

beneath the surface

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beneath the surface

by [hollanderheaven \(DivinelyDevyn\)](#).

Summary

“ a promise you’ll stay / and i start to believe . “

or

Ilya Rozanov and Shane Hollander make their late-night TV debut together.

Notes

In honor of Hudson and Connor’s late night debut because this definitely won’t come out until after at least one.

I had this bug in my brain that I just couldn’t shake. By the time I finish this, this idea will have already spread across ao3 I am sure of it. This is technically connected and can be read as an extension to my fic [discoveries](#) but can also be read as a stand-alone. No book spoilers, but for book readers this falls in between the cottage and the epilogue. For show watchers, this is just post-episode 6.

Please do not take this fic too seriously this is all for fun and goofs. I had a lot of fun imagining what they’d be like on a talk show and thought someone might enjoy their silliness as well. I tend to get carried away so this is one of my longest oneshots.

Lyric in summary from While You Were Sleeping by Laufey

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

- Inspired by [discoveries](#) by [hollanderheaven \(DivinelyDevyn\)](#).

August 2017

Large studio lights shine over the set. Crew members walk around talking to one another. In the corner, you can spot two or three interns holding coffees and gossiping with one another, stopping to look up at the set every once and a while. The two artists who were previously applying powders to faces disappear. Someone behind one of two cameras says something and suddenly everything begins.

“Shane Hollander!” an overtly cheery voice exclaims.

“Hello!”

“...And Ilya Rozanov.” the voice continues.

“Da.”

“Welcome to Beyond The Net! It’s wonderful to have you two here. If what I’ve been told is correct, this is the first off-season interview the two of you have had together.”

A live-studio audience cheers. Shane nods and gives an uneven smile. The tap to his foot and lack of eye contact are tell-tale signs of his anxiety.

Their first interview together. In the almost ten years since their rookie season, the two have never had an interview side-by-side besides maybe the draft. There seemed no reason to before. The two were rivals. Of course, they fed the league as much as the league hyped the rivalry, chirping one another in their own interviews and such. When they played against each other, Ilya would play up his charming, competitive nature, a wink here and a blown kiss there. Shane would keep his *Golden Boy* attitude and not give up how absolutely breathtaking he thought Ilya looked while taunting him.

Previously, as a side effect of the Hollander Hate Train of Ilya Rozanov, Yuna would decline any interviews that forced Shane into situations like these. But now, with the new acceptance of another son and their plan to slowly shift their narrative, Shane’s mom suggested it would be good for them to be seen together before this.

Shane was used to this kind of thing. Ever since his rookie season, his mom has approached him with sponsorships and endorsements in order to boost his influence.

Ilya Rozanov, on the other hand, barely did PR. In strong contrast to Shane’s constant commercials and campaigns, Ilya had barely done more than a dozen photoshoots throughout his career. Despite his fame, he didn’t have an official PR team. Any opportunities were usually brought up by the Raiders’ team.

He felt unnatural doing all this, awkward. He already hated how he sounded speaking English, despising his stupid accent. Long, complex questions usually required nuanced, media-trained answers. Ones in which Ilya could not properly articulate in English. While in Russia, he did plenty of Russian interviews, no problem. But during the season, or in America in general, he tried his hardest to avoid it.

But Shane was here. And that made him feel just a bit better about this.

The two had flown to New York to appear on this popular, thankfully not live, hockey commentary show. Similar to a late night show, if Shane could recall his mother's briefing correctly. During the off-season they'd bring different players in, ask them some fun questions about their free time, have a fan-related segment, and then they'd wrap. It would be fun, Yuna assured them. She even booked them dinner after, a warm meal waiting for them at their hotel (in which they had separate rooms but would ultimately spend the night in one).

It was about four in the afternoon, pretty early for a 'night' show but they did have to edit it after all. It was supposed to premiere tomorrow night and has been hyped up all week. Just the spotting of Ilya in the JFK airport caused an uproar on Twitter (another reason for them to fly separately and have separate hotel rooms).

The last time the two had been this close in a professional setting was one of the past All-Star Games? Or maybe... the 2015 MHL Awards.

Las Vegas.

That night.

Ilya's hotel room afterwards.

Shane shakes the thought from his head, hoping the flush on his face isn't too apparent underneath the gentle makeup on his face.

He sneaks a brief glance at Ilya and *god*, he looks good. Ilya Rozanov is clad in his usual casual style. A v-neck shirt that ever so slightly shows off just enough of his chest for fans to discuss for the next month. A simple pair of black slacks and dress shoes. He always looks so effortlessly beautiful in a way Shane has never come to understand.

Shane, however, went through a million options and phone calls with Rose, his stylist, and his mother before finally deciding on his outfit. He feels both far underdressed and way too formal. He has on a brown suit with bold black buttons, the jacket being a bit big on him and covering the fact he doesn't have a shirt on underneath. Practically Ilya's complete opposite.

The two are sitting on either end of a dark blue couch, facing towards the host of the show (Paris, Shane thinks her name is. It was definitely a city..) who is in her own chair. Two tiny black microphones are attached to their collars which makes Shane conscious of every breath he takes. He tries to find the perfect place to rest his gaze that doesn't include a fan in the audience, Ilya, or Paris. He settles on a poster just behind the host's head.

"Since this is such a special occasion, this show is going to be just a bit different than our usual programming."

Oh no. *Oh no.*

"We'll start with some basic questions, boring, I know. Then we'll play some games and our fan segment will end the night! We will have a special surprise for our guests before we go so

stay tuned for that!”

The crowd claps and settles. Not too bad. Shane hates surprises, though.

“So, I suppose we should start with our two time cup holder, Mr. Hollander. No offense, Mr. Rozanov.”

“Is fine. His two cups will be nothing to my ten.”

The crowd laughs and just like that, it all begins. Shane can’t help but crack a smile at Ilya’s confidence, glancing over at him. Ilya winks at him and he turns his head before his body has the chance to react.

“Okay, okay! I see the rivalry is still alive and well. As I was saying, Hollander—”

“Please, call me Shane.”

“Shane, what has it been like competing with and having this one constant rival all these years?”

Shane goes silent a minute, thinking carefully of his answer, before responding.

“Me and Rozanov have been supposedly at each other's throats since we were drafted. While I do believe all of the press of us being *sworn enemies* has gotten a bit out of hand, I do admit he motivates me to be better. I greatly respect Rozanov as a strategic and strong hockey player and...”

He pauses for a moment, taking a breath and quickly glancing at Ilya.

“I don’t think my career would be the same if not for our competition. He puts up a good fight.”

Shane shrugs, laughing a bit. The crowd applauds and Paris nods. Ilya is looking at Shane with something deep in his eyes, something Shane only has a moment to notice before the show continues.

“Great answer, thank you Shane. Now, I won’t bore you with my English, Rozanov, but I did have a question for you as well. What do you think makes Shane a worthy opponent?”

“Hm. He is good player, yes? Not better than me, of course, but he tries so hard. Is nice to see. Is fun.” He says simply, smirking his lopsided grin as the crowd laughs. Shane rolls his eyes at the comment but has a smile that just won’t leave his face.

“Okay, then! Thank you, Rozanov, for that,” she turns from Ilya to one of the cameras, “When we come back, these two will go head-to-head off the ice! Stay tuned for more Beyond The Net with London Leagues!”

After a few moments the person behind the camera gives a thumbs up and a bell rings. The audience begins to chatter with one another and Paris London looks down at some notes on her desk. An intern walks towards the two hockey players with water bottles.

“We’re taking a ten minute break to set up the games so we’ll need the two of you off set.” She seems a bit nervous, handing them the water bottles tentatively. “If you ask anyone with a red badge we can get you whatever you need. You’re welcome to interact with the crowd or get a snack at that table over there,” she points just past the crew, “and the bathrooms are just back there, past the table and take a left.”

“Thank you so much.” Shane says, as he gets up. Ilya nods and puts on his usually charming smile. Shane can hear the girl giggle as the two walk away and towards the snack table. He looks around before talking to Ilya.

“You seem to be enjoying this.” He chirps, taking a swig of his water bottle.

“Yes. Insulting you is favorite hobby of mine.”

“Oh, fuck you.”

“Not in public, Hollander!” Ilya smirks, feigning innocence.

“Asshole.” Shane mutters with a smirk on his face. “I think the interns are scared of you.”

“Oh really? The *interns*? I beg you, Hollander, stop making up words.”

“The *workers* with red badges. Everytime we pass them they go all silent and then giggle when we walk away. You’ve gotta be less intimidating.”

“I am hockey player. Being intimidating is my job.”

“Can you at least try to play nice?”

“Oh, but you love when I’m mean.”

After a couple more seconds of banter, Shane slinks away and finds a quiet corner to check his phone. A text from his mother making sure everything is going, a text from his stylist to remember his Rolex, a text from Rose to break a leg. He smiles lightly as he responds to each before getting a new notification. Lily.

He looks around for Ilya but he’s nowhere to be found. Great. He opens the message begrudgingly, looking around to make sure no one is near him.

Lily: You look so good in your suit

Lily: I am almost sad to take it off later

Lily: Almost

Jane: Who said I’ll let you?

Ilya smiled at his phone, chuckling at the text. He had snuck away to the bathroom to find some silence on set.

He knew Shane’s words had barely any bite to them. They’d go back to their hotel, one would sneak into the other’s room, and their night would play out just like any other.

An amused sigh escaped from Ilya at the thought. God, he was absolutely gone for that man.

Just as Ilya began to get lost in his fantasy for the night, a knock at the door cut off his train of thought.

“Mr. Rozanov?” a nervous voice called from the other side of the door, possibly another intern.

“Yes?” his tone came off a bit rougher than he wanted, remembering what Shane had said about being nice. He didn’t *mean* to come off so brash, it’s just the persona that was given to him since rookie season. And he happened to wear it well.

“Uhm, they wanted me to let you know that we’re all set up and we need you back on set in a minute or so.”

“Okay...thank you.” Ilya made a point to sound a bit nicer, as much as he could. He waited for the subtle sound of the staff member walking away before looking back down at his phone. He smiled at the message once again before tucking his phone back into his pocket.

He checked himself in the mirror, running a hand through his hair. He tried on a few smiles before deciding the notion was ridiculous and that Hollander was overthinking like always.

He walked out of the bathroom, heading back to set and sitting himself beside Shane, who was sitting prim and proper on the newly placed stools. The crew had taken out the couch and replaced them with three stools and a couple of cards sitting on top of a table beside the host. Ilya had not a single clue what they could be doing next.

He looked around and noticed no one was paying attention to the two besides a few fans in the crowd taking pictures, which probably wasn’t allowed. He leaned over slightly. It was close enough for Shane to hear him whisper. It was also just far enough that, if a fan *did* snap a picture, it would simply look like Ilya was teasing him, just like on the ice.

“Pretty, perfect Hollander. Like doll. Reminds me of commercial we did.”

Shane’s eyes dart to Ilya, staring at him as if he had lost his head.

“What are you doing?”

His voice is hushed but his tone is stern, or at least it would be if Hollander had a single angry bone in his body. Despite his intentions, it came out strained and a bit panicked. Ilya simply smiles as he continues as if he didn’t hear him.

“Such a good day, no? Our first time.”

There it is. That gorgeous red blooms on his face, just underneath the constellation of freckles that spot his cheeks. Ilya hears a few audience members giggle as he straightens in his seat.

The host comes back on set and after a countdown the show begins once again.

“Welcome back! As you can see, we have set up for our very first game. Something we like to call—“

The crowd cuts her off, reading a cue card held up by a crew member.

“Mixed Messages!”

“Yes, that’s right. We like to play this game whenever we have two players from different backgrounds. Usually, that would be an American and Canadian but today is special. Reminiscent of the first game played against the two, we have Russia vs. Canada.”

That was a deep cut. Ilya thought back to that time, the World Junior Hockey Championships. His first time representing his country, winning for his country. It felt amazing. But what felt even better was meeting Shane for the first time. Watching his eyes so focused, so trained on the puck. Seeing those beautiful freckles when he spoke to him outside the rink. That competition was their catalyst. Their impetus. The falling domino that led to the draft, and the gym hotel, and the commercial, and the locker room, and every hook up and little moment that led to today.

Today. Where their boyfriends. Where Ilya has found himself completely and utterly whipped for this man he’s fallen in love with.

It’s frankly disgusting how much he loves the man beside him.

“Let me explain how this works. We have a stack of cards here with different Russian and Canadian slang. You will take turns reading to one another and if you can correctly guess what it means you get a point!”

Ilya glances over at Shane. He’s nodding along to the instructions and knitting his eyebrows in the adorable way he does when he’s focused. Ilya is enjoying every second of it.

London hands each of them their respective cards and tells Shane to go first. Ilya can tell he’s a bit nervous by the way his foot taps and he fumbles the card a bit before holding it towards himself then to the audience.

“Okay, uh, my first word is toque.”

Ilya smiled cockily when he realized he knew the word. He was definitely at an advantage here, being a Russian constantly around Canadians as opposed to Shane only ever being around one Russian, Ilya. However, Ilya was still terrified of being made out to be some idiot just because he didn’t know a bunch of stupid English words that mean what they don’t mean.

Although, the only reason he knew *this* stupid English word was Shane. He remembered seeing him in an ad for some new Metros merch line. A targeted ad that wouldn’t have come up for Ilya if he hadn’t been watching the Metros game the night before.

Shane was one of many players posed in various pieces of crap with the Metros logo slapped on it. There were other players posed too, Pike and Boiziau sporting similar getups, but

there's no denying that Ilya was only paying attention to Shane's photo.

He had on a hoodie with his number on the front, likely his name on the back as well, and a beanie with the team logo stitched on the front. Ilya thought it was stupid and made a note to mention it the next time the two met. He scrolled to the description which is what piqued his interest.

*Gear up and get ready for the season with new Montreal Metros merchandise!  
Modeled by our very own players, new hoodies, toques, & jerseys. Exclusive MHL only
available on official website.*

The first thing Ilya did when he saw Shane was ask him—

“What the fuck is a *too-que*?”

That was a lie. That was the first thing he asked *after* he got through with him. They were wrapped in one another, Ilya resting against Shane's bare chest. Shane looked down, cocking an eyebrow as he carded his hand through Ilya's curls.

“What?” he giggled.

“A toque. The stupid thing you wore in Metros ad.”

Shane went quiet for a second, thinking.

“Oh! My hat. Toque is just what we call a uh...beanie.”

“Is stupid.”

“It isn't!”

“It is.”

“Whatever.” He went quiet for a second before grabbing Ilya's chin and guiding his eyes to his.

“You saw my ad?”

Ilya snapped back to reality when he realized he had been silent for a while. Thankfully, he could fall back on the excuse that his Russian brain was simply catching up to the English. Finally, after a long beat, he responded.

“Toque. Is stupid Canadian name for hat.”

A ding sound effect goes off from...somewhere. Ilya smiles as the host announces he got it right and the crowd applauds. He can tell that a lot more people are here for Shane than him. He hasn't been very well liked in New York since the Admirals' cup win.

After the crowd calms down, Ilya picks up the card in his lap and shows it to the crowd.

“Хейтить.”

Very funny. Ilya knew exactly why they picked this stupid word. It was slang for hate, very fitting for their rivalry. If only they knew.

Shane wouldn't know it. Because Ilya would never even dream of saying it to him. It was unfair, really.

Shane went through every Russian sentence Ilya had ever said, screamed, or whispered into his ear. He was so sure he had never heard it. It sounded like... heat? Hit? Shane sighed and finally spoke.

“Uh...I don't know, maybe hot..?”

An embarrassingly loud buzzer noise went off indicating he was wrong. The crowd stirred as Shane's face filled with a light red. There was no way he could've known that, but it still felt just as bad.

Ilya shoots a worried glare his way, one that no one would notice but him. A quiet “You're okay.” Shane smiles lightly and his fidgeting calms just a bit.

The game continues back and forth for a little while more. It ends 4-3 in Ilya's favor and some black and yellow confetti fills the room. Fitting.

They played another game which required the two to play air hockey against one another, Shane winning after a couple missed goals and chirps from Ilya.

There's another short break to clean up before they're ready to begin once more.

A break in which Ilya spends slightly off set, watching as Shane interacts with various fans in the crowd. His smile is big as he takes pictures with some and signs others' things.

Shane seemed surprised with each fan asking him for something. Like he wasn't a hockey all star. Like he hadn't won two cups. Ilya never understood Shane's insecurities when he's so talented and so good at hockey and so attractive and—

Ilya's mind wandered until someone tapped him on the shoulder and let him know it was time to get back to set.

He straightened himself and sat back down next to Shane, just ever so slightly closer.

“Okay! We have enjoyed the two of you so very much. To close off the show, we'd like to open the floor to some of the fans to ask you some questions. However, if any are out of your comfort zone, feel free to skip them.”

Shane nodded lightly and glanced over at Ilya. He noticed how, throughout the show, Ilya had slowly closed the distance between the two. He wanted so badly to grab his hand or place a hand on his thigh. He's never fought against a feeling this hard since they've become official.

The first fan was chosen from the audience and a camera turned to them.

"Uh, hi!! Oh my god, I didn't think I'd actually get chosen, okay. My question is for both of you. If you could describe each other in one word, what would it be?"

"Oh, is simple. Hollander is boring."

The crowd laughs and Shane rolls his eyes. *Boring*. It would usually mess with Shane but he knows that boring is what Ilya likes about him. It means he's stable. Consistent. They've had that talk dozens of times.

But Ilya can't help being an asshole. And out here? It's an insult. A playful one, at that.

"I would say Rozanov is...intense. *Very* much so."

The audience laughs once again and Shane smiles. He wasn't lying. The crowd just didn't have the same context of long nights and early mornings with Rozanov to go off of.

Another fan stood, a bit more confident than the first. She waved first, getting a wave from Shane and a nod from Ilya.

"My question is for Shane. How does it feel to be recognized while you're out in public? Especially when you're in your hometown?"

Shane thought about it briefly. It was the very thing keeping him from Ilya. Other people's thoughts, opinions, reactions. Things that clouded Shane's mind late at night. He often thought about when he was with Rose, how paparazzi somehow always knew exactly where he was or where he'd be. Since they broke up he's had slight reprise from that. But the feeling of being watched lingered. Made him think about if he could ever truly be out with Ilya.

"It took a while to get used to. I still get a bit surprised when someone asks me to sign something when I'm out. The funniest thing, though, is being out with my teammates and people will recognize me but not them?"

The crowd laughs and Shane settles into himself a bit, feeling a bit more comfortable.

"I know right! For example, one time I was out with Hayd- Pike. Hayden Pike. One of my closest friends on the team so we spend some of our off-time together. I was with him at this aquarium and..."

Shane continues, going on about his story. Ilya couldn't tell you a single word falling out of his mouth. If tested on it, he'd failed. Hollander could've been talking about how Ilya kissed him last Tuesday and he wouldn't have noticed. He was so enamored, watching this man he loved, so confident and self-assured. Something he rarely was unless they were alone. It was beautiful to see. It was hot.

Ilya adjusted himself in his seat just in time for Shane to finish his story about boring Pike. Another fan was picked and Ilya refocused, as much as he really didn't want to.

"This question is for Ilya. What was it like learning English? And do you have anyone you speak Russian with while in America?"

"Ah, I learned English when I was young. 14, maybe? My father is— was a part of the police force and said English was important business language. I was no good until I was older. Forced myself to be better before going to America for first time. Then I was drafted. I have gotten better, living in America. I miss it, though, speaking Russian. Here, I barely do. I have friend who is Russian but that is it."

The final fan stood and spoke and as soon as they did it was as if all of the air had been suctioned out of the room.

"Have you two heard of Hollanov? People saying the two of you would be good as a couple."

The room goes silent save a few murmurs in the crowd. A couple of 'Is that allowed?'s and "Oh my god.'s stand out. Ilya glares over at Shane and he is frozen. This is horrible. Shane's nightmare because how do you respond to that? Shane is a horrible liar, especially when it comes to Ilya. Something has to happen. Someone needs to say something. The host speaks up just as the silence is broken.

"You don't have to answer tha—"

"Hollander should be so lucky." Ilya chirps, cocky as ever.

The tension in the room dissipates and the crowd begins to laugh. The host lets out a sigh of relief that there aren't two angry, homophobic hockey players yelling right now. Shane stampers a bit but lets out an awkward chuckle. Ilya would do anything to be able to touch him, hold him, kiss him and tell him everything's okay right now. But he can't. So he settles for a smile and a wink. To which Shane scoffs and looks away.

The show wraps up after that. The host thanks them for coming on the show. She apologizes for the question and Shane assures her she does not have to. The crew gives the two some gift bags of snacks and they leave. In separate cars, they drive back to their hotel peacefully.

After showering, changing clothes, and finally relaxing, Shane picks up his phone seeing a very expected notification.

Lily: Come here

Shane couldn't fight the smile that spreads across his face as he puts on his hoodie and heads up to Ilya's room.

It only takes a single knock before Shane hears a muffled voice through the door. He opens it and locks it quickly before his eyes search the room for Ilya. He walks past the small sitting area into what he assumes is the bedroom.

"Ilya?" he calls. He finally finds him, lying on his bed shirtless with just sweatpants on.

“Hollanderrrrrr.” he whines, crawling across the bed and grabbing Shane’s waist. His head is flush with Shane’s chest and he’s staring up at him so lovingly. God, how could Shane not see it before? Maybe he was stupid.

“Yes, Rozanov?” He brushes his thumb over Ilya’s cheek and Ilya turns his face to kiss his palm.

“Do you know how hard it is to hate you?” He slowly slides up, meeting Shane’s face.

“Hm. I don’t know. You’re pretty easy to hate.” A smirk crosses Shane’s lips.

“Oh, now who’s the asshole?” He smiles and their lips meet.

It was slow. Patient. Because they had time. It didn’t have to be fast paced or hurried because they weren’t on a ticking clock. It was just them and the love they had for each other.

Shane is the first to break the kiss, only for a short moment in order to take his hoodie and shirt off in one quick movement. He immediately reconnects with Ilya, Shane’s hands reaching to cup his face.

They kiss deeper and wrap themselves in each other, laughing as Ilya pulls Shane onto the bed. They stay that way a while, in quiet harmony.

“You know, Ilya?”

Ilya looks down, his hand gently caressing Shane’s face, his freckles. He makes a small sound, acknowledging him sleepily.

“It took everything in me not to kiss you today.”

A comfortable silence falls between the two as Ilya looks Shane in the eye, saying everything he can’t.

“Me too.” Ilya near whispers, so quiet Shane almost doesn’t catch it.

Ilya closes his eyes and presses his head against Shane’s.

“я тебя люблю. я так сильно тебя люблю.”

Shane knows this one.

“I love you too.”

End Notes

Yes, Shane's outfit was inspired by Hudson's TIMID photoshoot. I was tempted to base both of their outfits on Connor and Hudson's Vanity Fair photoshoot but sadly, we both know those boys aren't that stylish. Adding to this, I am American, not Russian nor Canadian so the slang-game is heavily researched and may very well be silly to the natives reading.

*Ilya's last sentence says "I love you. I love you so much."

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