓✓

Reactions: 🙌

It's less crowded this way, and now I'm familiar with the cashier that works at this specific time during the week. 08:36 ✓✓

do you want nude 08:37

If you send anything while I'm in the store I am not even looking at you for the rest of the day.
08:38 ✓✓

Sent Message: 🙄 08:38

can you buy some chocolate bars please? 08:40

There are some in the pantry, in the cupboard on the left side. 08:42 ✓✓

They're all for you, I don't really eat any of this stuff. 08:43 ✓✓

Replying to: You

There are some in the pantry, in the cupboard on the left side.
not anymore 08:44

What? 08:45 ✓✓

can you also buy gummy bears please? 08:46



Type a message





613-XXX-XXX >

Today 9:28 PM

Hello Ilya. This is Yuna Hollander.

It was really nice to meet you. David and I were both happy to finally see the boy Shane had been mentioning for years. We're really glad that you could come be with Shane for a vacation, you both looked great.

Regarding what we talked about, once you let me know of a more certain timeline for when you would expect to be able to switch jobs, I will call some of my contacts to see if any of them know of any opportunities, and I will update you.

I have no doubts that we'll find something, with the knowledge and skillset you have. Maybe Shane has told you how I never give up on something when I get set on it ;-)

Let's talk again soon. Enjoy the rest of your stay with our Shane.

Miss Hollander,

Thank you very much for all of this. You are too kind. It was also very nice to meet you, and your husband. I will let you know once I have a talk with my friend. She is also my employer at the moment, so I will update you after that.

Thank you for being good to me, and good to Shane. I am happy to really see that he has good parents.

We will talk again soon, yes. I have many questions about Shane's childhood 🐱

We definitely have a lot to talk about, then!

And please, call me Yuna. :-)

Okay, Yuna. Thank you.



iMessage

◀  Whatsapp chat with: Shane 🐱📧📞⋮📺

1 UNREAD MESSAGE



Sent Message: 15:02

Reactions: ❤️

<

the pack!! 15:05 ✓✓

Sent Message: ❤️ 15:05



Type a message





[POV: Shane Hollander](#) [POV: Ilya Rozanov](#)

Shane drives them to the airport, and stays at Ilya's side for as long as he can before the other has to get ready to embark on his flight back to Boston.

They don't talk much. The incoming separation is evidently weighing on both of them.

Like Shane feared, he does not want to let Ilya go now. This break has been everything he had hoped for, and he wishes that he had much, much longer with the other. Forever, if possible.

But Ilya still has responsibilities in Boston, and things to figure out before he can truly be set on moving closer. Because now there's a plan about Ilya coming here, to Canada, so that they can live together.

So Shane will be patient, or at least he will try to be. He can do that. He's good at following a schedule and a plan. He'll visit Boston in the meantime, and Ilya can come back here too, even if only for short visits.

It all doesn't make it hurt less to see him leave right now.

When Ilya has to go, with no more room for delay, he simply takes his bag in one hand, and Shane's jaw in the other. "I love you," he says after kissing him, always so sincere in moments like these, "And I will see you soon, yes? Don't miss me too much."

"Asshole," Shane can only reply, just as honestly, "You know I will."

He doesn't stay to watch Ilya go. They get back to the airport in Shane's stupid, ugly, practical car. Ilya hates the sight of it even more now because of that.

They're pretty silent, the both of them, as they move through the airport to reach the gates Ilya will need to go through.

Ilya doesn't want to be away from Shane again, obviously. After years of waiting to be able to see the other, the mere two weeks they got were far too short.

But he's going back with a goal in mind. Upon landing back in Boston, he will figure out exactly when, and how, he can get to move closer to Shane. He will need to schedule a talk with Sveta. But she always seems to be a step ahead of him, so he thinks that she might already know that this conversation would be coming.

So, in a way, he is determined to go back. The sooner he does, the quicker he can see Shane again.

All this rational thinking and self motivational talk doesn't make it easier to detach himself right

now.

When the time does come for him to leave, he takes a long look at Shane. He brings up one of his hands to cup his boyfriend's cheeks, while he grabs his luggage with the other, all ready to go. "I love you," he starts with. It's the important part. "And I will see you soon, yes? Don't miss me too much."

"Asshole," Shane responds, his cheeks squished into Ilya's fingers, "You know I will."

Ilya rushes in before he decides to make a stupid decision, like missing his flight on purpose.

👤📱 Whatsapp chat with: Ilya 📞 ⋮ 📺

Have a safe flight. Text me when you get home. Love you. 16:54 ✓✓

1 UNREAD MESSAGE

Received Message: i'm home, miss you already 18:47

Good. 18:48 ✓✓

Not good that you miss me, but that you made it home safely. 18:49 ✓✓

I miss you too. 18:49 ✓✓

Reactions: ❤️

Received Message: you have gone back to the cottage? or did you leave for your apartment already 18:50

No, I'm still at the cottage. I need to clean and store some things before I leave. 18:51 ✓✓

why did you not let me help do that when i was there??? 18:52

but okay. good. maybe you should check in your bedside table 18:52

i think you have some mail 18:53



Моя любовь

Shane,

I am writing you something to read for when I am back in Boston. It is not like some of the letters that I have sent in the past, full of things that I could not get myself to admit anywhere put on paper.

No, more simply than that, writing a letter is something that is pretty romantic, no? I would have never thought of myself as someone that craves these kinds of romances and big, sappy gestures, but with you, I want it all. And I want to do it all in return.

I remember, long long time ago, that you told me not to sign my letters “with love” to you, because we did not know each other. I remember your words clearly, because they made me laugh. I tried to imagine who could be this really uptight Canadian boy, getting so annoyed at me from the other end of the world that he could not help but write back.

I would say that you were wrong to correct me, because I think that since the beginning I knew that I would love you.

Right now you are in the kitchen, making your terrible smoothie. When I am done I will come join you, and I will drink it because I know you will make two.

I will pretend that it is not the worst thing I have ever tasted. Or maybe I will successfully distract you with something way more fun.

But it does not really matter, because I want everything with you. All that you will give me, I take.

We will see each other again soon. Я всегда рядом. Я люблю тебя. I'm always near you. I love you.

С любовью и сердцем, With love and heart,
Ilya

←  Whatsapp chat with: Ilya   

i think you have some mail 18:53

Ilya. You're going to make me want to cry. 19:01 ✓✓

It's funny how alike we think, sometimes. 19:02 ✓✓

Received Message: yes? why do you say that? 19:04

Maybe you should check the inside pocket of your travel bag. 19:05 ✓✓



Type a message



To Ilya

Dear Ilya,

I wonder how long it'll take you to find this. I would hope that you won't wait days to unpack your travel belongings.

Anyway, it wouldn't be fitting for us to part ways without a letter, right? I thought that it would be something you'd enjoy.

When I used to tell people around me that I send letters to a guy I had never met, and who uses half of his limited paper space to try to get a rise out of me, they often asked me "why?"

And I used to ask myself the same thing. Why am I writing back? Why am I so invested, why do I want to share, and know more?

I'm not sure, still, what kept me so curious at first. What I do know is that I've never been more glad for anything. For your letters, and your company, and all of your attention. For how stubborn you were, pushing me to write back.

For all of you, for accepting me as I am, for being yourself around me.

I feel so honored to hold your heart in my hands. To have been given something so important.

I'll take care of it. I hope that you will remember this, and that it will make the sadness that you keep deep within you, but rarely show, ease a little.

This letter is a reminder that I hope you'll keep close. You could read it a hundred of times, and I will still mean every word.

I've never known myself to be a poet before you. But also, I've never loved anyone like I love you.

I will see you soon,
Shane

←  Whatsapp chat with: Shane 🐱💌📞⋮📺

Maybe you should check the inside pocket of your travel bag. 19:05

shane 19:14 ✓✓

я люблю тебя всей душой i love you with all my heart 19:15 ✓✓

Received Message: I love you with all my heart and more. 19:16

i thought we were not doing the “me more” thing 19:17 ✓✓

Received Message: No, you are not doing it. I decided that I can. 19:18

what? is unfair!!! 19:18 ✓✓

Reactions: ❤️



Type a message



Chapter End Notes

I am a little more stressed posting this chapter than the others, with it being the most different, the longest, and the most awaited part (i'm shaking like a little dog)

I chewed a lot on how to go about it, because I couldn't decide if I wanted to include plain text into this fic or not. Then I remembered this awesome multiple tabs code I had seen someone make (see below), and thought it would be perfect for this! It was a bit of a challenge to myself to write two POVs of the same events, so I hope it is as fun and as satisfying as intended :)

[Tabbing experiment](#)

[How to Make iOS Text Messages on AO3](#)

Next chapter will be the last. We're time jumping for an epilogue :) As always, thank you for reading and sharing your thoughts in the comments and anywhere online (I am lurking and I will see you, probably)

Chapter 8: YEARS AFTER, TO FOREVER WITH YOU

Chapter Notes

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

◀️  Whatsapp chat with: Shane 🐱💌📞⋮📺

Today

Sent Message: мой салатmy salad you are home? i got message that they will deliver the new washing machine today 11:02 ✓✓

*Received Message:*Salad? 11:04

Reactions: 👍

*Received Message:*Noted. I'm at the park near the apartment with Anya, we'll make our way back in a bit. 11:04

💖💖💖 i wish i was also there. stupid saturday work 11:05 ✓✓

can you send a picture? 11:05 ✓✓



Sent Message: 11:08

Reactions: ❤️

shane you are very beautiful 11:09 ✓✓

but i meant picture of anya 11:10 ✓✓

Jeez, sorry. 11:11

Maybe when you get back I'll just leave you alone with her. 11:12

nooo i love the picture i love it a lot i saved it i miss you 11:14 ✓✓

but please anechka picture 11:15 ✓✓



Sent Message: 11:17

Reactions: ❤️

my princess 🍷🐶🍷🐶🍷🐶 11:20 ✓✓

her natural aegyo is so refreshing 11:21 ✓✓

Okay? 11:22

What does that mean? 11:22

that she is very cute. is new expression the neighbours kids have teached me 11:24 ✓✓

How are the kids always a worse influence on you than you are on them? 11:25

i adapt easily and i learn fast 🐱 11:26 ✓✓

So could I say that your "natural aegyo" is refreshing? Does that work? 11:27

shane 11:27 ✓✓

i am abandoning this meeting right now i will be there soon do not move 11:29 ✓✓

Please don't. 11:30

Ilya answer me please tell me you didn't really leave the meeting. 11:39



Type a message



←  Whatsapp chat with: Ilyusha  

Hey. Dinner with mom and dad tomorrow night. 17:02 ✓✓

Can you buy eggs while you're still at the mall? We're out and I told them we'd bring dessert. 17:03 ✓✓

Received Message: what do you want me to make? 17:07

No, i will bake, don't worry about it. 17:09 ✓✓

I thought I'd make some brownies. 17:09 ✓✓

you will bake brownies? 17:10

Well, I saw a recipe for some veggie brownies the other day. I thought maybe I could try that for a change? 17:11 ✓✓

shane 17:11

is what you feed babies to try to make them eat green 17:12

you do not have to do that. you can eat your vegetables and brownies separately 17:13

Replying to: Ilyusha

is what you feed babies to try to make them eat green

It's "eat their greens" 17:14 ✓✓

Reactions: 😬

And I just wanted to try something different! The reviews are good! 17:15 ✓✓

It's not a bad thing to try to eat healthier. 17:15 ✓✓

i know 17:16

but if you want healthy tomorrow you do not have to make brownies, yes? 17:16

But you like brownies. And my mom does too. 17:17 ✓✓

i like a lot of things 17:18

and also i like baking with you 17:18

so i will go buy some things and we will do something else together, yes? something with fruits maybe? 17:19

Yeah, okay. Sounds good. 17:20 ✓✓

good 💖 see you in a bit малышbaby 17:21

Love you. 17:21 ✓✓

I will still try the veggie brownies another day. I'm curious to know if it really works. 17:25 ✓✓

i know you will. i will try them with you even if i know i will not like. love you 17:26

Reactions: ❤️



Type a message



Do not listen to Anechka I already fed her before i left

xoxo

Don't forget to buy:

- Olive oil
- Baking powder
- Milk
- Limes
- Gummy bears

Shane do you like me

YES ☒ NO ☐

Are we in middle school?

←  Whatsapp chat with: Shane 🐱💌📞🔍🖨

Sent Message: jade told me that i am her favorite uncle! 😊 12:45 ✓✓

Received Message: Bullshit. 12:47

Received Message: You're at Hayden's? 12:47

i am. but pike is not here 12:48 ✓✓

jackie asked me if i was free today to come help and the girls wanted to see me (because i am the favorite uncle) 12:49 ✓✓

what are you doing? 12:50 ✓✓

Rose is taking me to brunch in a bit. It's some fancy place she often goes to and apparently swears by. 12:52

you will send me pictures? i want to see 12:53 ✓✓

Sure) 12:53

Replying to: You

jade told me that i am her favorite uncle! 😊

It's not true, right? The kids wouldn't pick a favorite. 12:54

you are sad that you aren't the cool uncle they want to play with? 12:55 ✓✓

Reactions: 🗨

I'm not sad because it's not true. Jade told me she loves me just the other day. 12:57

yes but not as much as me! 12:58 ✓✓

you are upset? 13:05 ✓✓

hello 13:18 ✓✓

I called Jackie and she confirmed that you're lying. 13:24

you called jackie for this?? you can't do that! 12:25 ✓✓



Type a message



From: irozanov@ottcentaurs.com

Subject: Hello

To: shollander@ottcentaurs.com

Mr. Shane Hollander,

I have seen you today during my lunch break, and have been mesmerized by your beauty (and your ass). I couldn't stop myself from reaching out. I didn't know that we had such a beautiful person on the medical team.

Would you offer your services to someone that isn't an official player? My shoulders have been sore, they could use your hands on them.

I would also show you a good time, of course.

Very respectfully,

Ilya Rozanov
Hockey Analytics Assistant

Ottawa Centaurs
613-XXX-XXX

From: shollander@ottcentaurs.com

Subject: Re: Hello

To: irozanov@ottcentaurs.com

Mr. Rozanov,

You're being very forward, for a first conversation.

But luckily for you, I have also seen you in passing, in the arena.

You're not a player, you said? You could have fooled me, with how well-trained your thighs and biceps looked.

Maybe I should take a closer look. How does a massage sound?

Sincerely,

Shane Hollander
Team Physician

Ottawa Centaurs
613-XXX-XXX

Go cens!

From: irozanov@ottcentaurs.com

Subject: Re: Re: Hello

To: shollander@ottcentaurs.com

Mr Hollander,

A massage sounds perfect. My place, tonight? We will be more comfortable than in your work room.

Maybe we should even meet up before then? This way, I would give you the address in person, and offer you a drink.

I could even drive you there, I am a gentleman.

Let me know when you are free. ;)

Ilya Rozanov

Hockey Analytics Assistant

Ottawa Centaurs

613-XXX-XXX

From: bvazquez@ottcentaurs.com

Subject: Reminder

To: irozanov@ottcentaurs.com, shollander@ottcentaurs.com

Mr. Hollander, Mr. Rozanov,

I feel the need to remind you, for no particular reason at all, that you are both using professional email addresses. As you may have been told before, upper management has access to what you write and send, and may monitor you at random times.

As such, we ask you to please not use said email addresses for any personal, or intimate conversations.

Thank you.

Have a nice day,

Baptiste Vazquez

Assistant General Manager

Ottawa Centaurs

613-XXX-XXX

←  Whatsapp chat with: Ilyusha   

Sent Message: I'm going to kill you. 15:13 ✓✓

Received Message:))) sorry sorry 15:14

*Received Message:*but also you are the one who decided to answer! is shared guilt 15:15

*Received Message:*is fine they do not really care моя любовьmy love 15:15

This is so embarrassing. 15:16 ✓✓

will i still get my message mr hollander? 15:17

Obviously. 15:18 ✓✓

Reactions: 



Type a message



I'm bringing Sveta back to the airport. Don't wait to eat.

There is pasta for you in the fridge :)

Salad = Салат

Scotch tape = Скотч

Umbrella = Зонт

~~Faster = быстрее~~

~~Harder = Жестче~~

Call mom about cottage plans for this summer

-> Vacation abroad?

◀  Whatsapp chat with: Ilyusha   

3 UNREAD MESSAGES

*Received Message:*you know barrett? 13:07

*Received Message:*the forward that came from toronto 13:08

*Received Message:*i think he is gay 13:08

What??? 13:15 ✓✓

Why do you say that? 13:15 ✓✓

*Received Message:*i have a special sense for these things 🐱🧠🏳️‍🌈 13:16

*Received Message:*but also we talk often now when i come see the team at practice and he just told me himself 13:17

Wow. 13:18 ✓✓

I never would've guessed. And I saw him for a check-up just earlier. 13:18 ✓✓

i know, your radar is really broken. is why i am sharing with you 13:19

Shut up. 13:19 ✓✓

Why did he tell you? Is he seeing anyone? Does he plan on coming out? 13:21 ✓✓

you are mr gossip now? 13:22

Well, you started it! 13:23 ✓✓

)) i do not know the details but i think he has a crush on the social media guy 13:24

Harris??? 13:24 ✓✓

yes. you know harris is gay right? you did not miss the hundred of pride pins on his jacket? 13:25

No I know Harris is gay, we talk sometimes. 13:26 ✓✓

It's just a surprising match-up. 13:26 ✓✓

you know, we are also surprising 13:27

every time i tell someone here that we are dating they do not believe me 13:28

barrett did not believe me! 13:28

Replying to: Ilyusha

every time i tell someone here that we are together they do not believe me

Really? How often does that happen? 13:29 ✓✓

i have been telling a lot of people 13:30

just so they are not surprised when i start talking about my shane 13:31

Please at least remain professional, we can't keep getting reprimanded. 13:32 ✓✓

But I've been telling people too. Do you think we've been sharing the same information to the same people and they just act shocked? 13:33 ✓✓

that would be funny 13:34

i like when you tell people that we are together 13:35

Well, yes. I also want them to not be surprised when I talk about my baby. 13:37 ✓✓

блять fuck hollander you are always doing that on purpose 13:38

do you really say my baby when you talk about me to other people? are you on break? how much longer do you have? 13:39

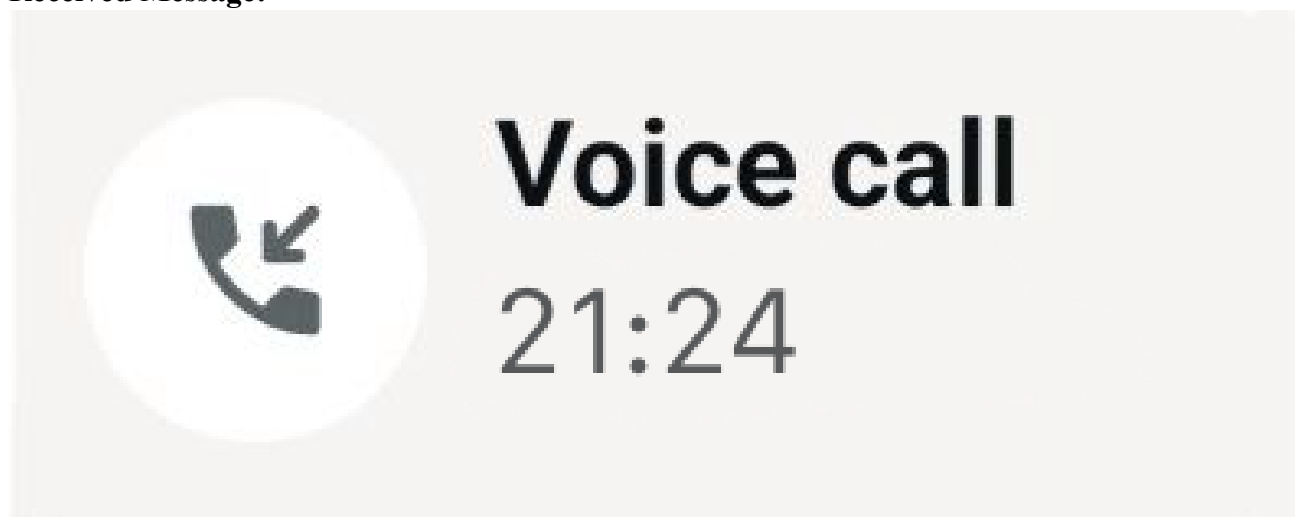
Well, look who's Mr. Curious now. 13:40 ✓✓

very funny. can you answer 13:41

I have about 20min. Also, I'm alone. 13:42 ✓✓

And sometimes I do, yes. 13:42 ✓✓

Received Message:

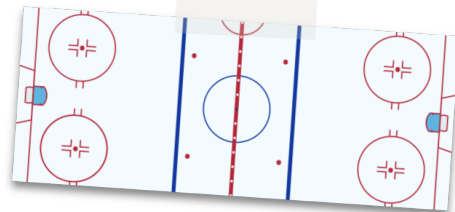
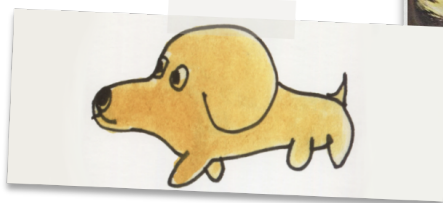
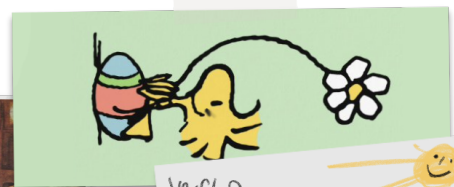
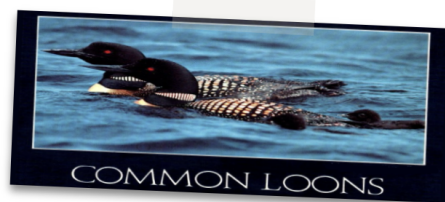


13:43



Type a message





POV: Ilya Rozanov POV: Shane Hollander

Ilya is sprawled across the couch in their living room when he hears Shane's voice from further into the apartment, calling for him. He spares one last glance at the video he was watching on his phone, and goes.

When he pushes open the bedroom door, he finds Shane just standing there.

“Hey,” says Shane as soon as he notices him, “You okay?”

“Yes,” Ilya answers, his brows slightly furrowing in confusion. “Did you need something?”

“Ah, no,” Shane replies, “No, no. It’s just—I was just cleaning out the closet and found this box underneath other things. You know, the one with all of our old letters.” He gestures loosely toward the bed with one hand, where Ilya can now see the familiar red box.

“Ah!” Ilya exclaims, a grin taking place on his face as he looks at it, “You were feeling, eh, what is the word... Nostalgic, yes? Remembering how charming I was from the start?”

Shane rolls his eyes at that, but it's fond. “Yes, well. Yes,” he fumbles awkwardly, “I thought that maybe you'd like to look through them too, since I took them out.”

Ilya hasn't seen the letters in a while, it's true. Not since they moved, and stored the box away for safekeeping.

He treasures them dearly, these letters. But sometimes Ilya gets in a mood, and seeing all the well kept envelopes stirs up a small ache, making him mourn the ones his brother destroyed, so long ago. He feels guilty about it, even now, even when he knows that he had no way of preventing it.

“Mmh,” Ilya purrs as he steps closer to Shane, sliding his hands around the other's waist. “I will, yes. Is a good idea,” he says as he leans in, pressing their chests together. “But maybe before that, you can enjoy how charming I am now?”

Shane puts his own hands on Ilya's shoulders and...Pushes him back. Okay, not the mood he thought it was, then. “I think you should look at the letters now. Before I put them away again?”

Ilya pouts a little at him, but detaches himself. “Okay,” he says easily. “We look at them together then, yes? Little trip down the lane of memory.”

“Yes,” Shane replies with a small smile, lingering where he stands as Ilya heads over to the bed and reaches for the box. Shane won't remember any of this conversation, when he tries to think about it later.

All he will be able to say is that in that moment, his heart was beating so fast that he thought he might need to go to the hospital.

Dear Ilya

Or should I say 'Dear future Ilya'? I think it will be a long while before you get to read this. To give you an idea of when I am writing this, it has been about half a year since we first saw each other at the cottage.

"So soon, Hollander, you couldn't wait?" you will say, I can already imagine it. And I will say "no, I wanted to make the vision clear in my head, even back then."

I couldn't wait, because I know that it will happen, in some years when we are both ready. It's you or it's no one, for me. And I hope it will still be the same for you.

I hope that by now, when I show you this, we're settled somewhere together. That we're good, and happy, and succeeding in what we're doing. I hope that there's nothing burdening either of us, and that as you're reading this you can guess where this letter is going and be as excited as I will surely be.

For this occasion, I wanted to go all the way back and take inspiration from the first words you ever wrote to me. So, if I may,

Hello. You are looking for a husband in Ottawa? My name is Shane (Шейн) and I am interested.

Ilya Rozanov, will you marry me?

I will make sure to say those words to you, face to face, when the time is right. But as you said yourself, letters are pretty romantic, yes? It is only fitting.

I look forward to a future with you.

Yours, hopefully forever,
Shane Hollander

[POV: Ilya Rozanov POV: Shane Hollander](#)

Ilya finishes the letter, forcing himself to focus even as a faint dizziness creeps in the further he reads. By the end of it, he's gripping the paper so hard he worries he will damage it.

Still, Ilya goes over every last word, and then he whips his body around to face Shane.

He has to lower his gaze, after that, because when he turns Shane is down on one knee.

"Shane—"

"Ilya Grigoryevich Rozanov," Shane interrupts, "will you marry me?"

Ilya stays stunned for a moment. He doesn't know for how long, really. He must look silly, not daring to move a muscle as if the slightest motion might shatter the scene in front of him.

He stares at Shane. His eyes flick down to the little box he's holding in his trembling hands, and then back up to Shane's face. He's sporting such a determined expression, his Shane. His face is all so red that it makes the pattern of freckles on his cheeks stand out even more, like Ilya loves.

He loves him so much. Loves him so intensely, the feeling only growing more and more as time goes on.

How lucky Ilya is, truly, to have ended up here. He lost count of how many times he thought so over the years.

"Yes," he finally manages to respond, and his voice breaks on that single syllable. "Yes, Shane. Of course, yes."

Shane's shoulders relax at once, like he ever had anything to worry about. He then rises, and as soon as he does Ilya rushes to take him in his hold. *Yes, yes, yes. Obviously, yes. Forever yours, officially, yes.*

"I love you," Ilya says, even if it isn't nearly enough to express how enormous the feelings that he has right now are, "я тебя люблю." "I love you."

And Shane's smile is blinding. His expression is a perfect mirror of Ilya's own, one that he can read it so easily. *Yes, I want to spend my whole life with you, yes.* "I love you more," Shane says, always trying to one-up him. The bastard.

There are tears in both of their eyes, rolling down their cheeks. They're laughing, and they're crying, and Shane's hands are still slightly shaking as he slides the beautiful ring he got onto Ilya's finger. It fits perfectly.

He can't even be mad that Shane has beaten him to the proposal.

Ilya has never been more excited thinking about a possibility of 'forever', before. He cannot wait to spend it all with Shane. *Thump. Thump. Thump. Thump.*

Shane watches Ilya cross the room, open the box, and, all as planned, carefully take the letter that was resting on top of the pile.

This is it. Shane's been thinking about this moment so much, and this is it.

As Ilya begins to read, Shane shifts quietly into position, lowering himself onto one knee. He takes out the small box he was hiding away, the one that holds the ring he picked out with Rose's assistance a while back.

Thump. Thump. Thump. Thump.

From where he is, he can only vaguely see the back of Ilya's head, and the familiar end of his curls. He has no way of discerning his expression, as he takes in the words Shane had written so long ago. Is he smiling? Surprised? Is he happy? Was he expecting this?

Does he even want this? They've talked about getting married over the years, but nothing more than vague plans for the future. Maybe Ilya isn't ready, maybe this isn't enough, maybe—

He can't think about it any longer, because as Ilya finishes the letter, he turns.

It takes him another second to notice that Shane is below him. A beat passes before his gaze drops.

"Shane—"

"Ilya Grigoryevich Rozanov," Shane cuts in immediately, as steadily as he can manage right now, "Will you marry me?"

Ilya doesn't answer, at first. If anything, he seems locked into place, his arms stiff at his sides, like he would like to reach out but is holding himself back.

His eyes are wide, and obviously caught off guard. He's dressed in nothing special, a regular t-shirt and pants both covered in some of Anya's fur, because nothing works to try to reduce her shedding.

It's all so ordinary. Shane adores him so, this way.

It felt like the right thing to do, to propose in the comfort of their home, by themselves, after a good, regular day. After nothing particular, only because Shane thought that it was it, now is the time.

And after all, Ilya has always liked surprises.

"Yes," Ilya finally answers, making Shane's heart stop and start all over again. *Thump, thump, thump.* "Yes, Shane. Of course, yes."

And Shane breathes again. *Of course, yes.*

Shane gets up on his feet, and Ilya immediately closes the space between them before he has the chance to do so himself. "I love you," Ilya says, "я тебя люблю." "I love you."

Shane smiles widely in response, tightening his arms around the other. *You're everything to me*, he thinks, like he did the first time they confessed their feelings aloud. "I love you more." He can't hold back from saying it.

They're both crying, now, grins stretched so far that Shane's cheeks hurt. He wouldn't have it any other way.

When they finally pull back, he takes Ilya's hand carefully in his own, and slides the gold band onto his ring finger.

Forever yours, forever mine. Shane must be the happiest person in the world, he thinks.

Need to call David about the suit

Also -> ask if he's free for puzzle this weekend

Wedding cake tasting on Friday

2 PM @ l'Atelier Pâtisseries

Do you like me
YES ☒ NO ☐

Stop asking this!



Chapter End Notes

And here we are. What a ride, yes?

A bit bittersweet for myself to see this one come to an end, but it felt like the right time to let my little Hollanovs live their long happy lives.

I've said it over and over in my notes, but I am so very very thankful for all the kindness this fic has received, and all the attention people have given to the details I put into it. It's been a joy to work on, and even more a joy to see the reactions.

As I promised some people, I have put together most of the codes [HERE](#), for those interested. I hope it makes enough sense. Some things might look wonky to people who have more

knowledge than I do in these things, but my mantra through all of this has been: if it works, it works!!

And that's about all from me, I think!

Maybe we'll all meet again in another little corner of AO3. Until then, take care, and thank you.

(Edit: I folded under pressure (read: people very very nicely asking me about it) and put my few HR fics into a series :) I didn't do it before because I get anxious fast when I'm perceived, but I want to work on that!!)

With all of my love,
Author

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