

I Laugh Like Me Again

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I Laugh Like Me Again

by [thekillerandthefinalgirl](#)

Summary

It's Shane Hollander's first season in Ottawa, and the whole Centaurs roster is playing better than they ever have. So why won't the press focus on that? Why do he and Ilya keep having to answer questions about their marriage, and not get to talk about the incredible start to the season that their team is having? Maybe if they do one podcast, with hosts who are normal people, they can just tell their whole story and focus on bringing the Stanley Cup to Ottawa.

or, Shane and Ilya do a sports podcast run by lesbians for members of the LGBTQ+ community, and the internet reacts.

Notes

Hi! I haven't written fanfiction in like ten years, and I'm so happy to be back to it. This fandom has been so inspiring, and it's been really, really good to have writing as a creative outlet again. I'm in a career where writing is a huge part of my job, and that took a lot of the joy out of fic, and I'm so happy to be here with this community so I can rediscover this.

I guess this piece is a mix of show and book canon. I watched the show first, so that's really what is front of mind for me. I've never written a social media AU fic, or a chat fic (I've always been very traditional prose girlie), so I hope I live up to the incredibly high standards that other authors in this space have set.

Also, I don't know anything about pro hockey. I'm an MLB girlie to my core, and a Seattle fan, so my only exposure to pro hockey is the Kraken (baby team) and the Torrent (baby team in a baby league). If I got anything wrong, it's because the Googling I did failed me. Same is true for languages: I neither speak nor read Russian, and I neither speak nor read any kind of French, let alone Canadian French or Quebecois (are they different??? I don't even know). It's me and Google Translate against the world.

Lastly, I'm hugely inspired by gurlsr00l and the Secret Society of Stick Handlers series, Liars and Thieves22's Desperate Measures series. Please, please go read them if you haven't already.

Chapter 1

[Begin transcript]

Intro: *jazzy, acoustic guitar music plays as a pastel blue background fades in. The words “Gay Girls and Goals” scrawl across the screen in big, loopy, pink cursive.*

The title card fades out, and the camera cuts to two women, one white with riotous ginger hair and a face full of freckles, and one Black, with her natural hair pulled into a bun. The camera is tight just on the two of them where they sit on their usual pale pink couch, podcast microphone rigs before them. The redhead speaks first, with a big smile on her face.

Cassie: And welcome back to Gay Girls and Goals, your podcast on all major league sports news for women’s and men’s leagues, for the girls, gays, and theys! [*sarcastically*] Hello to all our regular viewers and probably no new people at all! I’m Cassie.

Luna: And I’m Luna! This episode goes up on Monday, November 8, 2021, so if you’re watching day of, here’s today’s games. [*taps a pastel blue five by eight card against the palm of her hand*] In the WNBA, the New York Liberty are hosting the Connecticut Sun, then in the PWHL the Minnesota Frost are playing the Vancouver Goldeneyes at home. In the NFL we’ve got the Broncos and the Chargers in Denver, and also the Steelers and the Ravens in Pittsburgh. Then for the NBA, the Lakers are in Oregon and the Jazz are in Miami. Which brings us to the NHL, and the San Jose Sharks are in Ottawa playing the Centaurs, and the New York Admirals are in Chicago. I think I got everyone.

Cassie: Fucking November.

Luna: Fucking November! Everybody and their mama is in season.

Cassie: But that’s not why we’re here. Today is Interview Monday —

Luna: We really have to figure out a different name for it —

Cassie: One thing at a time. Today is Interview Monday, and we are absolutely thrilled to introduce to you our two guests for the day.

[the camera cuts to a wide shot, revealing the entirety of the long pink couch, and the two men sitting at the other end of it from Luna and Cassie]

Cassie: Our first guest was his class's number one draft pick. He is a winner of the Hart Memorial Trophy, Stanley Cup winner, multi-year All Star, former captain of Team Russia, former captain of the Boston Bears, and captain of the Ottawa Centaurs, Ilya Rozanov!

[Rozanov flashes a huge grin and joins the other three on the couch in polite applause]

Luna: And our second guest was his class's number two draft pick. He is also a winner of the Hart Memorial Trophy, as well as a Conn Smythe winner, three-time Stanley Cup winner, multi-year All Star, 2011 Rookie of the Year, Olympic Gold Medalist, former captain of Team Canada, former captain of the Montreal Voyageurs, and player for the Ottawa Centaurs, Shane Hollander!

[Shane laughs and waves politely at nobody in particular as Ilya, Cassie, and Luna all applaud]

Luna: Holy shit. The first husbands of hockey. On our couch. In our studio. In Los Angeles.

Shane: Thank you so much for having us. We really appreciate it.

Ilya: Yes, thank you. We know it was short notice.

Luna: Okay, so I guess that brings me to our first question, because I have been absolutely dying to know. Why us? Sports journalism is a small world, and like girl I *know* some of the

outlets you guys have turned down for interviews. But you called us! *You* called *us*. Like genuinely we are so excited and so honored, but also, what the fuck?

Ilya: Because you are for the girls, gays, and theys, obviously.

Shane: It's because you talk about athletes as whole people, and teams as both communities and workplaces. I've been listening to your show for a couple of years now, and —

[Luna gets up and paces away from the couch, holding a hand over her mouth]

Cassie: Wait, what?

Shane: Of course! When the Canadian Women's Hockey League launched, it was pretty impossible to find good consistent coverage of it, and Leah Campbell recommended your show to me. You talked about the folding of that league and the launch of the PWHL with so much respect and so much honesty. And I've been on board ever since. And just over the years listening to your coverage, and the way you talk about player safety in all leagues, and your support of all the players' unions — we knew we only wanted to have this conversation once, and we felt like it makes the most sense to have it with you.

Luna: *[dropping back down into her spot beside Cassie]* Shane Hollander listens to our podcast.

Ilya: I also listen to it! I am an ally.

Shane: You're bi.

Ilya: I can still be an ally to the girls and the theys, Shane.

Luna: Okay. I'm focused and professional. Shane, you said there's a conversation you want to have, and only have it once. Can you tell us about that?

Shane: Yeah, uh. So we're about six weeks into the season —

Cassie: Sorry to interrupt already, but I feel like we should also acknowledge that Ottawa is currently eleven and five, including a four to two win against the LA Kings last night, as we're recording this on Sunday. This is the strongest season opener the franchise has seen in a couple of decades, and coming off making it to the second round of the Stanley Cup playoffs last year, which is incredible, so congratulations to both of you for that.

Shane: Yeah, thank you. This team has been playing some amazing hockey these past few weeks, Barrett and Boodram and Haas are all putting up incredible numbers with both goals and assists, Wyatt Hayes is basically a hockey god in that net, our rookies are all starting really strong — and the press, especially on away games, keep asking about our marriage and our personal history in the postgame interviews.

Ilya: It is annoying, yes? We want to talk about hockey, about the games, but the usual crowd in the press room seems distracted. Which is funny, because we keep getting asked if it is the rest of the team that is distracted by us. So we are here, we will lay it to rest, and we can all focus on bringing the Stanley Cup to Ottawa.

Shane: And we know some elements of our personal story are relevant news in the hockey world, and we are willing to share those elements, but we wanted to be respected as we do it, and to do it with people we respect in turn.

Luna: Okay. Wow.

Cassie: Thank you so much. I am normal and I am being normal. We are being normal professionals and what you are both saying makes sense.

Luna: Yes. Very normal. Cass and I were thinking we could just... start at the beginning. *[sits up, straightens her note cards]* You met in December 2008, at the World Prospect Cup, right? You were both gaining international press by then, and it wasn't a secret that multiple NHL teams had plans to draft you early. Were you aware of each other?

Shane: Yes, I was aware of him. I've always been really focused on hockey, and I had a pretty good idea of who was going to be in the 2009 draft class. And then when the rosters for World Juniors were announced, coaches started talking to me about this Russian player, fast, strong, really aggressive play style, super high point total. But the way they said it to me was like I should be on the defensive? Like I should feel threatened by him, and want to beat him, because there could only be one of us who was the best. And I remember feeling really upset by that, but not in a way I knew how to talk about. Everything I heard about Ilya, every tape of his I watched, just made me want to meet him. I wanted to meet the guy who was going to be one of the best players in the world.

Ilya: I had also been told about Shane, and seen his tapes. And I hated him, or I told myself I did.

Cassie: Without ever having met him?

Ilya: Yes. For most of my life I knew only one thing about myself for sure, and it is that I am good at hockey. I had to be the best at hockey. It is... no longer a secret that my mother passed away when I was young, I have spoken about that before. And life at home was... not really easy after that. Hockey was what was going to get me out, so I had to be the best at it. And then I became the best at it, and it felt good to maintain that, to have it recognized.

Luna: You don't have to answer this, and we can cut it, but Ilya, did you *like* hockey?

[*pause. Shane takes Ilya's hand*]

Ilya: I did when I was small, and I grew to love it again once I got to Boston. But the years between were very difficult.

Cassie: Did you guys get a chance to talk at the 2008-2009 World Juniors?

[*Shane snorts*]

Ilya: Let me tell it, Hollander. You always tell it wrong. I was outside, trying to sneak a cigarette, and I remember I couldn't get my lighter to catch —

Shane: Because you shouldn't have been smoking—

Ilya: No, because it was fucking cold and windy and Saskatchewan in December. Calm down. Anyway, I was trying to light a fucking cigarette, minding my own business, and then this beautiful boy with these freckles just sprinkled across his face comes up to me, and does a stupid little wave like a penguin with his hand still in his pocket so he lifts up the corner of his jacket, and shakes my hand. I thought he was fucking with me.

Luna: Oh my *God*.

Ilya: We were fucking seventeen, who was this little businessman who wanted to shake my hand? And then he scolded me for smoking, but also complimented my playing? Very strange. Strangest, prettiest boy I had ever seen. Shane, you are so red, *moy malen'kiy pomidor*.

Shane: Jesus Christ.

Ilya: And then I think I scared him off by being an asshole. He went to go back inside, but then he shook my hand again. And I remember thinking, oh, he's not arrogant. He's *nice*. He's being *kind* to me. Which was deeply inconvenient, so I chirped at him, something about how Russia was going to beat Canada, and he chirped back. And then Russia *did* beat Canada, but we already know that.

Shane: Fuck off. Anyway, then we didn't see each other again until the draft, which was a few months later. And it was the second time Ilya beat me at something.

Ilya: Number one draft pick, baby.

Luna: What do you remember about draft day?

Shane: Standing next to Ilya with our jerseys. Seeing him across the room when we were both talking to our coaches. Being really nervous and looking away when he caught me staring.

Cassie: Sounds like you had a crush.

Shane: Looking back, I absolutely had a crush.

Luna: Ilya?

Ilya: Of course I had a crush. It was the freckles. I remember the night of the draft was the first time we had a real conversation, so there I was, thinking too much about this freckly Canadian, but also terrified to move to the United States, to Boston, to a place I'd never been, with a language I still did not really speak. I had so much I should have been worrying about, but he still crept into my brain. Very rude.

Shane: Fuck *off*, Rozanov. But yeah, after that we didn't really talk. We were both at World Juniors again that year, and obviously Canada won gold —

Cassie: Can I just say it's so fucking funny that you guys are literally beefing over the World Juniors Prospect Cup from almost twelve years ago?

Luna: Wild behavior for a rivalry that apparently was fake all along.

Ilya: I think it depends what we mean by fake. Hollander is the only player I have ever met who could keep up with me. Who it was a challenge to beat. I was intrigued by him. I wanted to beat him, I wanted to win, but I also wanted to see him move on the ice.

Shane: It was like that for me too. I had grown up always as the best hockey player, ever since mites. Then I lose World Juniors, I lose number one draft pick, and everybody is telling

me I have to be this guy's rival. I was eighteen, I didn't know — it seemed like it was what everyone around me wanted me to really take the Montreal - Boston rivalry super personally, and Ilya was going to Boston, so I did. I was a kid, and it felt like what I was supposed to do.

Cassie: That brings up a really interesting point. Hockey is super different from the other men's pro leagues, in that hockey doesn't recruit from colleges as much. Not never — we know Scott Hunter, for example, got drafted during his senior year of college, and has had a long and successful career —

Ilya: Yes, very long, longest ever, maybe —

Shane: Will you stop?

Cassie: But kids get tracked to pro hockey in North America super, super young. The fact that the World Juniors exists at all is a testament to that.

Luna: Yeah I remember what I was like at seventeen. The thought of an entire media campaign and brand management strategy being built around that dork is terrifying. Like I have cousins who are still that age, and I can't imagine being like, hey kid, here's a million-dollar contract, now please save this declining Original Six team. That's a stupid amount of pressure. And while you're at it, play this incredibly vicious high-contact sport when your body may not be finished growing yet.

Shane: Yeah. I look at the Cens rookies and I can't imagine wanting that for them, or being willing to put them through it. Especially if you're not from North America, and you don't have a support system here.

Luna: Yeah actually — on that note, Ilya, my recollection is that Boston didn't have any other Russian players on the roster at the time you were drafted. So did anyone ever provide you with a copy of your contract in Russian?

Ilya: No. My first agent was Russian, though, and he had connections to the KHL, and he represented other Russian NHL players in the US. He always treated me well.

Luna: That shouldn't absolve the league or the franchise of the responsibility to present you with paperwork in your first language.

Ilya: Oh I agree.

Cassie: So you're both eighteen, nineteen years old. You're in these Original Six teams, neither of which have had a great few seasons in the recent past, and you're both in the position of the franchise savior. What were those first few years like? How much of the rivalry narrative was coming from the press? How aware were you of each other, off the ice?

Shane: Well. Here's the thing. We know that... that the speculation on the internet is that Ilya and I got together in 2017. Depending on how you define 'got together,' that's not exactly accurate.

Cassie: It's not?

Luna: Wait. Wait, wait, wait. So... when, then?

Ilya: 2010.

[Luna screams, gets up from the couch again and stalks to the wall of the studio]

Cassie: *What?* Are you fucking with me? Like is this a prank?

Luna: *[muffled, off mic] Two thousand and ten? Ten? Are you sure?*

Shane: Pretty sure, yeah.

Luna: *[dives over the back of the couch to reach for her mic]* Since your rookie season?

Shane and Ilya, simultaneously: Summer before.

Luna: *[off mic again, pacing back and forth behind the couch]* Holy shit. Holy shit, holy shit.

Cassie: Luna, sit down before you break something! You two, I know we just met and I shouldn't be talking to you like this, but explain yourselves. Right now.

[Luna rushes back to her seat on the couch and pulls a pillow into her lap]

Ilya: So the summer before the 2010 season started, I got contacted about a sponsorship with CCM. And I was still thinking about this fucking polite Canadian from the draft, and I thought, hey, wouldn't it be cool if we were both in the campaign, so I could see his stupid freckles again? So I reached out to CCM marketing to suggest that we incorporate Hollander.

[Luna cackles]

Cassie: Wait, that's adorable! We'll have to find a photo from that campaign and put it up.

[A still image of eighteen-year-old Ilya Rozanov and Shane Hollander in branded CCM gear, facing off on the ice, appears on the screen. Their cheeks are still a little round with youth as they scowl at each other across the puck.]

Luna: That was you shooting your shot?

Shane: It worked.

Luna: Holy shit.

Cassie: So are you seriously telling us that you've been together since 2010? That you have now, as of 2021, been together for eleven years?

Shane: Not exactly. We weren't... serious.

Ilya: We saw each other again at the 2011 All Stars, but then not for a while, outside of games. He played hard to get for the two years after that.

Shane: Even that's an exaggeration. We texted every so often, and we both saw other people in that time. But I don't think I was playing hard to get.

[Ilya laughs]

Luna: Okay, Ilya, it sounds like that's definitely what *you'd* call it.

Ilya: It is. Shane, I was trying very, very hard to hook up with you again after the 2011 ASG, and you were not cooperating.

Shane: I didn't think you were serious!

Ilya: Cassie, Luna, I can show you the texts and you can see just how serious —

Luna: Yes. Yes please. Please God.

[Ilya laughs but makes no move to reach for his phone]

Shane: I mean, I guess I did know you were serious. But I also knew I wasn't ready.

Ilya: I know, *malysh*.

Shane: It didn't help that the league was really pushing the rivalry narrative. It sold tickets, it sold merch. After all, it worked back in the day with Ovechkin and Crosby, so we knew that there were a lot of people really invested in us hating each other. And I can't speak for Ilya, but for myself, I know I never hated him. He annoyed the living shit out of me, and I wanted to beat him, but it was because he was fucking good. He was *so* good, he *is* so good. Watching Ilya play hockey is a thing of beauty, truly. He thinks really quickly on its feet, he's willing to take risks, and it genuinely makes him unpredictable. And it made me want to be better. Better in general, better than myself the day before, better than him. He's always challenged me to be the best, and that has never, ever changed.

Ilya: That is true for me as well. It is infuriating how good Shane is at this game. Nobody plays like him, nobody studies like him. He knows what you're going to do before you do it, because he's watched hours of your tapes, and he's drilled how to block you. It's so fucking irritating. So every time I was able to beat him, to get something past him, it was a huge victory for me. It is so much more satisfying when you win against someone who really makes you fight for it, yes? And whenever I lost against Shane, it was like, okay, it is because he was able to do something I had never seen before, and if I can master it, I will be better. I needed that. And yes, it was always very fun to annoy him, but I was never able to throw him off his game. He is fascinating.

Cassie: Why do I feel like I'm going to cry?

Luna: Right? That was so beautiful, you guys.

Cassie: Do you think you could have been friends? If not for the rivalry?

Ilya: Yes, absolutely.

[*Shane turns to look at him*]

Cassie: You sound really sure.

Ilya: Yes. Shane, I do not know if you remember this, but the first press conference we ever did together was back at the 2011 ASG —

Shane: *[quieter, with the mic almost not picking it up]* I remember.

[A still image appears on the screen, of a much younger Shane and Ilya, in suits, sitting behind a table with a banner bearing the NHL All Star Game branding behind them. They both look tense.]

Ilya: Okay, so yes, we were in this press conference, and I got this question that I remember as being very complicated. I don't know if it was actually that bad, but my English definitely was not as strong as it is now —

Shane: It *was* that bad. English is my first language, and I'm telling you it was that bad. It was a hypothetical with multiple clauses about how we felt about the fan response to the possibility of winning the Cup. It wouldn't have been a fair question to ask anybody without them getting it in advance.

Ilya: Thank you, *moy malen'kiy slovar'*. But yes, so I get this question I don't understand, and everyone is looking at me, and I almost started to panic, but then Shane leaned forward and just... took the question in a way that felt very natural. And I don't know if he did this on purpose, but it felt like he was speaking very slowly, in very short sentences, so I was able to use his answer to work backwards to what the question had been.

Cassie: *Were* you doing it on purpose, Shane?

Shane: I mean. Yeah.

Ilya: See? So yes, if it hadn't been for the rivalry, I would have wanted to be his friend, because he is kind. He could easily have let me... what is the phrase, like laundry?

Shane: [*quietly, almost off mic*] Hung you out to dry.

Ilya: Hung me out to dry, yes, let me embarrass myself, and looked good by comparison. Instead he helped me, when he didn't have to, in a way that nobody noticed me needing help.

Luna: That's really sweet.

Ilya: Yes, I agree. He is the sweetest. *Moya malen'kaya konfetka.*

Cassie: It almost sounds like nobody but you could understand what the other was going through, so the one person you could really talk to about it was kind of off limits.

Shane: It did feel like that, yeah. It was really isolating, in a way.

Luna: And also... so I'm Black, right? I'm a Black lesbian in sports journalism who covers men's leagues. There's not a ton of us. So your whole career, Shane, I've watched you get questions about what it feels like to be a representative, or a role model, or whatever. Almost just straight up asking you what it felt like to be a token, which is definitely similar to questions I've gotten before. During your rookie season, you were the only player of Asian ancestry in the NHL, and one of only a handful of players of color. I may be misremembering this but I think in your rookie season you were often asked what it was like to be compared to the Williams sisters in tennis, and Tiger Woods, and stuff. Can you talk about that?

Shane: It was weird. I didn't create the problem of the lack of racial diversity in the NHL, but I was almost being asked what I was going to do to solve it. And like you're saying, I was at the time the only Asian player in the league, which meant that by default I represented all Asians who wanted to be in the league, or even who were hockey fans.

Luna: Yeah.

Shane: I'm proud of who I am. I'm proud of my mom, and my grandparents, and that whole part of my life. But it never feels like I'm being asked about that pride when I get those questions. Instead, it feels very much like someone is saying to me, 'We know this is uncomfortable and maybe even painful to you, but rather than doing anything to change it, we just want you to reassure us that it's not that big of a deal.' And it is a big deal. There should be more Asian players in the league. It's not a lack of talent that has us so limited. It's that we get overlooked by the league.

Luna: Has that changed over the course of your career?

Shane: Yes and no. It's changed for me personally in that I don't get those questions anymore. There's also more Asian American and Asian Canadian talent on NHL rosters than ever before, and I think Asian enrollment in youth hockey is up by like 150 percent since 2018. That's really important to me. Like I said, it's not a lack of talent, it's a lack of... imagination, I guess, from teams and from the league, that kept us out for so long. But we, and our Black and Hispanic and First Nations fellow players, still get to deal with being 'players of color' rather than just players. I never got to be just a player. If I mess up, it affects all of us.

Luna: Carter Vaughn has expressed similar ideas when we've had him on in the past.

Shane: Yeah. I really admire Vaughn, because he's always been more willing to talk about this stuff, and more articulate than I feel like I'm being right now. Like when the Black Lives Matter protests were happening in 2014 and again last summer, Vaughnny was always out there, directing attention, raising money for bail funds, stuff like that.

Ilya: He had a very supportive captain and franchise behind him, remember.

Luna: Ilya makes a good point, and we'll get to the whole Montreal thing later. But I'm also guessing that the complicated ways you've felt about your racial identity in this league didn't help you in terms of your sexuality?

Shane: Yeah. It was already really clear to me that I was... an exception to something. I didn't want to be one twice over.

Cassie: Which I guess brings us back to the 2010 of it all, which I still cannot fucking *believe*. Ilya, you said earlier that Shane played hard to get for two years after that 2011 All-Stars Game. What happened after two years?

Ilya: I would say that is when it became a... Shane, what is that terrible word LaPointe said the other day?

Shane: [*covering his face with his hands, so the sound is muffled*] Situationship.

Ilya: Yes, that. It became that.

Luna: Hold on.

Cassie: What... does that mean in this context?

Shane: It means we started seeing each other regularly but not exclusively in fall of 2013, and stayed in that pattern until spring of 2017.

Luna: Okay what the fuck? 2013?

Ilya: Yes, Luna.

Luna: Fall of 2013? Two thousand and thirteen? Ilya, you won the Stanley that season!

Ilya: Yes, I did. And it is important to us that people know that. In 2014, I became the youngest team captain in franchise history to lead the Bears to the Stanley Cup. The next two years, Hollander won the Cup for Montreal, including in 2016 when he won the Conn Smythe. We both made the playoffs in 2017. And through all of that, through every minute of it, we were together. Not exclusively, and it was difficult and painful, at times, yes, but I was

in love with him when I was winning games against him, and he was in love with me when he was winning games against me.

Cassie: Holy fuck.

Luna: I need a minute. I need a goddamn minute.

[Ilya reaches behind Shane to play with his hair. Shane rests a hand on Ilya's knee.]

Cassie: So all the highlights of your early careers, setting all these records, winning all these awards, Montreal knocking Boston out of the playoffs in 2015, Boston knocking Montreal out of wild card contention in 2017, winning the goddamn Stanley Cup, being the center of this huge rivalry narrative... the whole time?

Shane: Yes, the whole time. I have known Ilya my entire adult life. I think I may have loved him that long, too. The public has never known a version of me that has not wanted Ilya Rozanov. I am who I am because I love him. I am able to love him and compete against him, because his constant pushing me to be better is part of why I love him.

Luna: Oh my *God*.

Ilya: Again, we need people to understand this. The idea that Shane has ever or would ever throw a game for me is insulting. He would not be the man I love if he threw games. I also do not need anyone to throw games for me. Be serious.

Luna: Oh my *God*, you guys.

Ilya: Yes, you said that already.

Luna: Sorry, I'm just... Obviously nobody with a brain believes that Shane tripped in the 2021 playoff game against Ottawa. We've all seen that clip a million times. It was an

accident. Players trip. It's a game involving thin metal blades for shoes, and a big ice floor. Tripping happens literally all the time. But Ilya, it sounds like you might have actually broken up with him if he had tripped on purpose.

Ilya: Probably, yes.

Shane: I would have been furious with him if he hadn't taken the puck from an opponent who tripped. The idea of either Ilya or me playing anything other than our best hockey in Game Seven of a playoff series is insulting. It was heartbreaking for me to have Montreal get knocked out. I wanted that fourth Stanley Cup. I still want it.

Ilya: And we will get it this year.

Shane: You keep fucking saying that, you're going to jinx it.

Ilya: Is not a jinx, it is a fact. It is not a jinx to say what is true.

Luna: Sorry, I'm still processing. If I was in a situation with a man for four years I would probably kill him and then myself. Cassie, I think I need you to take over for a minute.

Cassie: Yeah, I got you. Okay, sorry, can I ask one really personal question before we move on? When did either of you... catch feelings, I guess?

[Shane and Ilya glance at each other]

Shane: I'll take this first. I don't know exactly when I fell in love with him. I've been trying to figure it out for years. There's this line that Jane Austen has, I think in *Pride and Prejudice*, that goes something like 'I was halfway in it before I knew it had begun —'

Ilya: Mr. Intellectual —

Shane: Will you shut up? But I can tell you that I realized I was in trouble in 2014, when Boston won the Cup.

Ilya: Wait, what?

Shane: [*squeezes Ilya's knee*] I was watching the final with some teammates at Hayden Pike's house. When you lifted the Cup, before you passed it off to your team, you said something in Russian. I didn't understand it, but I thought I caught the word 'mama.' And there was so much joy in your face, but I thought I saw some pain, too, just for a second. And there was nothing in that moment that I wanted more than to be there, with you, celebrating your win. So that's how I knew I was fucked.

Ilya: [*quietly, leaning away from the mic*] *Ty nikogda mne etogo ne govoril.*

Shane: [*quietly*] *Mne zhal'.*

Ilya: No, no, is okay, just... [*exhales*].

Cassie: Shane speaks Russian?

Luna: Cass, focus. Do you guys need a break?

Ilya: No, we're good. After all, it didn't stop him from knocking me out of Cup contention the next year, and winning back-to-back Stanleys. To show off.

Shane: There it is.

Cassie: What about you, Ilya?

Ilya: Around the same time, I think. And I knew that the right thing to do was to stop seeing him, but I have never been a huge fan of doing the right thing. So I did what I thought was second best. I kept it casual, no expectations. If I acted like there were no feelings, then maybe they would fade. Because there *couldn't* be feelings.

Cassie: Yeah. [*glances at her own notecards*] The Law for the Purpose of Protecting Children from Information Advocating a Denial of Traditional Family Values.

Ilya: Exactly. I knew who I was at that point, knew I liked men as well as women. I had known for years. But I still only had a Russian passport, so if something happened and someone found out, and I got released from my contract with Boston, I would be deported, and the Russian government would know why. People like us, me and Shane, are imprisoned or disappeared for this.

Shane: And enforcement of that law has only picked up the longer the current regime has been in power in Russia.

Cassie: And stuff like that is also really, really worth talking about when the NHL recruits from overseas markets. If the league cannot be a place where people are safe, where people have to worry about being fired and then literally fucking deported, then it's not engaging in ethical recruiting practices.

Shane: Exactly. In a lot of ways, Ilya had much more to lose than I did if we were to... name the thing between us.

Luna: So if I could pull together a couple of different threads here, it sounds like for both of you, politically you weren't safe, and personally you weren't ready.

Shane: That feels fair to say, yeah.

Cassie: Wow.

Luna: Did anybody know? In all that time?

Ilya: Not exactly. I have a very good friend, a childhood friend from Russia, who knew there was somebody. But she didn't know who, or how serious it was. Mostly because I told her it wasn't serious. Oh, and of course, Rose Landry.

Cassie: Okay so we weren't going to bring up Rose Landry, but you opened the door, so —

Luna: Please, *please* tell us about Rose Landry.

Ilya: Yes, Shane, tell them about Rose Landry.

Shane: Fuck off, Rozanov, you're the one who set it up for us to get dinner with her last night. Dating Rose was... my very last-ditch attempt at being straight.

[*Cassie bursts out laughing*]

Luna: Shut up, oh my God.

Shane: We dated for a little over a month, if you could call it that. I mean, we went on dates. But Rose was the first person who really looked me in the eye and had me admit to myself that I'm gay, that I'm *only* attracted to men, and that I would be happier if I was honest about that. She's one of my best friends.

Cassie: Okay, I am going to admit something about myself here. I know the internet thinks you two just got together in 2017 at the ASG, but ever since you came out, I thought it was earlier than that, and the reason is that the Boston-Montreal game in December 2016, the only game the teams played against each other while Shane was dating Rose Landry —

Shane: *[covers his face with his free hand again]* Oh no.

Cassie: — is, by all metrics, the single worst game of both of your careers. *[flips to a new notecard with a flourish]* Montreal took it, but barely, one-nothing, and that one goal was scored by Hayden Pike. Ilya had two shots on goal, no assists, and Shane had one shot on goal also with no assists, and for both of you, that's still your career lows.

Ilya: How long did you spend thinking about this?

Cassie: Oh, no. *You're* being interviewed. *We're* asking the questions.

Ilya: Fair, but if your earliest guess was December 2016, you were still very far off.

Cassie: You got me there.

Shane: This is so embarrassing. But yeah, I owe a lot to Rose. She was kind to me in a moment when I really needed it.

Luna: Yeah, because you were in situationship hell.

Shane: Yep.

[laughter]

Cassie: Speaking of situationship hell, just based on the information that's already publicly available, it seems like a lot happened in the first half of 2017.

Luna: Yeah, starting with the All Star Game in January.

Cassie: First time the two of you played on the same team — on the same line, even. What was that like? Because honestly it was incredible to watch, even if we don't count the helmet kiss heard round the internet.

[Image of Shane and Ilya in All Stars Eastern Conference Team uniforms appears on screen. Ilya has his arms around Shane, and is pressing a kiss into the side of Shane's helmet while Shane beams]

Shane: Oh my God.

Cassie: Well, maybe just some corners of the internet. The straights just thought it was a normal European celly, but we knew better.

Ilya: *[laughs]* It was the best I had ever felt playing hockey in my fucking life, until the start of this current season. Yes, All Stars is silly, it is pointless, is there for players to lose momentum going into the playoffs and advertisers to make all their money back, but I had never felt anything like playing on the same line as Shane. It was like he could read my mind. If I needed to pass, I did not have to look. I just knew he would be there. And if he had the puck and I had an opening, he got it to me before anyone knew he was even planning to. No one had ever been able to keep up with me like that. It was like we were flying.

Luna: Well goddamn.

[Shane stares at Ilya]

Cassie: Shane? Anything to add?

Shane: No, that about covers it. *[clears throat, turns back to Cassie and Luna]* But aside from the game itself, it was... the first really honest conversation we'd maybe ever had with each other. About us. Without going into a ton of detail, we finally told the truth about some stuff we'd been avoiding for a while, and that was... really great, but it also felt like not a lot had changed. The NHL was still the NHL. Russia was still Russia. I didn't know what to do.

Luna: I can't decide if that's worse. Like, knowing you have feelings that the other person shares, but not being able to do anything with that information.

Ilya: Yes, I could not decide either.

Shane: Oh, I don't think it was *worse*. I was sure about Ilya in a way I'd never felt before. I may not have known what to do, but I was ready to try to figure it out.

[*pause*]

Ilya: Fuck, Hollander.

Shane: *Ty eto uzhe znal.*

Ilya: *Da, no ya ne osoznaval.... blyat'.*

[*another pause*]

Cassie: Seriously, Shane, do you speak Russian?

Shane: I'm learning.

Ilya: He speaks Russian.

Cassie: Wow.

Luna: I can't even get a text back. Girl fuck you.

Ilya: Do you have a podcast you are competing against? Is there another sports journalist who is as good a sports journalist as you? Try that. The competition makes it very hot.

Luna: Am I allowed to tell guests I hate them?

Cassie: No. So to bring us back on track, two weeks after the ASG, Ilya, your father passed away.

Ilya: *[clears throat]* Yes. I know I mentioned this earlier, but my relationship with my surviving family was not the best after my mother died. My father had been sick for a long time, so it was not a surprise that he died, but these things still impact you.

Luna: Is that the last time you went back to Russia?

Ilya: Yes, and I will not be able to go back again for the foreseeable future. But it is okay, I think. There is nothing really left for me, there.

Luna: Please correct me if I'm wrong, but... even if you decided you were done going back to Russia, it didn't address the problem with your Russian passport, if you were to be outed in a hostile environment.

Ilya: No, that is correct. Everything really just... felt impossible in those months. So when Shane got hit...

Cassie: Yeah. Boston at Montreal, March 30th, 2017. First time Shane Hollander had to be taken off the ice by the medics because he couldn't move under his own power.

Ilya: And it scared the shit out of me. The night it happened...

[pause. Ilya looks away.]

Shane: He had to play the rest of the game. There was no way for him to go with me in transport, or get updates on my condition, or do anything that you would need to do if your partner got hurt like that. Nobody knew what we were to each other. I honestly don't think I could have handled it, if it had been reversed. I would have just had a panic attack on center ice.

Luna: It's so unfair. If any other player is hurt at a home game, the wag is the first phone call, even if they're not married. And of course there's a history, in both the US and Canada, of queer people not being allowed near their partners in medical settings, without formal and legal recognition of their relationships. We know this is why gay marriage as a political issue emerged out of the AIDS crisis. And I'm not saying that a bad hit on the ice is the same thing, but it had to have been so lonely and so scary, Ilya.

Ilya: It was. I almost... ended it, then.

Cassie: Really?

Ilya: Yes. It was one thing when it was casual, and fun, and not serious. But if it *was* serious, and there was no good ending that I could see, it was going to hurt when that ending came. And I thought I had to get out before it got any worse.

[Shane lifts his hand from Ilya's knee and pulls Ilya's hand to rest between both of his own]

Cassie: What changed?

Ilya: Scott Hunter.

Luna: Oh, of course. The Stanley Cup Kiss.

[A still image of Scott Hunter kissing Kip Grady on the ice at the 2017 Stanley Cup final appears on the screen]

Cassie: Where were you both when that happened? Montreal had gotten knocked out in the first round, and Boston in the second.

Shane: Yeah, I was still in recovery from the concussion and the broken collar bone, so I was at my parents' house in Ottawa. Ilya was in Boston.

Ilya: I was actually packing to go back to Moscow during that game. I did not want to, but I had always done it during the summer. I hoped that putting physical distance between me and Shane would help me get over him.

Shane: Then you shouldn't have been texting me.

Ilya: You were texting me back. Very unhelpful. And then the game was called for the Admirals, and Scott Hunter took the Cup, and we know what happened next. Seeing him call down his boyfriend, his partner, and kiss him in front of the cameras, and his teammates, and the crowd, and the NHL Commissioner... it felt like I was being struck by lightning. If Scott Hunter, the oldest man in the league, the dinosaur of the NHL —

Shane: Oh my *God*, Ilya —

Ilya: — the captain who had just led his team to their first Stanley Cup in almost thirty years, could have that *and* have Kip, maybe I could have something too.

Luna: Hang on real quick. *[reaches behind herself to a small box of tissues resting on a side table, and dabs at her eyes]* Okay, I'm good. But damn, that representation do be mattering, huh?

Cassie: Can I ask what Hunter's reaction was when you told him all of this?

Ilya: I did not.

Cassie: Excuse me? *[laughs]*

Ilya: He will find out if he listens to this, I think. If the volume settings on his phone go up high enough for him to catch it with his hearing aids.

Luna: Ilya Rozanov, you're kind of a menace to society, aren't you?

Ilya: Yes.

Shane: Jesus. Anyway. So we spent that summer together. It was the first time we were able to be together for longer than six hours at a time. So we figured out a plan for how we were going to make it work. Ilya met my parents, who now love him more than they love me, by the way, which is hurtful, and we started really thinking about the future.

Ilya: Is true. I am Yuna's favorite son. Not only am I better at hockey, but I also gave her her first beautiful grandchild, Anya.

[an image of Anya Hollander-Rozanova appears on screen. Her tail is clearly mid-wag, and she has a bright pink bow tied around her neck]

Luna: This is not the point, by the way, but when are you going to get that dog her own Instagram account? Because I would follow it in a minute.

Ilya: I take my daughter's internet safety very seriously, so not any time soon.

Shane: Please, Luna, he's already dangerous on social media on his own accounts. He doesn't need more of a platform.

Ilya: I cannot believe you are ashamed of our perfect daughter.

Cassie: Okay I love Anya as much as the next person, but can we please get back on track? [laughs] What did it mean, to plan for the future?

Shane: [sighs] There was a lot to balance. We wanted to be together, but we didn't want to give up our careers, we shouldn't have had to, and there was still the issue of Ilya's citizenship. So what with the 2016 election in the US, the first priority was getting Ilya to Canada as soon as his contract with Boston ended. Ottawa was the best choice.

Luna: Wait, Shane, was it your idea for Ilya to go to Ottawa?

Ilya: It was his idea, yes. I would have gone anywhere for Shane, but he thought of Ottawa because of cap space, and proximity to Montreal. It made the most sense.

Luna: Were you bothered by going to a team that had one of the... least great records in the NHL?

Ilya: Not really. At the time the coaching staff was a mess, yes, but Zane Boodram and Evan Dykstra and Nick Chouinard have always been great players. Of course we did not know this at the time, but Brandon Wiebe is the best thing to have ever happened to this franchise, and we only had to wait a few more years to get him. Anyway, is not like Boston had been doing that well when I was drafted, but three years later we had a Stanley Cup.

Cassie: And the plan was for you to stay in Montreal, Shane? Were the two of you ever going to come out?

[pause]

Shane: That was the plan, yeah. I thought if we did it slowly, we could get the world ready for us to come out and be together when we retired. We started the Irina Foundation, both to really do some good, and also to get people used to the idea of us spending time together.

Cassie: It's such a cool organization.

Shane: Thank you.

Ilya: It was also Shane's idea, to name it after my mother and to partner with suicide prevention organizations.

Shane: Ilya is really the heart of the organization. He's so good with the kids. He's a great coach, and he's always been better at getting other players to come in and work with us.

Luna: Okay, seriously, you guys gotta stop. This is too much.

Cassie: But of course the retirement plan isn't what happened.

[pause. Shane stares at the floor for a moment. Ilya rubs the back of his neck]

Shane: I don't know if it was ever going to, honestly. We were both only 26, and even then I thought we both could play for another ten years without slowing down. The last year that Ilya was in Boston was a nightmare, but we kept telling ourselves that it would be better once he was in Ottawa, and we were only two hours apart and didn't have to go through fucking passport control to see each other. But even after he moved to Ottawa, it really, really wore on us, on our mental health. Ilya's depression and my orthorexia both got pretty bad, even before this past spring.

Luna: We don't talk enough about orthorexia, especially in male athletes. Do you feel okay getting into that? And again, we can always cut stuff.

Shane: No, you're right, we need to talk about it more. [*Shane takes a deep breath and leans back into Ilya's hand on his neck.*] Orthorexia is a form of disordered eating where you engage in restrictive eating patterns dressed up as an obsession with 'healthy' or 'clean' eating. And I feel like it's really normalized in men's professional sports, because like, yes, the body is the job, and you do have to take care of yourself if you're going to perform, but it was getting to the point where it was consuming me. Every time I got invited to do something social, my first thought wasn't, 'I'm so happy to spend time with my friends,' it was 'will there be anything there I am allowed to eat?'

Cassie: Disordered eating is such a massive problem in professional sports, because like you're saying, the body is the job, so it's easy to become obsessed. But we're more willing to identify it in women than in men, because we live in a world where we expect and encourage women to obsess over the size and shape of their bodies. And orthorexia in particular is complicated because there's still not an official DSM definition or diagnostic protocol for it. But like... I'm an athlete, I grew up in these spaces, I have my own history with disordered eating —

Luna: Me too.

Cassie: It very much becomes a control thing. Like oh, I can control my gameplay if I never eat any refined sugar. Oh, I can get a handle on this passing sequence if I just cut carbs, because my body will perform better. And my life was pretty normal when I was playing competitively! You had a lot more going on that probably felt out of your control.

Shane: [*clears throat*] Yeah. I came out to the Voyageurs locker room after the 2020 Stanley Cup win, and it... didn't go well as I told myself it did at the time. I'm not here to air out any personal grievances with other players, but it did... concern me enough to validate the part of the plan that would have kept me and Ilya from coming out until retirement.

Luna: Oh that sounds... really bad. We didn't comment on this on the podcast at the time, but people who are really locked in to hockey knew that there were rumors going around starting that summer that you were gay and the team wasn't taking it well.

Ilya: Unlike my husband, I *am* here to air out personal grievances with other players —

Shane: Ilya —

Ilya: No, let me say this. Montreal had not even made the playoffs for two years before they drafted Shane, and they had not won a Stanley Cup in over ten years before that. Then, they get Shane, they appear in the playoffs every single year that he is on their roster. His second year as captain, he wins them a Cup. His third year as captain, he wins them a cup. His fourth year as captain, he gets injured, they get knocked out of the playoffs in the first round. His fifth and sixth years as captain, they make it to the second round of the playoffs. His seventh year, another Cup. He built that franchise. He formed that dynasty. He led that locker room, he created a culture where nothing less than excellence would be tolerated. He was always polite and professional and humble and generous to the team when he spoke to the press. He treated them far better than they deserved, and for them to freeze him out over something that has nothing to do with his game play, after he trusted them with a part of his identity, is not something I will ever forget.

Shane: [*releases one of his hands from where it is wrapped around Ilya's to grip Ilya's knee again*] I think we get it.

Luna: Let him cook!

Ilya: Thank you, Luna. You are my favorite. *Do* we get it, Shane? Because you were the center of their coaching strategy. Theriault never had any plan beyond 'get the puck to Hollander and let him go.' That is not how a team should operate. Every team has star players, yes, but star players do not bear sole responsibility for the success of the franchise. You do not get to set up a player like that, and then fail him when it is convenient.

Shane: Aren't you the guy who said he'd score fifty goals in his rookie season?

Ilya: And then I did score fifty goals in my rookie season. What does that have to do with anything?

[*Cassie snorts.*]

Luna: Ilya makes a great point, and commentators have been saying this for years. It's been clear for a while that Theriault's only priority was for other forwards to pass to Shane. That was actually one of the biggest tells after the whole FanMail thing that something was really, really wrong in the locker room. Nobody on offense except Pike was passing to Hollander anymore, but they didn't know how to operate without prioritizing Hollander, which is why the gameplay fell apart. It didn't help that the defensive line wasn't covering him.

Ilya: Exactly this. The team did not support Shane. Shane carried the team. Shane carried them to the playoffs in 2021 even though he may as well have been alone out there. And it will be... *interesting* to see if Montreal can make it to the playoffs this year without him.

Cassie: Shane, you are *bright* red.

Shane: [*leans towards Ilya. Quietly, almost off mic*] Spasibo. [*Facing Luna and Cassie again*] I think Rozanov has said enough about that for both of us.

Luna: You're no fun.

Ilya: Yes, very boring. But fine. I can be done now.

Cassie: As someone who obviously doesn't know you personally, you both seem much, much happier this season than last. What's changing with your mental health?

Shane: We're both in therapy. Together and separately.

Ilya: I started therapy first, because I always beat Hollander —

Shane: For fuck's sake —

Luna: Anybody who ever said this rivalry was fake is full of shit, oh my *God*.

Ilya: To be serious, therapy probably saved my life. That, and starting an antidepressant. I know there's a lot of... Shane, what is the word for when the culture does not like it —

Shane: Stigma.

Ilya: Yes, thank you, stigma around mental health care for men, especially in spaces like the NHL. Russia is the same way. So it was difficult for me to admit to myself that I need it. But I do, and everything is so much easier now. Like I can breathe.

Luna: Congratulations, Ilya, really. That's huge. Shane, what about you?

Shane: I'm newer to therapy. I only started when I moved to Ottawa. But Ilya's right, it's like

I can breathe. My therapist also recommended that we do couple's counseling, not because anything is wrong, but to help us with our communication.

Luna: I feel like I know more and more couples who are doing that. Like maintenance counseling.

Shane: Yeah, it's important. We went from a 'normal' in our relationship where it was like, a couple of hours here, a night there, phone calls when we could, and then during the summer we didn't really have to be in public, to bring our relationship around people, if we didn't want to. So we went from that to living together, working together, our relationship being a topic of public interest. It's a different world. And we owe a lot to our care team.

Cassie: That's really awesome, you guys. Thank you for being willing to talk about it.

Ilya: Is important.

Luna: I guess that brings us to the FanMail of it all.

Shane: I guess it does. But even before the FanMail incident, the ten-year plan was kind of fucked.

Cassie: Really?

Ilya: Yes. The plan became to get married and come out this past summer. Summer 2021.

Cassie: What changed this time?

[*pause*]

Shane: Do you remember when the Cens' plane had that emergency landing in Tampa?

Luna: Oh my God, of course. That was so scary. It must have been awful, for both of you.

Shane: It wasn't great, for sure. It was this... I couldn't even get to him, because the Voyageurs were in Seattle at the time. I just had to wait until we were both back in Ottawa. It must have been like what it felt for him to see me get hit on the ice.

Ilya: I wanted him with me too. And to have to leave the building to pick up the phone when he called me... I hated it. More than I had ever hated it.

Shane: Everything that had seemed so important — how the commissioner's office would react, both of our teammates, sponsorship income — mattered a whole lot less. Even Ilya's immigration status... we were working on his eligibility to become a Canadian permanent resident as a skilled worker. And it would have been nice to have that completely resolved before we were outed, but even then, we were just so tired of hiding. Which I guess is where we were when the FanMail thing happened.

Cassie: I can't imagine. Like if Sarah was in a fucking car accident or something, and I couldn't get to her, and nobody knew to call me... I'd just start killing people, I think.

Shane: I considered it. Briefly, but I did consider it.

Luna: So FanMail Day. What was that day like for you?

Ilya: Relief. Some fear, yes, some... shame is not the right word, because I am not ashamed of loving this man, but it was an intimate moment that we had not wanted other people to see. But primarily, relief.

Shane: I would agree with that. It had been weighing on us so heavily, that by that point, even if every single thing I had been afraid of if we were outed were to happen, that would still be better than hiding anymore. I'm not going to pretend I didn't spend most of the morning having panic attacks, because I did, but I had Ilya with me. And now we no longer could be caught in decision paralysis. The decision had been made for us, so our path forward was clear. I love him, he loves me, people know it, so, let's handle that.

Cassie: So no bad blood between you and Hayden Pike?

Ilya: I would not go that far.

Shane: He loves Hayden, he'll just never admit it. And Hayden loves him. Hayden actually figured out that I was in love with Ilya several years ago. He's been a huge support.

Ilya: Eh.

[Shane lifts their joined hands on Ilya's knee and swats Ilya before settling back down.]

Luna: I totally get what you're saying about how even if all these awful things happened it would still be better than hiding anymore, but... it's worth noting that it seems like a lot of

those awful things *did* happen. It's not like your fears were baseless. [*glances down at her cards*] We looked into it, and it seems like some ongoing sponsorships you had are no longer running. We're not going to list them, and honestly this seems like it might be the least important part, but that was a thing that happened.

Shane: It's just money.

Luna: For sure. But I imagine it's going to be harder to get either of you to talk about these other two, so I wanted to start easy. There were, again, some extremely persistent rumors that the Voyageurs locker room got... I believe the technical term is 'really fucking bad' after that video came out. Is there anything you want to tell us about that?

Shane: I guess just that rumors are persistent for a reason.

[*pause*]

Cassie: Ilya, you look like you want to say something.

Ilya: I do, but I have to go home with him later.

Cassie: Fair! But Shane, your contract was up for renegotiation at the end of this past season anyway. You were going into free agency. Montreal announced that they weren't resigning you. You have said, plenty of times over the years, that you loved Montreal, you loved the fans, you loved the team, you wanted to retire with that jersey. Was it really their decision to not resign you, or did they just beat you to releasing a statement?

Shane: I do love the city, and the fans. I love the team I was drafted into. But teams change, over time. You also grow up, and realize that cultures aren't healthy just because you're used to them. I'm not the same person I was at eighteen. If Montreal had offered to resign me, I might have said yes, but I had my agent reach out to Ottawa first.

Luna: Are you saying you only would have resigned with the Voyageurs if the Cens had turned you down?

Shane: Yes. It was the closest team to Ilya.

Luna: Damn.

Cassie: How is it that all roads lead to *Ottawa*, of all places?

Ilya: Ah, is a good city. Gets a bad rap.

Cassie: Can we talk about cap space for a minute? Because I know a lot of people had a lot to say about that when the signing was announced. Rozanov is expensive, Troy Barrett is expensive, Wyatt Hayes and Luca Haas are going to be expensive on their next negotiations if they keep playing like they're playing now. I'm not asking how much, but Shane, did you take a pay cut to go to Ottawa?

Shane: Yeah. And I was happy to do it.

Ilya: He is a trophy husband now. A kept man. I am a sugar daddy.

[Cassie and Luna both scream with laughter]

Shane: Stop.

Ilya: I will not. I am very proud that I get to have the hottest, smartest NHL player on my team and as my husband. Is a big win for me, personally.

Shane: Oh my God.

Luna: I mean if the team keeps performing the way it is so far this season, cap space will probably increase pretty fast as more sponsors get interested.

Shane: Sure, but to be really clear, I'd play for free if it meant I got to be with Ilya. I'd quit hockey if it meant I got to be with Ilya. I would choose him over anything, including this job. He is the rest of my life. I'm going to grow old with him. I have loved hockey for a long time, and I'm getting to rediscover my love of it this season, but at the end of the day, it's not the center of my universe. He is.

Luna: Bro you can't just say shit like that with no warning. What the hell.

Ilya: *Moya lyubov*, you cannot go on a podcast and announce you would play for free. [*turns to face the camera and pulls mic closer to his face*] He will not play for free. He must be paid what he is worth. He is incredibly valuable and will be treated as such.

Shane: I thought I was a trophy husband.

Ilya: I am the only one allowed to make that joke. Certainly not the front office.

Cassie: Speaking of front offices...

Shane: No comment.

Cassie: Come on, let me at least ask the question first. *The Athletic* reported that a few days after the FanMail video was posted, both you and Ilya were seen entering the NHL head offices in Montreal, and then leaving again about half an hour later. Is there literally anything you can tell us about that meeting?

Shane: We don't have any comment to make about that at this time. Right, Ilya?

Ilya: *[sighs]* Yes, yes, no comment, because I never get to do anything fun.

Shane: Exactly.

Luna: So you don't have anything to say about the, again, very persistent rumors going around that Commissioner Crowell threatened both of you with expulsion from the league if you went through with your wedding this past summer?

Shane: Not at this time, no.

Luna: Ilya?

Ilya: You will notice that we are married and still playing. But fine, that is all.

Cassie: Shane said earlier that sometimes rumors are persistent for a reason.

Shane: Hmm.

Cassie: *Ugh.* That Yuna Hollander media training strikes again.

Ilya: I personally would never go against Yuna Hollander, or anyone she cares about, yes.

Luna: *Fine.* Getting back to stuff we can get Shane to talk about, what's it like playing under Ilya's captaincy? You said earlier that you were rediscovering your love of hockey this season, so does playing with Ilya have anything to do with that?

Shane: It has everything to do with that. Ilya is the best team captain I have ever seen or worked with. He works the team hard, constant drills, constant half-speed scrimmages, but also makes absolutely sure that everyone is regularly going to PT even when they think they

don't need it, or meeting with the dieticians, or taking notes during tape review. And he makes all of that fun. He makes it a labor of love. He cares about every single player on this team as a whole person — if anything is bothering anybody, he can almost sniff it out, and he can talk people through anything, and get them back to playing condition if that's what's best for them. He prioritizes the mental and physical wellbeing of players in a way I have never seen before. I have never seen a team *love* following a leader as much as this team loves following him. He understands that in order to be a captain worth following, he first has to be a good friend, and I can say personally he's the best friend I've ever had.

Cassie: Ilya, are you *blushing*?

Ilya: Absolutely not. I do not blush. I am Russian.

Shane: I'm not done. The leadership of Ilya and Wiebe and Bood is the foundation of this team. We know that previous Cens leadership had an idea of what it meant to be a good hockey player, and only pushed players towards that one goal. Wiebe and Ilya work in the exact opposite way — seeing what players prioritize about themselves, and understanding how to fit all those pieces together into a sum greater than its parts. It's amazing. It's almost like alchemy.

Luna: I'm gonna fucking cry again. Holy shit.

Cassie: I guess that answers the question about if Shane is gonna try for the C in a couple of years.

Shane: Never. You don't mess with perfection.

Ilya: [*clears throat*]. Even so. League rules say we can have up to two alternates, and right now Bood is only one. Something to think about for next year.

Shane: We'll get there when we get there.

Luna: I also definitely hear what you're saying about Wiebe working towards player strengths, and it brings up something else I really wanted to talk about. Hockey teams in general tend to think of offensive lines as being formed in, like, descending levels of talent. So your stars are on the first line, your good but not great players are on the second, and so on and so forth. But that's not what's going on in Ottawa this year. That first line is usually Rozanov at center, with Bood and Barrett in the wings, and the second line is usually Hollander at center, with Haas and LaPointe. Then we have Boyle, Holmberg, and Dillon.

Ilya: Right.

Luna: But I say usually, because you guys mix that up constantly. Wiebe seems more likely than most coaches to be willing to change a lineup just to fuck with the opposition, or based on what's going on with the score. I've also never seen a coach more willing to move players around. Ilya, the few times this season that we've seen you on Shane's wing have been the most gorgeous hockey I've ever seen played.

Ilya: Is not a... a hierarchy. This is the first team where I have ever played like this, and is great. Is not a ranking or anything like that. Is genuinely us asking the question, 'what is best for this team in this play in this moment?' And we have enough depth of talent and variety in play styles that we are able to do this. It keeps the pressure up, so is not like we put up our third line and the other team has an easy shot on goal. It confuses the other team, it makes the game more fun for us, it makes a better locker room. Everybody wins. Except the other team.

Luna: You love to see it.

Cassie: Is there a future where we see Shane Hollander play wing?

Shane: I'm working on it. I'm not good at it yet, so I don't know if it's going to happen this season.

Ilya: I would like to clarify. He is very good at it. But Shane Hollander's standards for 'good at it' are higher than a normal person's.

Cassie: I have no trouble whatsoever believing that.

Luna: So... who's the better hockey player?

Cassie: We said we weren't going to ask them that.

Luna: I felt the spirit move me. So?

Ilya: Me.

Shane: It depends on what criteria you're paying attention to.

Ilya: What?

Shane: Look, Ilya has the most career goals, and he's currently first in the scoring race for this season. But I have the most career points, and I'm up this season on assists. We're both second on the respective lists. His play style is more aggressive, more creative, more unpredictable, and that really throws people off. Mine is just faster and more intentional, and I know that overwhelms other players. I'm really good at playing center, but I'm *only* good at playing center. He can play either left or right wing. He won the Cup first, but we're still waiting on his Conn Smythe. Maybe this will be his year for it. He'd definitely deserve it.

Ilya: Fuck, Hollander, now I look like asshole.

Shane: To be fair, you *are* an asshole.

Ilya: True. And if I am not being asshole for just a minute, Shane is the better player. And that makes me want to be a better player too.

Cassie: That is better than any answer we could possibly have hoped for. You guys are so adorable. My God.

Luna: I can't believe we're at time. Okay. Wow.

Cassie: This has been so incredible.

Luna: I can't get over the 2010 of it all, still.

Ilya: Me neither, sometimes. Shane has been with me, in my heart, for my full adult life.

Luna: Aww.

Cassie: I guess to close out... what's next? For you two, and for the Ottawa Centaurs?

Shane: I think for both, it's to play some damn good hockey. If this is coming out on Monday, then you can catch us hosting a string of home games this week, starting with San Jose tonight.

Ilya: Yes, and then next week, the first Ottawa - Montreal game of the season is coming. Should be fun.

Luna: Okay can I call that an evil smile?

Cassie: Yeah I think so. I love it.

Ilya: And then we will bring the Stanley Cup to Ottawa.

Shane: *Ilya.*

Ilya: You worry too much, Hollander. I keep telling you is not a jinx if it is true. Is it a jinx to say we will purchase iced coffee at airport? Is it a jinx to say the sun will rise in the east in the morning? No? Then is also not a jinx for me to say that we will bring the Stanley Cup to Ottawa.

Shane: If we don't, I'm blaming you.

Ilya: I am happy to take that, because it will not matter, because we will bring the Stanley Cup to Ottawa.

[all laugh]

Luna: Last question. Any regrets?

Shane: I go back and forth on this one. Some days, it feels like we wasted a lot of time, and we hurt each other when we didn't know any better, and I wish we hadn't. But most days... I'm *here*. I have this beautiful man as my husband, we have our dog, we have our home, we get to play my favorite sport with the best group of guys I've ever met. It's hard to have regrets when I'm here.

Ilya: None. I would do it all again to get to where we are, today, right now, in this podcast studio in LA, telling the world how much I love my husband and his freckles, with Shane's parents at home taking care of our perfect daughter.

Luna: I swear to god this is the most I've ever cried in an interview.

Cassie: Ilya, Shane, thank you so, so much for reaching out and asking us to do this interview with you. This is also the most I've ever cried at work, but I also think it's the most fun I've ever had doing this job. You both make it really, really easy to root for you.

Ilya: Ah, you are Cens fans now?

Cassie: For professional purposes, that's not what I said.

Luna: But for real, thank you so much for trusting us with your story. I know there's usually not just one moment where you 'come out,' unless you're a public figure. Like most people do it over and over again, in different ways, whenever they enter a new context. So having it be one big moment, where now the whole world knows this about you whether you like it or not, can feel really violating.

Shane: It can. It did. But... we're free now.

Ilya: There was something very powerful about it just becoming something true about each of us, and both of us together. I love him. That is the most important part of me. Everyone who knows me should know that.

Shane: Exactly that.

Cassie: I'm a genuine believer in the idea that every time you enter a room and don't see yourself, it still matters because somebody sees you, and knows that they can live honestly. And you're both doing that. Not just in being outed, which, it's terrible to have that choice taken away from you, but in every move you've made since then. Continuing to show up and be authentic and open and kind.

Shane: That means a lot. Thank you so much for having us.

Ilya: Yes. Thank you. And thank you for doing what you do on this show.

[End transcript]

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

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

“And... we’re out,” called Jack, the producer for “Gay Girls and Goals,” as the red lights on all the cameras and microphones winked off. Ilya felt Shane exhale beside him, and he pressed his fingers into a massage on the nape of Shane’s neck.

“Wow,” breathed Luna, fingertips dabbing at her lower lash line again. “That was beautiful, you guys. Thank you so much for trusting us with... everything.”

Shane smiled. “You made it easy.” Ilya always loved these moments with Shane right after a press commitment ended — the tension slowly ebbed out of Shane’s shoulders, and he let himself lean against Ilya for support. Even if this was easily the best press interaction they’d ever had, old habits died hard for Shane, Ilya knew.

Cassie stood up, even as she wiped her own eyes. “Okay, so we know you have to run to LAX, which is not a thing anyone is ever able to do easily, so we won’t keep you. But we’re going to go into the edit right away, and should have the final cut for you to your approval by tonight —” she glanced at Jack, who nodded, “—and then if you say we’re good to go, we can post it as scheduled by tomorrow.”

“And please don’t worry about telling us that you need stuff cut,” Luna added, sliding her note cards onto a side table beside the couch. “You both shared a lot, and if you think about it, or talk to Yuna, and decide you want something cut, that is absolutely no problem.”

“Thank you,” Ilya murmured as Shane got up, clearing room for Ilya to get to his feet. “I don’t expect that will happen. We knew...” his fingertips brushed the palm of Shane’s hand, “we knew what we wanted to say.” He could feel a headache coming on. Being this careful with his English for so long, even after all these years, could wear on him.

“Yeah, it was time,” Shane said, rolling back his shoulders in a stretch. “Thank you again. We really, really appreciate it. And sorry for cutting into your weekend—”

Cassie was already shaking her head, ginger curls bouncing. “You absolutely do not need to apologize for that. This is easily the biggest interview we’ve ever gotten, and even if it wasn’t, you two were genuinely the best, kindest guests we’ve ever had.”

“Eh, Hollander was kind. I was asshole.”

Luna snorted and clapped a hand over her mouth. “I think that’s the brand, though.”

Ilya laughed once, the sight of Shane’s soft smile glowing like an ember in Ilya’s chest. “I have a reputation to keep.” He held out his right hand to Luna, who was closest. “Thank you again. We’re very lucky that it was you.”

Luna ignored his hand and slowly spread her arms wide, giving Ilya the chance to turn her down, but he grinned and pulled her in for the hug. Over her shoulder, he saw Cassie gently wrapping her arms around Shane.

They traded, laughing a little, before Shane took Ilya’s hand again. “We can’t say enough how much we appreciate you. You clearly put a lot of work into prepping for us, and it means a lot.”

“Oh, please.” Cassie waved him off, nose wrinkling. “It was genuinely so much fun to do. And it says a lot about the two of you that you came to us, to this kind of show, for this conversation. So thank you.”

“Of course.” Ilya grinned. “You will watch the Voyageurs game next week, yes?”

Luna cackled as Cassie grinned. “Wouldn’t miss it.”

Outside, the LA sun doused them in warmth, and Ilya found himself looking forward to the overcast skies and brisk leaves in Ottawa. Shane checked the time on his phone as they made

their way through the parking lot to the black car that Lola in the Centaurs front office had set up for them for the afternoon. The rest of the team had flown out that morning, and Shane and Ilya were due to arrive in Ottawa about four hours after them. As Hank, the driver, moved to get out of the front seat to open the back passenger doors for them, Shane muttered, “Might have time to go to In n Out before the airport?”

Ilya smiled, even as he waved at Hank to keep his seat. He loved Shane for the progress he was making with his diet, turning his relationship with food into something less restrictive and more intentional, something that allowed Shane to enjoy himself more. Even so... “I don’t want to risk it. Let’s just go and eat overpriced burgers at the airport, yes?”

Shane pocketed his phone again. “And purchase iced coffee?”

Ilya nodded, serious. “And purchase iced coffee.” Before Shane could reach for the car’s door, Ilya dropped Shane’s hand to touch his wrist, holding him still. “*Spasibo*,” he whispered.

Shane lifted his free hand to brush the backs of his fingers across Ilya’s face. “*Vsegda*,” he murmured, sunlight dancing in his dark eyes. “*Vse*.”

Twitter

Gay Girls and Goals podcast  @GayGirlsGoalspodcast

Interview Announcement: This week on Gay Girls and Goals, the girls welcome @shanehollanderhockey and @ilyarozanov81 to the studio!

Allie!!! @eversince2017

Omg omg @ilyasmole girl look!!

i said  @ilyasmole

First joint married interview first joint married interview first joint married interview!!!
Lock in!!!

WE'RE SO BACK  @censbeliever

Love this concept!!! Everybody say thank you Yuna!!!

shane's freckles ✨ ✨ ✨ @shanesfreckles

do you guys think we're finally gonna get confirmation that they got together at the 2017 ASG

hollanov forever 💙💜 @hollanovvvv

Omg I hope so! I think about the helmet kiss approx 3x a week

Pike Kid #5 @hayyyydennnn34

You guys gotta get over it that's just how europeans are

hollanov forever 💙💜 @hollanovvvv

...they're literally married

Gay Girls and Goals podcast @GayGirlsGoalspodcast

Today we're honored to put up a really special Interview Monday episode of Gay Girls and Goals. @ilyarozanov81 & @shanehollanderhockey stopped by to talk about their love story, their careers, and who is really Yuna Hollander's favorite child

Cassie Archer! 🏹✅ @cassiearcher96

All jokes aside, Luna and I feel lucky beyond words that we got to be the space where these guys told their story.

Luna Preston 🌕💜✅ @lunapreston

I have never cried this much on our set. What a joy it was to have this conversation. Now I gotta redownload Hinge.

Shane Hollander ✅ @shanehollanderhockey

thank you so much, Luna and Cassie. This was very difficult for us, and we could not have done it without you taking such good care of us.

Ilya. ✅ @ilyarozanov81

Luna and Cassie, we are very grateful. And Luna, I am serious: Find a podcaster as good as you and spend the next ten years pursuing her. It will work.

Luna Preston 🌕💜✅ @lunapreston

Yeah okay it makes sense to me why you get checked so often

Daisyyy 🌻 @babydaisy

Wait, ten years?

Cassie Archer! 🏹✅ @cassiearcher96

... we think you're going to enjoy this one

shane's BEAUTIFUL freckles ✨ ✨ ✨ @shanesfreckles

HOLLANOV NATION HOW WE FEELING????

THE WHOLE TIME 💙💜 @hollanovvvv

fucking insane thank u for asking bestie 🤪

Anya Hollander-Rozanova 💖🐶💖 @puppyanyahr

two..... thousand..... and ten..... 🤪🤪🤪

Nina 🐦 @chirpyrozy

WATCHING ILYA PLAY HOCKEY IS A THING OF BEAUTY IT IS INFURIATING
HOW GOOD SHANE IS AT THIS GAME WHAT THE HELL CALL ME AN
AMBULANCE

Carter Vaughn ✅ @cvaughnNY

@shanehollanderhockey proud of you, brother. We'll keep pushing forward together.

Shane Hollander ✅ @shanehollanderhockey Thanks, Vaughnny. Love you.

Allie!! @eversince2017

Hey does anybody know how to change a twitter handle because hOLY SHIT 🤪🤪

Daisyyy 🌻 @babydaisy

Oh i'm ilya rozanov. I'm captaining my scrappy underdog team to an unprecedented start of season. I lead the whole NHL in goals. I'm married to the most beautiful man in the world. I have a perfect dog. My in laws love me. Girl fuck you.

[@ilyarozanov81 retweeted this tweet]

Daisyyy 🌻 @babydaisy

FUCK OFFFFFFFFF

Troy Barrett ✅ @troybarrettottawa

It would be funnier if this wasn't also exactly how he sounded in real life

Josh Boyle ✅ @boyleinottawa

Fr like i just read it in the accent

Ilya. ✅ @ilyarozanov81

Big words for men who I assume don't want to do bag skates tomorrow.

Troy Barrett ✅ @troybarrettottawa

Roz you have never once made us do bag skates during the regular season. you're too nice. Marriage made you soft. the threat has lost all power.

Ilya. ✅ @ilyarozanov81

This is homophobia

Troy Barrett ✅ @troybarrettottawa

Boy do I have news for you about me.

Daisyyy 🌻 @babydaisy

The entire Cens offense is in my mentions chirping each other put this on my fucking tombstone

🌸🌸 **priti in pink** 🌸🌸 @priti_ramamurthy

Hey uhhhh did anyone else get to the part where ilya said shane waved like a penguin and then mcfreakin lose it

celeste 🌸 @shanemybeloved

the penguin wave... the freckles... of course i had a crush...

  **pritti in pink**   @priti_ramamurthy

Like literally they were just seventeen and they were in love and they kept finding their way back to each other....

center of his universe    @shaneholeander

like am i supposed to just move on with my life after this interview

Hockey Forever @freedallasss

Going on some stupid podcast nobody cares about instead of taking questions from actual journalists is a bitch move, but what else do you expect

Sweetiepie Luca  @babygirlhaas

They are journalists. We let women be journalists now.

center of his universe    @shaneholeander

A dallas kent stan with a bad take? Fork found in kitchen

Sweetiepie Luca  @babygirlhaas

MONTREAL VOYAGEURS COME OUTSIDE I JUST WANNA TALK

Nina  @chirpyrozy

Nobody's gonna jump you Montreal!!! We just have some questions!!!

shane's BEAUTIFUL freckles    @shanesfreckles

Ok but for real....shane what were you not saying....we ride at dawn....

Jennie    @voyajennie

Yeah like Hollander has been talking about wanting to retire with Montreal since the 2015 Stanley Cup. it sounds like stuff got super bad super fast?

  **pritti in pink**   @priti_ramamurthy

Fr and also he was the only Asian Canadian player in that locker room for like. His entire run with the team?

july 25  @hollanovwedding

No bc look at this look how much happier he is during a regular szn ottawa game than he was when he literally won the Stanley Cup in m*ntr**l [PHOTO ATTACHMENT: one image of Shane Hollander on the ice in full Centaurs away uniform, stick in hand, laughing at something out of frame. One image of Shane Hollander, in Montreal home uniform sans helmet and gloves, hosting the Stanley Cup overhead, expression focused with a faint smile]

Jennie 🦋💙🐦 @voyajennie

Yeah i'm a lifelong voyageurs fan and i've never seen shane look like this...

shane's BEAUTIFUL freckles ✨ ✨ ✨ @shanesfreckles

I mean you don't have to be a lifelong voyageurs fan [LINK: Ottawa Centaurs Team Store: Purchase Hollander 24 Home Jersey]

celeste 🌸 @shanemybeloved

Guys look i just rewatched them presenting the Lady Byng at the 2014 NHL awards this is insane like shane said he already knew he was quote in trouble unquote for ilya by then??? When they took that stupid selfie??? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VbHgPZaQI>

Nina 🐦 @chirpyrozy

Also look at the 2011 ASG interview they were talking about. You can see ilya get overwhelmed and shane cover for him but you can only see that if you're looking bc my boy did it so subtly!!! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XX9kT_oNk

Allie!! @eversince2010

If we're hurting our own and each other's feelings here's the ESPN coverage of shane getting hit in that 2017 game. You can see ilya's faaaaaace <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-nzBeuzz0>

celeste 🌸 @shanemybeloved

1. Extremely uncalled for of you and 2. Literally how did we all see ilya's face here and not like. Get it immediately.

Scott Hunter Admirals ✅ @HunterAdmirals21

You guys could have just texted me. At any time in the last four years.

Scott Hunter Admirals ✅ @HunterAdmirals21

But in all seriousness, thank you @shanehollanderhockey and @ilyarozanov81 for sharing this. I know what it is to hide, and I know the pressure it puts on relationships.

Scott Hunter Admirals ✅ @HunterAdmirals21

I'm really happy that I was able to help you. I know that telling your story will help others. Love you guys.

Ilya. ✅ @ilyarozanov81

Love you too, Hunter. Happy retirement ❤️🦎💀

Scott Hunter Admirals ✅ @HunterAdmirals21

Do you ever take a day off?

Daisyyy 🌻 @babydaisy

tired: ilya rozanov hates shane hollander

wired: ilya rozanov loves shane hollander

inspired: ilya rozanov loves shane hollander and fucking hates scott hunter

Katie C. 🍷 @kitkatkatie

“strangest prettiest boy i had ever seen” “very rude” “it’s so fucking irritating” “the competition makes it hot” “boring” GUYS IF I SPEAK —

Brienne 🦄💎💜💖💙 @hollanovunicorn

Honestly Roz flirting via chirp is probably the least surprising part of all of this

Yuna's Google Calendar @momageryunaa

“I am very proud that I get to have the hottest, smartest NHL player on my team and as my husband. It’s a big win for me, personally.” Sir I diagnose you with “down catastrophic bad” disease

Ilya. ✅ @ilyarozanov81

Oh no somebody call a doctor for me this is so bad how will i survive

Yuna's Google Calendar @momageryunaa

Shane willingly putting up with all of this 24/7? He’s god’s strongest soldier

Anya Hollander-Rozanova 💖🐶💖 @puppyanyahr

Ilya not liking hockey until he got to Boston... multiple times saying Shane was kind to him... recognizing that Vaughn had more space than Shane to talk about difficult stuff because Vaughn had the support of his organization... in therapy on antidepressants...

Maddie Moo 🐮👨🔒 @boodsleftskate

Gonna go on priv to say this but like. Should we dig up his father and kill him again.

Anya Hollander-Rozanova 💖🐶💖 @puppyanyahr

Babes i'm down

Izzy 🍄 @isabelle_levesque

Luna jumping off the couch and running around screaming crying throwing up as soon as Ilya said 2010 is so valid actually because bro what the hell imagine getting this info while you're literally at work

center of his universe 🥰🐸☀️ @shaneholeander

Right omg i feel like the next few weeks are just gonna be all of stantwt going through old clips and Noticing and Realizing and Discovering

Izzy 🍄 @isabelle_levesque

Like Kylie told us to in 2016... she was trying to tell us...

center of his universe 🥰🐸☀️ @shaneholeander

King Kylie always right

Shane Believer 🐶 @teamhollander2424

"I cannot fix on the hour, or the spot, or the look or the words, which laid the foundation. It is too long ago. I was in the middle before I knew that I had begun." - Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice. ILYA ROZANOV CAN YOU FIGHT

Ilya Rozanov ✅ @ilyarozanov81

да https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rozanov_drop_gloves_compilation

Shane Believer 🐶 @teamhollander2424

....omg ok sorry Mr. Rozanov it was a joke i take it back

Matt C @matty478

We gotta go back and audit Hollander and Rozanov's whole careers. If they've been fucking since they were drafted, every win they've ever had is invalid.

Anya Hollander-Rozanova 💖🐶💖 @puppyanyahr

Explain this to me in small words bc I can't even get mad it's too confusing

Matt C @matty478

You don't think it's a problem that they've been throwing games for each other for years?

Jake from Ottawa !! @gocensgo1990

I mean. The win-loss rate between MTL and BOS when that's where they were is tied. If they've both been throwing the same number of games for each other, then if they hadn't the rate would be the exact same so then they would have... won the same number of games?

Go Sharks Go 🐋 @letsgoshorka

Ok i don't even go here but that's funny as fuck

Mia 🍷 @uuuh-melia

Shane saying Rozy is a great player because Rozy thinks so fast and is unpredictable and Rozy saying Shane is a great player because Shane studies you and can predict everything you do oh they're really twin flames i'm sick i hate them

Jake from Ottawa !! @gocensgo1990

And they both play for Ottawa now baby!!

I'll Find My Way Back to You 🌈☀️ @shaydentruther

Today must be so hard for Hayden... I hope he's taking care of himself. This has to hurt.

Brienne 🦄💎💜💖💙 @hollanovunicorn

Girl it's over it's been over since December 2008 give it up

Eating Disorders Foundation of Canada ✓ @edfca

We here at EDFCA want to thank @shanehollanderhockeyplayer for his bravery and vulnerability in discussing orthorexia in professional hockey spaces. Like Shane says, when your body is your job, it can be easy to slip into unhealthy patterns. The more we know, the more we can support each other.

Shane Hollander ✓ @shanehollanderhockey

Thank you for your work.

Blackhawks 2021 🗡️ @goblackhawks298

man i don't even fw the gay shit like that but montreal losing the plot so fuckin bad that we all now have to deal with hollander and rozanov on the same fucking team is so embarrassing

that's MY dinosaur 🦖 @scottshunters

[PHOTO ATTACHMENT: Clickhole Headline — “Heartbreaking: The Worst Person You Know Just Made A Great Point”]

i hate hockey 🍿🍌 @tricia_sandoval

If my best offensive linesman was noted rapist patrick kane i'd maybe sit this one out

center of his universe 🧡🐸☀️ @shaneholeander

“I also do not need anyone to throw games for me. Be serious.” What is WRONG with him (affectionate)

Cliff Marlow ✓ @boston_marly

Honestly he's just kind of like that

center of his universe 🧡🐸☀️ @shaneholeander

Omg hi Marlow

Brienne 🦄💎💜💖💙 @hollanovunicorn

THREAD: Ok so if shane and ilya were together (situationship, serious, etc) since TWO THOUSAND AND FUCKING TEN, here's a thread of all the photo shoots for brand deals Yuna had Shane in during that time

gay romantic celly 🇺🇸🇺🇸 @helmetsmooch

OMG I FORGOT ABOUT THE 2014-2015 CALVIN KLEIN CAMPAIGN I NEED A TIME MACHINE AND A SPYGLASS

marie watches hockey 🏒🐻 @cens_hope_eternal

My personal fave has always been the Rolex ads with the suits and the dress shirts with the slut button unbuttoned

Brienne 🦄💎💜💜💜💜 @hollanovunicorn

Girl wtf is the slut button

marie watches hockey 🏒🐻 @cens_hope_eternal

Um it's what it sounds like? There's the collar button, then the collarbone button, then the tie button, then the "i can kind of see your chest hair" button. Then the slut button.

Brienne 🦄💎💜💜💜💜 @hollanovunicorn

Ok ur so right i apologize for snappin

marie watches hockey 🏒🐻 @cens_hope_eternal

Literally no worries we are all at our most insane today

Hayden Pike ✅ @hayden34pike

Lucky to know you, @shanehollanderhockey. Grateful for your friendship. So happy to see you thriving. Love you.

Hayden Pike ✅ @hayden34pike

@ilyarozanov81 is fine too I guess

Shane Hollander ✅ @shanehollanderhockeyplayer

Love you too, man

Ilya. ✅ @ilyarozanov81

Tell the good Pikes (Jackie, Ruby, Jade, Arthur, Amber) that Uncle Ilya and Uncle Shane say hello

Hayden Pike ✅ @hayden34pike



Siobhan 🗡️🌻 @shiv_girlie

“The public has never known a version of me that has not wanted Ilya Rozanov” “Shane has been with me in my heart for my full adult life” SOMEBODY FUCKING SEDATE ME
WHAT THE FUCK IS THISSSSS

Brienne 🦄💎💜💖💙 @hollanovunicorn

We are forgetting “I would have gone anywhere for Shane”

Siobhan 🗡️🌻 @shiv_girlie

And baby he means it he went to fucking Ottawa!!!

Sweetiepie Luca 🍰 @babygirlhaas

Yes he did! He rebuilt our franchise! He got us back to the playoffs! And he’s gonna get us the Stanley Fucking Cup!

Tony Rojas ✅ @antoniorojasLA

Thank you, @shanehollanderhockey, for starting this conversation about race in hockey. I was the only Latino kid in my junior league, and whenever I tried to talk about being treated differently, I got shut down for not being a team player. Hell, even going by Tony and not Antonio was a choice I made because of all this.

Tony Rojas ✅ @antoniorojasLA

I know I’m not the only guy that happened to, but I do think I’m the only one who didn’t protect my mental health or my dignity by quitting. I’m lucky now to play for LA, one of the most diverse teams in the NHL, but I know we have more work to do.

Shane Hollander ✅ @shanehollanderhockeyplayer

Thank you, man. Coming up with you and @cvaughnNY and @jeanjacquesboizieu and @the_boodman_grills has made this less lonely for sure. Maybe now that we’re older and more established, we can talk about it more?

Tony Rojas ✅ @antoniorojasLA

Hell yeah brother. Let’s do it. I’ll text you.

Carter Vaughn ✅ @cvaughnNY

Loving this new Shane Hollander who remembered who the fuck he is. Let’s go.

JJ Boizieu  @jeanjacquesboizieu

Always my Capitaine!

i hate hockey   @tricia_sandoval

(so i know they were having a serious conversation about race but can we talk about JJ Boizieu calling Hollander “always my capitaine” when G*I C*meau is actually JJ’s captain)

Pike Kid #5 @hayyyydennnn34

Right like JJ u in danger girl

Jennie    @voyajennie

Do u guys think JJ and Pike have put in trade requests or?

Pike Kid #5 @hayyyydennnn34

Oh obviously. And then that’s all the players worth caring about. Where are we gonna go then???

Jennie    @voyajennie

I mean. Ottawa.

Pike Kid #5 @hayyyydennnn34

Damn.

i hate hockey   @tricia_sandoval

Shane also didn’t respond to JJ but he did to Vaughnny and Rojas... and JJ was in that Montreal locker room...

Pike Kid #5 @hayyyydennnn34

Hollander also didn’t reply to Boodram come on now

Jennie    @voyajennie

1. He plays on the same team as Bood and probably saw him at practice
2. Bood hasn’t tweeted since the 2016 US election. I think tricia is right.

Pike Kid #5 @hayyyydennnn34

I fucking hate it here

THE WHOLE TIME   @hollanovvvv

I gotta stop thinking about Shane taking that hit on the ice in 2017 and Ilya not being able to do anything but stand there and demand answers from the medics before refs push him away. Like he couldn't touch Shane he couldn't even get off the ice.

THE WHOLE TIME   @hollanovvvv

Sure hockey is a contact sport but like Cassie said in the episode, Shane had never been hurt like that at that point. I can't imagine my girlfriend getting literally knocked out in front of me and I couldn't even hold her hand without outing her, or without endangering myself

THE WHOLE TIME   @hollanovvvv

Everyone deserves to have their relationships respected. I don't know how they made it so long without that. Fuck.

july 25  @hollanovwedding

I'm there too but with the Cens plane emergency landing. Like ya everyone was okay and the Cens even played their game after that, but I was looking at the schedules and Hollander was in Seattle at the time. Literally as far as you can be while still in the same country

july 25  @hollanovwedding

And Shane was out to the team by then! But *allegedly* Montreal was being shitty about it, so it's not like he could have explained what was going on and been able to go to Ilya.

THE WHOLE TIME   @hollanovvvv

It's so unfair. And the only reason they're safe now is because the Centaurs is the organization that it is. Fuck.

Leah Campbell  @leahplays hockey

I love everything about this interview. So proud of my friends @ilyarozanov81 and @shanehollanderhockey for stepping up and telling their truth. You know, all pro women's sports are full of lesbians and bisexuals, and god forbid even some trans and GNC players, and the world hasn't ended. Men's orgs need to catch up.

Shane Hollander  @shanehollanderhockey

Thank you, Leah. And yes, that's such a good point. Once again the women's leagues are beating the men's. We'll see you at camp again this summer?

Leah Campbell ✓ @leahplays hockey

Wouldn't miss it. Go win that Stanley.

Ilya. ✓ @ilyarozanov81

Leah would you be interested in a position as commissioner of the nhl in the event there's an opening?

[this tweet has been deleted]

Leah Campbell ✓ @leahplays hockey

Delete this

Shane Hollander ✓ @shanehollanderhockey

Delete this

Nina 🐦 @chirpyrozy

NOOOOO FREE MY BOY HE DID NOTHING WRONG

Princess Chloe 👑 @chloe_elizabeth

Ok can Shane Hollander fight [PHOTO ATTACHMENT: zoomed in screen shot of the podcast video, focusing on Ilya's hand brushing through Shane's hair]

Izzy 🍄 @isabelle_levesque

Baby girl he can but he does not have to all his checks are legal
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hollander_offensive_check_compilation

Princess Chloe 👑 @chloe_elizabeth

Ok fair enough

🌸🌷 **pritti in pink** 🌷🌸 @priti_ramamurthy

Also no offense bestie Roz is right where he wants to be

🦫 **chuck the beaver** 🦫 @beaverchucky

Damn Roz really believed in the Cens from day 1, huh. Praising Boody and Chewie and Dykstra, knowing that the issue was coaching strategy and not player quality. Like I remember people saying he was just gonna take the paycheck and coast.

Wyatt Hayz 🧱 @brickwallhazy

Seems like Hollander believed in us too, if he's confirming he took a pay cut. Damn. We got really lucky with gay love, huh boys?

A-a-ron @DJsillygoose

Well apparently it's a statement of fact and not a jinx that we're winning the stanley cup this year

Rose Landry ✅ @RoseLandryOfficial

I'm so lucky to have Shane as my best friend, and I'm so lucky that I got to meet Ilya through him. Proud of my boys always. So good to see you guys when you were in town. I'll text later 💕

Ilya. ✅ @ilyarozanov81

Love you, Rose. You have great taste in men.

Rose Landry ✅ @RoseLandryOfficial

We have this in common!

Shane Hollander ✅ @shanehollanderhockey

Actually I don't like either of you

Siobhan 🗡️ 🌻 @shiv_girlie

"Unlike my husband, I am here to air out personal grievances with other players." I KNOW THAT'S RIGHT

🌸 🌸 **pritti in pink** 🌸 🌸 @priti_ramamurthy

Absolutely begging one of the journos to follow up on that in the next postgame where Hollander isn't on press duty

shane's BEAUTIFUL freckles ✨ ✨ ✨ @shanesfreckles

Please neither Yuna nor Harris are ever going to let Ilya do press without Shane ever again. Like free my boy what did he want to say about Crowell

Siobhan 🗡️ 🌻 @shiv_girlie

Omg *slips Danielle from the Ottawa Citizen sports page \$20* ask him about Crowell
PLEASE bestie

Shane Believer 🦊 @teamhollander2424

Kind of a bummer we're never gonna see Hollander wear the C again but like if we get all this instead I'll take it

Shane Believer 🦊 @teamhollander2424

And by "all this" i do mean Rozanov basically planning a murder of Jacques Theriault out loud on beyonce's internet

Allie!! @eversince2010

No but what they value about each other's leadership would make them such a good fit as captain and alternate with Bood! Holly demands perfection, Roz makes delivering that perfection, and i am quoting here, a "labor of love," and Bood makes sure everyone is still friends at the end of the day!!! I love my sons ur honor.

gay romantic celly 🇨🇦 🧐 @helmetsmooch

Ya ok the hollanov of it all but also? Nuanced discussions about male eating disorders? racism in the NHL? treatment of prospects and rookies without responsible mentors? structural and interpersonal homophobia?

gay romantic celly 🇨🇦 🧐 @helmetsmooch

@cassiearcher96 and @lunapreston truly nobody is doing it like you queens

Cassie Archer! 🏹 ✅ @cassiearcher96

Aww thank you but really we're just grateful to Ilya and Shane for being willing to talk about it with us. More honesty about player safety, in all forms, is good for everybody.

Sofiya Portnova 🌹 🧚 @sofiya_portnovaaaa

Ok so hi my dad is russian my mom is a US foreign service worker and we lived in moscow until i was 10. First things first shane hollander speaks russian. His accent isn't perfect, but like. That boy speaks russian. (1/x)

Sofiya Portnova 🌹 🧚 @sofiya_portnovaaaa

Ilya called Shane "малыш." → baby

Also “my little tomato” and “my little dictionary” and “my little candy” and “my love.”
it’s so cute i hate them (2/x)

Sofiya Portnova 🌹 🧑🏻 @sofiya_portnovaaaa

When Shane talks about realizing he was in love with Ilya when Boston won the Cup in 2014, he mentions something Ilya said in Russian on the ice. It was “this is for you, mama.” also made me cry when i watched it live back then (3/x)

Sofiya Portnova 🌹 🧑🏻 @sofiya_portnovaaaa

Then after shane tells that story, ilya says “you never told me that.” then shane says “i’m sorry.” (4/x)

Sofiya Portnova 🌹 🧑🏻 @sofiya_portnovaaaa

Then when they’re talking about the tampa ASG, and shane said he didn’t know what to do but he was ready to try to figure it out, and ilya looks like he’s gonna cry, shane says “you already knew that,” and “ilya says “yes but i didn’t realize” and doesn’t finish the sentence (5/x)

Sofiya Portnova 🌹 🧑🏻 @sofiya_portnovaaaa

I also want to add that Shane and Ilya’s read of the russian anti-gay laws are super, super fair. Ilya is a public figure, so if he were to be deported back to russia after being outed, he would 10000000% have been killed to be made an example of (6/x)

Sofiya Portnova 🌹 🧑🏻 @sofiya_portnovaaaa

Oh also after Ilya rips Theriault a new asshole, shane says “thank you” (7/x)

Sofiya Portnova 🌹 🧑🏻 @sofiya_portnovaaaa

In conclusion, they’re in love in english and russian and probably french too. thank u 4 coming 2 my ted talk (8/end)

Sofiya Portnova 🌹 🧑🏻 @sofiya_portnovaaaa

Also real quick Shane pronounces Ilya's name correctly. Usually english speakers condense “ilya” to two syllables when really it’s three: IL-ee-ya. He also stresses the middle syllable in “rozanov” like you’re supposed to: roh-ZAH-nov. I know it seems like a small thing but it’s important.

Sofiya Portnova 🌹 🧑🏻 @sofiya_portnovaaaa

UH HELLO????? [PHOTO ATTACHMENT: screen shot of Twitter notification: @ilyarozanov81 liked your tweet: “In conclusion, they’re in love in english and russian and prob...]

Yuna's Google Calendar @momageryunaa

Ok I'll say it: everybody involved is apparently taking it way too easy on Hayden Pike. like why didn't you see them in the video? We all saw them in the video immediately????

Mia  @uuuh-melia

Idk man it kind of sounded like the boys are better for it. I'm not saying parts of it didn't suck (@MontrealVoyageurs meet me in the fucking pit) but they just look so fucking happy

Yuna's Google Calendar @momageryunaa

Ugh that's fair I guess I just wish they had been able to tell us how they wanted to. Like with the Russia and the Crowell of it all it had to be so scary, and after a bunch of other scary things had already happened.

Maddie Moo    @boodyleftskate

no but the ottawa transition from "it's so over" to "we're so back" being fueled by a combination of gay true love and the trump-putin collab is just...

evan dykstra defender @dicks_strah

I get this is serious but calling it a collab is so fucking funny

Montréal Voyageurs  @MontrealVoyageurs

The ownership, management, staff, and players of the Montréal Voyageurs have, and have always had, a strong commitment to respect people of all genders, races, and sexualities. We strive every day to make this franchise a safe and welcoming environment, while also protecting the ability of everyone to exercise their freedom of speech.

Montréal Voyageurs  @MontrealVoyageurs

La direction, les propriétaires, le personnel et les joueurs des Voyageurs de Montréal ont toujours été fermement engagés à respecter les personnes de tous genres, races et orientations sexuelles. Nous nous efforçons chaque jour de faire de cette franchise un environnement sécuritaire et accueillant, tout en protégeant la liberté d'expression de chacun.

Marry Me Patrice @drapeausgf

Thank you for taking a stand to protect your players!

Anya Hollander-Rozanova    @puppyanyahr

@drapeausgf Girl protect them against what? Questioning their own masculinity?

Siobhan 🗡️ 🌻 @shiv_girlie

@drapeausgf @puppyanyahr Protect them against the consequences of their own actions so it would seem

Marry Me Patrice @drapeausgf

@puppyanyahr @shiv_girlie At least we have real men on our team now

Siobhan 🗡️ 🌻 @shiv_girlie

@puppyanyahr @drapeausgf The real men who are 5 and 10 so far this season? I said oh I'm sure.

Anya Hollander-Rozanova 💖 🐶 💖 @puppyanyahr

@shiv_girlie @drapeausgf Have we considered that maybe it's gay to pass a puck to another man

🌸 🌷 **pritti in pink** 🌷 🌸 @priti_ramamurthy

How much did the lawyers bill you to write this

Jennie 🦋 💙 🐋 @montrealjennie

Free speech??? We're calling homophobia and racism free speech now??? Ok I'm out I'm so sorry I can't do this anymore the Victoire has always been better anyway idk why I was wasting my time

i hate hockey 🍿 🍌 @tricia_sandoval

Hope it's worth us literally never making playoffs again and also tanking any public goodwill boys

Ilya. ✅ @ilyarozanov81

Okay.

🌸 🌷 **pritti in pink** 🌷 🌸 @priti_ramamurthy

@ilyarozanov81 Jesus christ lmao

Harris Drover 🏳️🌈 🍎 ✅ @harrisdcentaurs

@ilyarozanov81 Hi Ilya! If you could answer your phone that would be great!

Troy Barrett ✅ @troybarrettottawa

Answer your fucking phone Roz

Sofiya Portnova 🌹 🧑🏻 @sofiya_portnovaaaa

LET HIM COOK

THE WHOLE TIME 💙💜 @hollanovvvv

Lollllll this game on monday is gonna be fucking brutal

Montréal Victoire ✅ @MontrealVictoire

Here at the Victoire, we know that hockey is for everyone. We strive constantly to put that into practice, and are proud and honored to be part of a league @PWL that puts work behind that knowledge. Congratulations to the @OttawaCenturs for an incredible start of their season, and to @ilyarozanov81 and @shanehollanderhockey for their honesty, bravery, and decision to share their joy with the world.

Montréal Victoire ✅ @MontrealVictoire

Ici, au Victoire, on sait que le hockey est pour tous. Nous nous efforçons constamment de le mettre en pratique et sommes fiers et honorés de faire partie d'une ligue comme la LPHF qui concrétise cette conviction. Félicitations aux @OttawaCenturs pour leur incroyable début de saison, et à @ilyarozanov81 et @shanehollanderhockey pour leur honnêteté, leur courage et leur décision de partager leur joie avec le monde entier.

Shane Hollander ✅ @shanehollanderhockeyplayer

Merci beaucoup pour votre soutien et votre gentillesse. Je suis fière d'être une fan de la Victoire. 🦅

Ilya. ✅ @ilyarozanov81

I refuse to learn French but I assume I agree with Hollander. Thank you to the Victoire, and we're excited to be at your match against the Chargers next week ⚡

Izzy 🍄 @isabelle_levesque

This is the funniest possible outcome I love women I love gays I love petty I love hockey

Sweetiepie Luca 🍰 @babygirlhaas

Lmaoooo the PWL stays winning what a time to be alive

gay romantic celly 🇨🇦 🤔 @helmetsmooch

“Some rumors are persistent for a reason” Oh I am building an enemies list and it has the entire V*y*g**rs roster and management and coaching staff, maybe minus their rookies, but even they’re on thin ice

Izzy 🍄 @isabelle_levesque

And Crowell

gay romantic celly 🍄👉 @helmetsmooch

Tbf he’s been on my enemies list ever since shane and ilya were photographed leaving the NHL offices bc uhhh [PHOTO ATTACHMENT: A paparazzi shot of Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov, clearly taken from across a busy street. Shane looks furious but Ilya seems to be hiding a smile]

Izzy 🍄 @isabelle_levesque

Ya something Bad happened in those offices but whatever it was also seems to have activated Roz’s inner chaos demon so

Izzy 🍄 @isabelle_levesque

NOT ILYA ROZANOV LIKING THAT TWEET WTF SIR WHAT DO YOU KNOW

Ilya. ✅ @ilyarozanov81

I have been told that I have no comment

gay romantic celly 🍄👉 @helmetsmooch

“Oh Shane dogwalks Ilya” “Oh Ilya dogwalks Shane” there’s actually one person in charge here and it’s Yuna Hollander

[@shanehollanderhockey retweeted this tweet]

gay romantic celly 🍄👉 @helmetsmooch

...now they’re just fucking with us

shane's BEAUTIFUL freckles ✨ ✨ ✨ @shanesfreckles

Team i must admit that between Shane saying they’re such evenly matched players that there's no real way to say who’s better and Ilya saying he has no regrets because everything he’s been through has led him to a life with shane, i am lying on the floor staring at the ceiling and not a productive member of society.

Princess Chloe 👑 @chloe_elizabeth

Ur so valid this actually seems like the only reasonable response i can't believe i have to do my stupid job

Brienne 🦄💎💜💖💙 @hollanovunicorn

Everybody just remember that some things are just true: we will purchase iced coffee at the airport, the sun will rise in the east, Ottawa will win the Stanley Cup, and Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov are deeply, deeply in love

i said 50 @ilyasmole

“The rivalry was fake” “the rivalry was real” the rivalry was a secret third thing: foreplay

marie watches hockey 🏒🦊 @cens_hope_eternal

Lads do I have this right is it the power of queer love that is going to win us the st*nl*y c*p

Mia 🦋 @uuuh-melia

I don't think you have to censor Stanley Cup bestie roz says it's not a jinx if it's true

marie watches hockey 🏒🦊 @cens_hope_eternal

Ur so right how could i already forget that we will purchase iced coffee in the airport, the sun will rise in the east, and the ottawa centaurs are going to win the stanley cup

Mia 🦋 @uuuh-melia

These are just facts! It's not a jinx if it's a fact!

Gil Comeau ✅ @comeaumontreal

What's actually insulting is expecting special treatment just because of some woke bullshit. Maybe if you played defensively you wouldn't get checked so much, pussy.

[this tweet has been deleted]

Ilya. ✅ @ilyarozanov81

[PHOTO ATTACHMENT: screen shot of tweet by **Gil Comeau** @comeaumontreal: “What's actually insulting is expecting special treatment just because of some woke bullshit. Maybe if you played defensively you wouldn't get checked so much, pussy.”]

See you on Monday to talk about playing defensively, okay?

Allie!! @eversince2010

GET A HIT IN FOR ME CAP!!!

Ilya. ✓ @ilyarozanov81



Shane Hollander ✓ @shanehollanderhockey

Ilya.

Ilya. ✓ @ilyarozanov81

Yes, моя любовь?

i said 5 0 @ilyasmole

Guys it's been 24mins and hollander hasn't responded do you think they're *gunshot sounds*

Abby from Boston @beantownbaddie

Honestly losing Rozanov, even if it was because of true love, is still a bitter pill to swallow. But knowing that M*nter**l lost Hollander because of homophobia makes it a little better.

Jennie 🦋💙🐦 @montrealjennie

Lizzo said it best.... We could have had a bad bitch... noncommittal... who helped us with our career... just a little...

Pike Kid #5 @hayyyyyydennnn34

Girl you gotta be quiet or ottawa is gonna make that the goal song for Cens-Voyageurs next week

Jennie 🦋💙🐦 @montrealjennie

Not my problem anymore Λ(◡)>

Ottawa Centaurs ✓ @CentaursOfficial

Don't miss Cap @ilyarozanov81 and @shanehollanderhockey 's interview with Gay Girls and Goals podcast! And yes, both Rozy and Holly can fight. They are professional hockey

players. We've been over this.

Katie C. 🍫 @kitkatkatie

Hi Harris

a-a-ron @DJsillygoose

sorry harris

Brienne 🦄💎💜💜💜💙 @hollanovunicorn

Sorry Harris!

Anya Hollander-Rozanova 💕🐶💕 @puppyanyahr

sorry harris :(

Shane Believer 🦄 @teamhollander2424

Sorry harris!!! Tell him i didn't mean it!!!

Harris Drover 🏳️🍏✅ @harrisdcentaurs

Seriously, guys, Roz doesn't need the encouragement

Instagram

@Gay Girls and Goalspod

[Image Description: Standing in the Gay Girls and Goals studio, from left to right, are Ilya Rozanov, Cassie Archer, Luna Preston, and Shane Hollander. Their arms are around each other's shoulders and waists, although Shane is very politely hovering the palm of his hand over Luna's skin. Their smiles are natural and easy]

Caption: **@Gay Girls and Goals pod** Did you miss our interview with @shanehollander and @ilyarozanov81? Catch it now (or, let's be real, rewatch it) on Youtube or wherever you get your podcasts 💜🐶💕🇨🇦

@ilyarozanov81

[Image Description: New outtake from the 2010 CCM commercial shoot. Shane and Ilya are at center ice with a puck between them, but only Shane is in a face-off stance, even as he

smiles brightly. Ilya is fully doubled over laughing.]

[Image Description: Shane, without his helmet and gloves but with the rest of his Montreal gear on, alone, lifting the Stanley Cup above his head in 2015]

[Image Description: Shane, dressed the same, grinning while passing the Stanley Cup off to Hayden Pike in 2016]

[Image Description: Ilya pressing a kiss to Shane's helmet during the 2017 All Stars Game]

[Image Description: Shane, shirtless and in swim trunks and sunglasses, laying on his back on a dock beside a lake. An obscene purple hickey is just barely visible at his waistband.]

[Image Description: A selfie with Shane and Ilya's faces pressed tightly together, a Christmas tree sparkling in the background]

[Image Description: Shane and Ilya, in full Eastern Conference uniform and gear, chirping at each other in the box at the 2021 All Stars Game. Wyatt Hayes, looking uncomfortable, sits between them.]

[Image Description: Shane, barefoot, sitting cross-legged on a patio, cuddling Anya]

[Image Description: A professional shot of Shane slipping a wedding band onto Ilya's finger at their wedding. Both of them are tearing up.]

[Image Description: Shane in profile, wearing an Ottawa jersey with his name and the number 24 on the back of it over his white button down, signing his paperwork to join the Centaurs, while grinning broadly]

Caption: **@ilyarozanov81** Вся моя взрослая жизнь. Моё будущее. Моя любовь.

@shanehollander

[Image Description: Teenage Shane and Ilya, wearing their WJPC team captain jerseys, shaking hands at the end of the handshake lines after the cup finals in 2010. Shane is whispering something to Ilya, and Ilya smiles softly.]

[Image Description: Shane, Ilya, and Titusz Korogyi on Draft Day, holding up their jerseys and displaying their fingers counting off their draft numbers. Ilya has a big cheesy grin on his face, but he's looking to his right, at Shane. Shane's smile is stiff and uncomfortable, but his fist brushes Ilya's where their hands are gripping the sleeves of their jerseys.]

[Image Description: Ilya in a tuxedo, on stage accepting the 2014 Hart Memorial Trophy at the NHL awards]

[Image Description: A still from an ESPN broadcast of a 2016 Boston-Montreal game, capturing Ilya checking Shane into the boards. Both of their broad grins are barely visible under their helmet visors.]

[Image Description: Ilya, shirtless in waist-deep water in the lake behind Shane's cottage, mid-laugh, clearly getting ready to splash the camera]

[Image Description: Ilya standing between Yuna and David Hollander. Their arms are around each other, and Yuna and David are beaming as Ilya presses a kiss into Yuna's cheek]

[Image Description: A professional shot of Ilya on the ice, focused, waiting for the signal to begin his turn at the shot accuracy competition during the 2020 All Stars Game]

[Image Description: Ilya in a sweaty t-shirt, clearly just back from a run, cuddling Anya and pressing kisses to her furry head]

[Image Description: Shane sitting in Ilya's lap in an oversized patio chair in Zane Boodram's backyard, plates of barbecue on the table beside them, laughing at something off camera.]

[Image Description: Ilya and Shane at the center of a crowd of uniformed and geared-up Ottawa Centaurs players, celebrating their November 2021 win against the LA Kings. Ilya and Shane's foreheads are touching as they smile.]

Caption: @shanehollander: Центр моей вселенной

Seven Months Later

[*Begin transcript*]

Intro: *jazzy, acoustic guitar music plays as a pastel blue background fades in. The words "Gay Girls and Goals" scrawl across the screen in big, loopy, pink cursive.*

[*The title card fades out to show Cassie and Luna both seated on their pink couch, mic rigs in place before them. Luna is cross legged with an Ottawa Centaurs Chuck the Beaver plushie in her lap, and Cassie wears a red and black bandana tied around her hair.*]

Luna: Hello hello! Welcome back to Gay Girls and Goals, your podcast on all major league sports news for women's and men's leagues, for the girls, gays, and theys!

Cassie: Let's skip the rest of the intro, and just roll the tape.

[the screen cuts to a clip of the Gay Girls and Goals interview with Ilya Rozanov and Shane Hollander in November. Ilya is smirking, and Shane somehow looks both annoyed and incredibly affectionate.]

Ilya: *And then we will bring the Stanley Cup to Ottawa.*

Shane: *Ilya.*

Ilya: *You worry too much, Hollander. I keep telling you is not a jinx if it is true. Is it a jinx to say we will purchase iced coffee at airport? Is it a jinx to say the sun will rise in the east in the morning? No? Then is also not a jinx for me to say that we will bring the Stanley Cup to Ottawa.*

Shane: *If we don't, I'm blaming you.*

Ilya: *I am happy to take that, because it will not matter, because we will bring the Stanley Cup to Ottawa.*

The clip ends.]

[Luna and Cassie start clapping and cheering. More cheering can be heard off camera.]

Cassie: So I guess that settles it. It's not a jinx if it's true!

Luna: *[slaps her hand down on the couch cushion next to her leg] They did purchase iced coffee at the airport! [slap] The sun did rise in the east in the morning! And they did bring the fucking Stanley Cup to fucking Ottawa! [punctuates every word with another slap]*

Cassie: We're journalists and commentators, but we're also fans, and it was so fucking easy to be fans of the Ottawa Centaurs this year. Holy shit.

Luna: It kind of became a joke over the season that the team ran on vibes, friendship, and gay love, but if that's true maybe more teams should try it? Like these fucking guys had an overall win-loss ratio of sixty-one to twenty-one going into the playoffs, clinched their playoffs berth fully a week before anybody else just because no other team in the Eastern Conference could catch them—

Cassie: Including fucking New York! Fucking Boston! These powerhouse, legacy teams—

Luna: Knocked Detroit out in a five-game series for the first round, then swept Toronto in four games in the second—

Cassie: Which, let's be real, had to have felt good for both Hayes and Barrett.

Luna: Oh, totally. So, so happy for them.

Cassie: And then the Division Championship series with New York and Ottawa! The single gayest division series ever! Four out queer players on the ice at once!

Luna: Seven games. Ottawa took game one, then New York, then two for Ottawa, two for New York, and Game Seven in fucking overtime. These two teams were *so* well matched.

Cassie: Maybe if more teams got gay they would play this well. But girl I almost had a heart attack and I didn't even grow up a fan of either team! What the hell!

Luna: Okay but can we talk about Yuna Hollander?

[An image appears on screen of Yuna Hollander, standing up at her seat in the Canadian Tire Centre, clutching at the neck of her Rozanov jersey, face completely drained of color. David

Hollander is visible in the corner of the shot, still seated, but with a fist pressed to his mouth. He is wearing a Hollander jersey.]

Luna: The devil works hard, Kris Jenner works harder, but Yuna Hollander is vibrating on a whole other frequency.

Cassie: Of course she is! Those are her boys!

Luna: And then Hollander scoring in double overtime to end the game, and then immediately dropping his stick and just absolutely *roaring* at the ceiling —

Cassie: I say this with the utmost, lesbianest respect... that was so fucking hot.

Luna: So was Roz charging into him from behind and lifting him up. Respectfully and lesbianly.

Cassie: And then we got the moment with Hollander and Rozanov, and Hunter and Vaughn —

[An image appears on screen of the four men at center ice after the game was called. All have their helmets and gloves removed. Rozanov and Hunter are hugging, while Hollander and Vaughn stand beside them, arms around each other's shoulders, laughing at whatever Rozanov is saying to Hunter]

Cassie: And *that's* on solidarity forever.

Luna: Truly this Vaughnny-Hollzy friendship must be protected at all costs. And then the Stanley Cup finals!

Cassie: The Stanley Cup finals! And truly we have to give it up to the Wild, they also had an incredible season, but literally who would have ever thought that any other team would be the

underdog in any matchup with the *Ottawa fucking Centaurs*?

Luna: A five-game series. Not a record, but still really, really short. And most of that is owed to Wyatt Hayes, an absolute brick wall in that net. Holy shit. Two goals allowed in the whole goddamn series. What the fuck.

Cassie: Whatever they are paying that man, they should double it. He's a future Conn Smythe winner for sure.

Luna: Future Hall of Famer.

Cassie: Absolutely. But of course all praise to the whole skater roster — I don't think Wiebe ever ran the same line twice, offense or defense. I mean like I know *mathematically* he did, he had to, but it sure as shit didn't feel like it.

Luna: Truly. If you're Minnesota I don't know how you prep for this kind of series.

Cassie: Which speaks so, so well to Ottawa's locker room dynamics. It's not just your own line you have to trust. You have to trust every single guy on the team. Rozanov and Boodram did *such* a good job cultivating that kind of team.

Luna: But they were ready to end it on Game Five. You could see it in their eyes. Like they walked into the Tire Centre that night knowing they were going to close it out there. Going into the first two periods with Roz centering Barrett and Haas, then Hollzy centering Boodram and LaPointe, putting up *four goals* with those lines, Hayes and the d-men, especially Chouinard and Dykstra, allowing *no* points from the Wild—

Cassie: And then switching it in the third period for the first line to be Rozanov centering with Hollander and Barrett on wings? For *that moment* to be the first time Shane Hollander played wing in an NHL game? They absolutely did not come to fuck around.

Luna: I know we can't license the actual footage, and the stills won't do it justice, but—

[An image appears on screen of Hollander moving ahead of Rozanov to cross ahead of him, reversing their positions of wing and center. Then, after a moment, a new image appears of Hollander passing the puck backwards without bothering to look if Rozanov was there to receive it. Finally, a third image appears of Rozanov cheering. The hand holding his stick is raised in the air, while his other hand is gripping the back of Hollander's neck, where Hollander is pressed into his chest with his arms wrapped tight around Rozanov's waist.]

Luna: —Real ones may remember that this is the exact move that they pulled at the 2017 ASG, with that whole crossover and pass back, except back then Roz was winging Holly. They just traded places. This is the helmet kiss move.

Cassie: I burst into tears. Like, just, fully sobbing. You were in tears too. I think everybody at our watch party was doing some version of ugly crying. And they did that shit with thirty-four goddamn seconds on the clock.

Luna: Sending out the line of just Haas, LaPointe, and Holmberg, so the rookies could have the last possession, was really, *really* sweet. Like Haas was already bawling when he won the face-off.

Cassie: Sarah and I don't want kids, but like, that's my son.

Luna: That's all our son. Like that's our baby.

Cassie: And then they won. They fucking *won*. We now live in a world where two married husbands kissed on center ice, surrounded by their teammates, after winning the motherfucking Stanley Cup.

[An image appears on screen. Shane and Ilya, helmets and gloves off, are locked in a passionate kiss, at the center of a scrum of their teammates yelling, hugging, and throwing their own gloves into the air, as red, white, and black confetti falls all around them]

Luna: That bitch Roger Crowell looked like he was sucking on a goddamn lemon when he handed the Cup to Rozanov.

Cassie: And of course Ilya ‘I never get to do anything fun’ Rozanov really made Crowell wait before he accepted the handshake. Fucking asshole. I love him.

Luna: But he’s such a fucking team dad like he barely did his own lap with the Cup before he handed it off to Bood so he could go hug the rookies.

[An image appears on screen of Rozanov, clearly yelling, in a massive group hug with Haas, LaPointe, Holmberg, and Young, all of whom are crying. Holmberg appears to have snot running down his nose.]

Cassie: It’s not a surprise he won the Conn Smythe. It’s been a long time coming, for him. And that doesn’t take away anything from how absolutely well-earned it was. He was the heart and soul of this team, all season.

Luna: I’m glad it was this year, you know? *[clears her throat and grabs a tissue]* With this team, that he had such a huge hand in rebuilding over the last four years. Like yes he would have deserved it in 2014 with Boston, but I think it means more now.

[An image appears on screen of Shane Hollander beaming as tears slide down his face, staring at Ilya Rozanov, who appears in shock.]

Cassie: And we can all agree that Shane is for sure getting that second alternate captain jersey next year, right?

Luna: Oh abso-fucking-lutely. Wiebe knows what he’s got. By the fucking way, this is only Wiebe’s second year as coach.

Cassie: Unreal. And... after everything Roz and Holly have been through, after Shane’s last year with Montreal... for them to be part of this team, building all of this together, and to get

last night... [*she pauses to sniffle and wipe her eyes*] it really feels like justice, you know? It feels like joy.

Luna: I think that's the lesson in all of this. If you're honest, and brave, and smart, and if you work hard, and trust your team, and stand up for what's right, good things *can* happen to good people.

Cassie: Isn't sports cool, you guys?

Luna: Sports are *so* cool. And speaking of justice, if I can be a bitch for *just* a second... [*cups her hands around her mic*] Montreal finished seventh in the Atlantic Division. Out of eight teams.

Cassie: They beat Tampa Bay, I guess.

Luna: This is the first time they missed the playoffs since when? [*she makes a show of checking her wrist for a nonexistent watch*] Oh, since 2009, which conveniently is the last year before they drafted Shane Hollander. Guess they did need him after all, huh?

Cassie: Once the dust settles, I'm sure Roz will be so normal about this, and not petty at all.

Luna: Girl you know petty *is* that man's normal.

Cassie: And he's earned it!

Luna: Okay. I'm sure we're going to be talking about this Cup series for weeks, but we do have other sports to talk about, including with the WNBA and the National Women's Soccer League, and women's sports are always more important than men's by default. So we're going to take a break, finish crying, and fix our makeup, and we'll be right back.

[*End transcript*]

Instagram

@shanehollander

[Image Description: Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov embracing and resting their foreheads against each other, still in their Centaurs uniforms but with their helmets discarded, moments after winning the Stanley Cup]

[Image Description: A group shot of all the Ottawa Centaurs and their partners and children, in casual clothes, in Zane Boodram's backyard. Everyone is grinning broadly. Wyatt Hayes appears to be holding up two fingers in bunny ears above Luca Haas's head.]

[Image Description: Yuna Hollander clearly holding her phone at an awkward selfie angle so as to capture David Hollander and Anya Hollander-Rozanova sitting on the couch behind her, watching a Centaurs away game on the television in their living room.]

[Image Description: From left to right, Kip Grady, Ilya Rozanov, Scott Hunter, Shane Hollander, Carter Vaughn, Troy Barrett, Zane Boodram, and Luca Haas beside the pool table at The Kingfisher. All are smiling broadly. Ilya and Vaughn are holding pool cues. Scott has one arm each around Shane and Ilya.]

[Image Description: Ilya Rozanov, Rose Landry, and Svetlana Vetrova seated at a table, playing some sort of card game. A facedown hand of cards and a can of ginger ale is beside Svetlana's spot, clearly left by Shane so he could take the photo.]

[Image Description: Shane Hollander, Ilya Rozanov, and Anya all asleep on the couch in David and Yuna Hollander's living room. Shane is lying on his back, Ilya's head resting on his chest, Anya curled into the cushion beside their shoulders.]

Caption: @shanehollander Thank you. Спасибо. *Merci*.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you all so much for reading! A couple random notes

- Instead of the canon-compliant version of the Sochi Olympics, I went with what happened in the real world. This is mostly because my copy of Heated Rivalry was in another room and I've never read Game Changers, and googling the actual results was faster

- I believe the moment Ilya caught feelings was when Shane tenderly kissed his forehead after the first time they had sex in Montreal. I also believe Ilya is not going to say that on a podcast.

- I don't think Shane was able to admit to himself that he had an eating disorder until he started therapy, which he has not yet done as of The Long Game. I also think that Shane, who has never done anything halfway in his life and who knows that he and Ilya have had communication problems in the past, would be very into the idea of preventative couple's counseling. But this is my sandbox and I get to play in it how I want.

- Ilya is quieter than Shane towards the end of the interview just because of the language issue. I speak three languages, and I know that when I have to converse in my second or third languages, with a complicated vocabulary, for longer periods of time, I can start to fade pretty significantly. In no way do I think this means Ilya is less vocal in his love for Shane.

- I've never read Role Model so p much everything I know about Dallas Kent comes from fanfic. He seems like he's based on Patrick Kane. I included both Dallas Kent and Patrick Kane in this fic because I hate Patrick Kane in real life. I'm happy with my choices.

- Shane Hollander is smart. Not just about hockey but in general. I said what I said.

- In my honest opinion, Shane recording the Crowell meeting and then doing nothing with the recording is the single biggest Chekhov's Gun in the entire series. That's what's going on with all the "no comments" but also Ilya being a little shit. LiarsandThieves22 handled this so, so well in her own work. Just go read that.

- I think that Carter Vaughn, as a Black man from the US who came up in the era of Black Lives Matter, would be pretty passionate and articulate about racial justice. I also really like the idea of him and Shane being bros and besties.

- The image of Yuna and David Hollander from the Conference finals is very much based on Aly Raisman's parents during her uneven bars routine.

- I have been informed that I messed up the grammar in some of the French. I don't care, because I do not respect the French :)

- Fic title is from "Almost (Sweet Music)" by Hozier

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