The Hollander Line

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at https://archiveofourown.org/works/77188261.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Heated Rivalry (TV), Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid
Relationship:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Shane Hollander, Ilya Rozanov, Original Children of Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov
Additional Tags:	Hollanov - Freeform, Domestic Fluff, Kid Fic, Girl Dads, Ilya Rozanov Loves Shane Hollander, POV Shane Hollander, Post-Canon, Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence, Post-Book 6: The Long Game (Game Changers), ilya is the fun dad, Ottawa Centaurs (Game Changers), timbits hockey, double double slander, Married Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov, Slice of Life, Retired Shane Hollander, Retired Ilya Rozanov, Fluff
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2026-01-06 Words: 4,865 Chapters: 1/1

The Hollander Line

by animeboysruinedmylife

Summary

> “Which one is yours?”
>
> Shane scans the ice for his daughter’s jersey number. Ilya had been really smug about it when they brought it home. *She has your last name, Hollander,* he’d said, *let her have my number if she wants. Is better, anyway.*
>
> “That one,” he says, pointing at the clump of white jerseys. “Number 81. Mila.”
>
> “Oh you’re Mila’s dad!” The woman looks delighted. “I’m Maddie’s mom. Jane.”
>
> She holds her hand out, and Shane has to bite back a grin. He takes her hand.
>
> “Shane,” he says, shaking it. “Nice to meet you.”

Notes

> so i read the plane crash fic and needed to bleach my brain with happy thoughts 🙃 Please enjoy married girl dads Shane & Ilya as they navigate parenting and Timbits hockey (which, for any non-Canadians is a Tim Hortons-sponsored league for kids aged 4-6).
>
> Please ignore the slight canon divergence(s) that are here purely for my convenience, but this is set post-The Long Game. They're married, retired from the NHL, and have started a family :)

See the end of the work for more notes

“Which one is yours?”

Shane turns around. There’s a woman sitting in the row behind him, giving him a bright smile. She’s wearing a red Team Canada toque with a white pompom on top. Shane smiles back.

“Um…” he turns back around, scanning the ice for his daughter’s jersey number. Ilya had been really smug about it when they brought it home. *She has your last name, Hollander,* he’d said, *let her have my number if she wants. Is better, anyway.*

“That one,” he says, pointing at the clump of white jerseys. “Number 81. Mila.”

“Oh *you’re* Mila’s dad!” The woman looks delighted. “Do you mind if I…” she gestures to the empty seat next to him.

“No, please,” Shane says, shuffling over a tiny bit on the plastic-topped bleacher bench. The woman loops her arm through her tote bag and scoots down onto the bench, holding her blanket against her lap.

“I’ve heard so much about your daughter,” the woman says. She points to a tiny child hovering near one of the goals. “I’m Maddie’s mom. Jane.”

She holds her hand out, and Shane has to bite back a grin. He takes her hand.

“Shane,” he says, shaking it. “Nice to meet you.”

His daughter has mentioned a Maddie before, a handful of times. *Maddie says her mom’s buying her pink tape,* she’d said on the drive home from the arena after their first game this year, *can we get pink tape?*

Maddie lost her this tooth, she’d said, pointing at the fresh gap in between her canines, *and now we’re matching!*

Maddie has a dog, she’d said after practice one day, *can we get a dog?*

Maybe, Shane had said, at the same time Ilya said *yes.*

They got the dog.

“We’ve just moved here,” Jane says, tucking her hand back under her blanket, “my husband and I, so I’m trying to meet as many parents as I can!”

“Where’d you move from?” Shane asks.

“Thunder Bay,” Jane says. She hisses through her teeth when one of the children bowls into a group, and sends all four of them to the ice. “I really hate when they fall.” She turns to look at Shane. “Can you tell I’m not really a hockey mom?”

Shane laughs. “Nah, you’re fine.” He can’t help but be reminded of his own mom. They have the same long dark hair, same kind, brown eyes. He remembers seeing his mom react similarly when he started playing, looking over to see her wincing through the glass whenever he got hit. “How long has she been in Timbits?”

“This is our first year,” Jane says. “I’m not sure where this obsession with hockey’s come from all of a sudden.” She laughs. “Maybe my husband’s influence. He’s a big Centaurs fan.”

Shane nods. He still can’t quite tell if she knows who he is. They’ve lived in Ottawa for a while now, and it’s always a fifty-fifty chance someone’s eyes will suddenly widen with recognition, and start asking a million questions about what life after retirement has been like. Shane’s never liked the spotlight in that way. *Quieter,* he usually says. *Just enjoying family life.* It’s not a lie; he just likes to keep some things just for them.

It’s not a secret that they live in Ottawa – him and Ilya. They’d done a house tour with Architectural Digest the year after the Centaurs won the Cup. They’d loved that house. Ilya had insisted on the giant windows in the living room, *like the cottage*, he’d said. Shane had been particular about the extra-long kitchen island, with room for eight stools for when they had guests over. Mostly for when Hayden and Jackie came to visit, so there was room for everyone to sit.

My house is full of Pikes, Ilya would pretend to grumble. But then he’d chase the kids around with the giant Nerf gun he claimed to have bought for them, while they squealed and ran for cover in the games room. The kids never wanted to leave, and more than once, Ilya had helped Arthur hide in one of the bathroom cabinets so he wouldn’t have to go home to Montreal.

But they don’t live in that house anymore. They’d moved further out, the year Mila was born, to a bigger piece of property where they could build a bigger house. *At least four bedrooms*, Ilya had said decisively while they were looking at preliminary designs. *I want enough kids to fill a line.*

Ilya, that’s way too many, Shane had said, but Ilya just shook his head.

The Centaurs will love to have them,” he’d said. *‘Put in the Hollander line’, they’ll say. Crowd will love it, they’ll cheer for little Hollanders*.

What if we have girls? Shane had asked.

Shane, Ilya had said, slowly, like he was explaining something to a child. *Girls can play hockey too.*

Shane had shoved his husband. *I know that, asshole,* he’d said, and Ilya had laughed at him. *But they won’t be in the NHL.*

You’ll see, Ilya had said, putting both hands on Shane’s shoulders. *They’ll be so good, NHL will be begging our girls to come play for them.*

* * *

“Sorry, sorry,” Ilya says now, sliding onto the bench next to Shane. “Man in front of me kept changing his mind.” He’s holding two paper coffee cups, and hands one over. Baby Charlie snuffles in her sleep, cuddled up to Ilya’s chest in the carrier. Ilya immediately stops moving until she settles again.

“It’s okay,” Shane says, taking the cup. “Thanks. This is Maddie’s mom,” he says, gesturing to his other side. “*Jane*.”

Ilya raises his eyebrows minutely at Shane, then puts on his most pleasant people-meeting smile. “Ilya,” he says smoothly, reaching across Shane’s lap. He keeps one hand on the back of Charlie’s head, keeping her close to his chest. She doesn’t stir. “Nice to meet you.”

“You too,” Jane says. She eyes the baby strapped to Ilya’s chest. “And who’s this?”

“Charlotte,” Ilya says, smiling down at her proudly. He adjusts the tiny green toque on her head. “Sorry, she’s a little shy.”

“What a cutie,” Jane says. “How old is she?”

“Four months,” Shane says.

“Oh wow!” Jane’s eyes go wide. “Good for you for even making it out of the house today!”

“We’re lucky,” Ilya says. “She was born with Shane’s pretty eyes and my ability to sleep anywhere.”

“For now,” Shane says. “We’ll see.” He brings his coffee cup to his mouth, then immediately screws up his face at the bitter taste. “Uh-”

“Oh, sorry.” Ilya takes the cup out of Shane’s hand and replaces it with the other one. “That one is mine. *This* is disgusting ‘double-double’.”

“They’ll revoke your citizenship if you keep saying that,” Shane jokes, and Ilya gives him a look, taking a long sip from his black coffee without breaking eye contact.

“Oh!” Jane stands suddenly, clasping her hands together. Out on the ice, one of the players from the blue team is on a breakaway. They fire a clumsy shot towards the open net, but one of the kids in white and red comes out of nowhere to throw their body on the ice and blocks the puck.

“Yes, Maddie!” Jane cheers.

“This is your daughter?” Ilya points with the hand holding his coffee cup. “She is fast. Good skater.”

“I can’t take any credit for it,” Jane says. “She’s taken to hockey like a fish to- well, frozen water, I suppose. My husband’s been *dying* to get her into U7, and she just loves it. She skates better than she walks, I think!”

“Which team does she support?” Ilya asks, taking another sip of coffee.

Shane turns to him. “Ilya,” he warns.

“What?” His husband smiles innocently at him. “Just asking.”

“I was just saying, my husband is a big Centaurs fan,” Jane says, picking her blanket up from where it’s pooled at her feet, covering her lap again. “So Maddie is too, now, sort of by association. She says her favourite player is Wyatt Hanes.”

“Hayes,” Shane and Ilya say at the same time, reflexively.

“The goalie,” Ilya says, nodding. “She wants to be in goal?”

“I think she just likes the idea of wearing all those pads,” Jane laughs. “But who knows?”

“Have you ever brought her to a game?” Shane asks.

“Oh god no,” Jane says. “I’ve never been able to sit through more than about five minutes of a game. But I guess I better get used to it! Maybe when she’s a bit older.”

She cranes her neck, looking towards the double doors. “I don’t know where Chris went. He had to step out to take a work call, but I’m sure he’d love to talk-”

“Come on,” Shane says suddenly, his eyes following Mila on the ice. She’s managed to steal the puck from one of the blue players and is skating towards the other team’s goal.

She’s a lot more sure of herself this year, he’s noticed. More confident with her stick as well. He and Ilya had agreed that they wouldn’t push her into hockey, but maybe it was inevitable. *Genetics*, Ilya always says whenever they pick her up from her grandparents’ house, where Shane’s parents still watch every Cens game, even though neither of their sons play anymore.

Mila likes to wear Centaurs shirts when she watches – *for good luck*, she says. They’d bought her a jersey, a new one in her size, but she prefers to wear her dads’, even though they hang off her shoulders like a dress.

Between the two of them, they have enough Centaurs apparel to outfit a small army, even now, years after they’ve retired. Some Metros shirts too, that Shane holds onto purely for nostalgic reasons. But the only shirt he won’t let his daughter wear is the one faded Raiders shirt he saved, with “Rozanov” on the back. That one’s his.

It’s vintage, he said to Ilya, who found it folded at the back of Shane’s sock drawer.

They’re all vintage, Ilya said. *There is no more Ilya Rozanov*.

Shane had rolled his eyes. *You know I hate when you phrase it like that.*

Like what? Ilya said, grinning like an idiot.

It makes it sound like you died or something, Shane said.

But is true, Ilya insisted, *legally, there is no Ilya Rozanov. He disappeared, poof! Married some Canadian has-been hockey player and has lots of sex and babies.*

He'd scooped Shane up in a tight bear hug, lifting him straight off the ground, and tossed him onto their bed. Climbed up and straddled Shane's hips. *Ilya Hollander is much better, yes?*

Shane pretended to think about it, and Ilya responded swiftly, tickling Shane's ribs and kissing the side of his neck that always made Shane giggle.

Okay okay, Shane had said. *It's better. A bit of a mouthful though.*

I'll show you a mouthful, Ilya had said, reaching for his belt buckle. He never misses a beat.

They'd waited until after Ilya retired to legally change his name. It was less complicated that way. Though Harris said fans probably would have paid good money to own a jersey with the double-barrel name on the back if they knew they were limited edition. The team had gifted them a custom-made "Hollander-Rozanov" Centaurs jersey when they got married, which Shane had framed immediately. It's hanging in their bedroom.

Ilya always tells people he changed his name so their family could be like a team, all sharing the same name. *Hollander is easier to spell*, he'd said in one interview, shrugging it off. But Shane knows it's because Ilya feels no loyalty to the Rozanov name. He doesn't want to be reminded of his father, or his brother, with whom he had shared it, and contributed only to his misery.

Are you sure? Shane had asked, when Ilya told him he had decided.

Yes, Ilya had said. Shane had studied his husband's face, but he didn't see the twitch in his jaw, Ilya's usual tell. He was serious. *I don't owe them anything,* Ilya continued. *That name is my past. And you are my future, solnyshko*.

Mila comes to a shaky stop in front of the net. She winds her stick back and shoots – backhand, Ilya is sure to mention – burying the puck in the back of the net.

"*Davai!"* Ilya shouts, then makes a face, glancing down at Charlie. She's still fast asleep. "Great goal, *myshka!"* he calls out, a bit quieter. Mila turns to where they're sitting, giving them a wave.

"Backhand," Ilya mutters, and Shane rolls his eyes.

"I knew you'd say that," he says, still clapping for Mila.

"I taught her that," Ilya says, leaning across to speak to Jane.

"She's fantastic!" Jane turns to look at them. "Did either of you play?"

"Eh, little bit," Ilya says, tilting his hand back and forth in a *comme ci, comme ça* gesture that he's always found hilarious for some reason. "Not anymore."

That's not entirely true. Ilya thinks it's funny to find local pick-up or beer league games searching for extra players and show up unannounced. It's become somewhat of a joke in the area that if a round of drinks is on the line for the winning team, Ilya Rozanov might show up (and then buy a round for the losing team as well, and the rest of the bar for good measure).

Do you miss it? Shane had asked, a few years ago. They'd been sitting on the couch watching Washington win the playoffs, their first in over a decade. The young captain held the cup above his head, shouting triumphantly, surrounded by his teammates.

No, Ilya had answered, his eyes on the screen. Mila was lying between them, stretched out over two couch cushions, her feet in Shane's lap.

Liar, Shane said, and Ilya had turned to him.

Is not a lie. He'd looked at Mila, then back to his husband. *Why would I miss it, when this is everything I ever wanted?*

"We got Mila a pair of nets for Christmas," Shane says, gently steering the conversation back to their daughter. "For the driveway. She loves shooting practice."

"Oh wow," Jane's eyes light up. "Don't let Maddie hear you say that, she's been *begging* for a net. But we live right off a main road, so we don't let her play in the street."

"Bring her to our house," Ilya says. "We have a big driveway. *Milushka* will love to play with someone who isn't her old Dad."

"Hey!" Shane says with mock offence. "We're the same age!"

"Same age," Ilya agrees, then points at himself "but Papa is *much* faster."

"Screw you," Shane chuckles.

Jane giggles beside him. "You two are so funny. How long have you been together?"

Ilya and Shane look at each other. How could they condense everything they've been through into a number? Even if it were triple, *quadruple* digits, it would feel too small. They've lived a lifetime together.

"Probably…twelve years, officially?" Ilya looks to Shane for confirmation, and Shane nods. "But we have known each other since we were seventeen."

"That's so cute," Jane gushes. "Like high school sweethearts?"

Shane smiles at Ilya before turning back to Jane. "Yeah, something like that." Ilya slides a hand onto Shane's knee and gives it a squeeze.

Twelve years has felt like a blur; a blur of hockey, plane rides, winning, and losing. Summers at the cottage, Christmases with Shane's parents, and long weekends at their house, imagining this life they're now living.

And Ilya has been rock solid through it all.

Two months before Mila was born via surrogate, Shane had had a mild panic attack. Ilya would say it was more than mild, but he's always been a bit dramatic.

I can't do this, Shane had said, slumping down onto the kitchen floor, knees to his chest.

Ilya had crouched down in front of him. *Yes you can. You won Montreal their first back-to-back Cups ever, you can do anything.*

Shane looked up and glared at him. *That's not the same thing.*

The Metros are not a good team, Hollander, Ilya said. *They won because of* you. *Because you are good leader.*

Fuck you, we were good in 2015.

Ilya gave him an incredulous look. '*We'? What is this 'we'? Fuck Montreal, they are not 'we'-*

What if she hates me? Shane let his head fall back down, resting on his knees. He wrapped his arms around his legs, folding in on himself.

She won't, Ilya said, putting his hands on Shane's shoulders.

She might.

Why would she hate you?

Because I'm gonna be the strict one! Shane looked up again, tears in his eyes. *I'm gonna be the mean dad with all the rules, and you're gonna be the fun dad who lets her stay up late and eat junk and buys her whatever she wants. That's just who we are. I'm the boring one, and you're the fun one. You just… are.*

Sweetheart, Ilya said, still rubbing Shane's shoulders. *You're… fun, too?* It hadn't been very convincing.

Fuck you, Shane had said. He dipped his head back down, but Ilya caught his face between his hands, cupping his cheeks.

No, you are! Remember when we went on that zipline? In the trees? That was your idea.

Only because I thought you'd like it, Shane grumbled.

And you learned to make solyanka, Ilya continued.

Because you said it was your favourite-

Da, Ilya said, wiping away a tear with his thumb. *I did, and you remembered. And you make it for me all the time. And you'll do this for her too, I know you will. You're so selfless,*

solnyshko, you will be a good dad.

He sat down next to Shane, back against the fridge door, and grabbed Shane's hand. He brought it to his lips. Shane looked over and gave him a watery smile.

...not as good as me, probably. Ilya smirked at him, and Shane rolled his eyes

You're such an asshole! He'd said and tried to yank his hand away, but Ilya was too fast for him.

Eh, is competition now, he said, *you love competing with me!*

Yeah, Shane said, leaning his head to rest on his husband's shoulder, *but I liked it better once we were on the same team.*

Ilya laid his head on top of Shane's. *Me too. And we still are. We're Hollanders. We can do anything.*

He squeezed Shane's fingers between his own.

And if we can't, at least we try our best, okay?

Shane squeezed back. *Okay.*

* * *

On the ice, two players collide and fall down. Ilya jumps up.

"Ref!" he calls out, cupping his hands around Charlie's ears. "Are you blind? That was clearly roughing!"

"Oh my go- sit *down*," Shane says, tugging on Ilya's coat sleeve. He can feel himself getting red. "You are so embarrassing!"

"Kidding, kidding," Ilya says with a shit-eating grin. Some of the parents near them laugh, and he holds up a hand before sitting down.

"Relax, Hollander," he says, as the whistle blows, signalling the end of the game. He kicks at Shane's foot with the tip of his shoe.

"*You* relax, Hollander," Shane says, kicking him back.

"That's my name, don't wear it out," Ilya says cheerfully.

Jane stands up, folding her blanket over her arm. "Well, that wasn't so bad, only an hour! I think I could work up to two by the time they're ready to move up!"

"It goes by fast," Shane says. Charlie stirs in her carrier, babbling a little bit and Shane smiles at her. She really does have his eyes.

"Who won?" Jane asks. "I think I lost track."

Shane opens his mouth, about to say that he doesn't know, but Ilya jumps in. Of course he does.

"We did," he says. "Five to three. Unless I missed something while I was waiting in slow coffee line."

"But that's not the important part," Shane says pointedly. Jane laughs.

"Yes yes, of course," Ilya says flippantly, waving one hand. "Important part is having fun! Right, *Sharlotta*?" Charlie blinks up at him and yawns.

"I'm serious about playdate," Ilya says, adjusting the baby carrier. "You and your husband should bring Maddie over to play in the driveway."

"Really?" Jane looks surprised. "Well, thank you! It's been kind of tough making friends here, so I appreciate the offer."

"Is no problem," Ilya says. He takes his phone out of his pocket and unlocks it. "What is your number?"

Jane recites her number, and Ilya taps it into his phone. He texts her right away, and she saves his number as well.

"This is great," Ilya says. "*Milushka* begged for a sister to play with, but we told her she has to wait until this one can at least sit up on her own."

"He's kidding," Shane interjects, before Jane can start to formulate opinions on their questionable parenting methods.

"Mm mostly kidding," Ilya says with a wink. He bounces Charlie a little. "Once she can hold a stick, we'll see."

"Dad! Papa!" Mila calls from the ice, leaning over the boards. Shane and Ilya both wave at her, and Shane holds up his index finger – *one minute*.

"It was really nice to meet you," Shane says, turning to Jane.

"You too," she says. It sounds like she really means it. She crouches a little, getting to Charlie's eye-level. "And it was nice to meet *you!"* She waggles her fingers, and laughs when Charlie doesn't react at all.

"You will text me, yes?" Ilya asks, pointing to the phone still in her hand. "I would like to meet your Centaurs fan husband."

"Yes, I don't know where he disappeared to!" She looks over at the doors again. "But I'll definitely text you. I'm sure the girls would love to get together."

"Great!" Ilya smiles at her before turning back to Shane. "Ready?"

"Yep."

They head down to the ice, where Mila is waiting with another girl. “Did you see my goal?”

“You were amazing!” Shane says, reaching over the boards to lift her up by the armpits. “Great backhand.”

“I’ve been practicing with Papa,” she says proudly.

“See?” Ilya pumps his eyebrows at Shane. “Excellent work, *myshka.* Did you have fun?”

“Yep!” She points to her friend. “This is Maddie. Can she come over tomorrow? I want to show her my nets!”

“Absolutely,” Shane says, “as long as she asks her parents first.”

“My grandpa built these boards so the puck doesn’t roll down the driveway,” Mila says to Maddie, “it’s so cool!”

“Cool!” Maddie repeats.

“I hear Wyatt Hayes is your favourite player,” Ilya says to Maddie. She nods at him. “I will tell him. He will be so excited to hear this, because he is nobody’s favourite.”

“Ilya,” Shane mutters through clenched teeth, “be nice.”

Maddie’s eyes get wide. “You *know* him?”

Ilya grins at her. “Yes. He is a good guy. We have dinner together all the time.”

“No you don’t,” Maddie says, and Ilya pulls out his phone.

“You think I am liar? Okay, look at this…”

“Dad.” Mila tugs at Shane’s elbow. She’s pulled her gloves off. Shane looks down at her. “Was I good?”

Something in Shane’s heart twinges. She’s inherited his anxiety around playing; he feels responsible for that. He’s been hoping all the time she’s spent playing with Ilya would instill some of his confidence.

She’d been nervous before her first practice too. She’d only been four then, but tall for her age. She could thank her six-foot-three Russian Papa for those genes.

Shane and Ilya had been standing with her by one of the player gates. She kept looking down at her skates. Everyone else was already on the ice. Shane was keeping his eye on two of the six-year-olds that looked like trouble.

Okay myshka, Ilya had said, rapping the top of her helmet, *we will be sitting right here, okay?*

Mila nodded, and as Ilya started walking up into the stands, she'd grabbed the bottom of Shane's jacket. *Dad? Can you check my skates again?*

Of course, he'd said. Ilya had turned around, but Shane gestured for him to go ahead. Mila took a seat on the edge of the bench, and Shane knelt down in front of her. But her skates were tied perfectly, just as they had been when he'd checked them for her ten minutes earlier.

What's up, sweetie? he asked. *Are you nervous?*

Mila nodded, not meeting his eyes.

About the other kids?

She nodded again.

Or… something else?

Another nod. *What if I'm bad?* She looked up at him. There were no tears in her eyes, but Shane recognized the fear. The fear of *not good enough*, despite the hours they'd spent ripping around the pond that past winter practicing skating, the drills she and Ilya had run through in the driveway, shooting balls at the garage door (even though Shane had told him not to – they already had to repaint the walls in the basement).

Oh, Mila. Shane put his hands on her knees. *You won't be! But today, you don't even have to worry about being good or bad. This is just for fun!*

What if I don't like it? She whispered the words, like she was afraid of anyone hearing.

Then we won't play anymore, Shane said. *And we can try something else. Like… soccer. Or baseball?* Mila shook her head, but she was smiling. *Or maybe not sports,* Shane continued, *something like… painting.*

Mila's face got serious again. *Will Papa be sad if I don't want to play hockey?* She suddenly looked so small, in her helmet and shoulder pads, dwarfed by the one-size-fits-all *Tim Hortons* jersey thrown over top.

Shane looked past her, to where Ilya was sitting on a faded red bleacher bench. He was wearing a hat with the logo of Ottawa's PWHL team – one he'd bought, actually, even though they'd sent him one for free – and was already chatting with someone in the row in front of him.

Papa and I love you, Shane said to Mila, squeezing her legs. *We will always love you. Even if you weren't good at hockey. But you are, baby. You're very good!*

Mila sniffled a little, but nodded.

And Papa and I will still love you if you decide you don't like hockey anymore. I promise.

Okay, she'd said.

And we'll find something else to love together. Okay?

Okay. She brightened a little bit. *I'll try hockey first.*

Sounds good! Shane smiled at her. *What team are we?*

Mila's smile widened before shouting, *Team Hollander!*

And what do Hollanders do?

Try our best!

Yes we do! Shane flipped her little visor down, then tilted his head forward slightly so she could tap her helmet against his forehead. *Go have fun!*

Mila wobbled her way to the gate and stepped out onto the ice to join the rest of the team. Shane stood up, his bad knee clicking a little as he did so, and he tried not to wince.

Everything okay? Ilya asked once Shane had made his way over to their seats.

Yeah, Shane said, watching their little Timbit compare sticks with one of the other kids. *We're okay.*

* * *

"Was I good?"

Mila is still looking up at him, through the scratched-up plastic of her visor. Now, at six-years-old, she's still small, still too young to be anxious about shot percentages, and face-off wins, and minutes played, or whatever else he and Ilya yelled at the TV when they watched games together. She's playing because she *likes* to – *loves* to, maybe – and that's all that should matter.

"The best," Shane says. "Still fun?"

"Still fun," his daughter confirms. She knocks on the side of her helmet with her knuckles, and Shane smiles, leaning down to tap his forehead to her visor.

He hopes she never stops asking. He hopes her answer never changes. But if it does, they'll be okay.

* * *

"I'm *so* sorry that took so long," Chris says, rushing back up the stairs. "What did I miss?"

"Maddie threw herself on the ice to block a shot," Jane says. "And I made friends!"

"Awesome!"

“Actually…” Jane scans the crowd. “Oh, there they are. They’re Mila’s dads.” She points to where Maddie is standing next to a small girl with two blond braids poking out the bottom of her helmet.

“Those are Mila’s dads?”

“Uh huh.” Jane turns around. Her husband’s eyes look ready to pop out of his skull. “What are you staring at?”

“Janie,” Chris says, unable to look away from the gigantic Russian man offering his daughter a fist bump with her gloves on. “That’s Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov.”

“I know,” Jane says, confused. “I just met them.”

“No, as in *Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov*. From the Centaurs,” Chris says. “They were like, the best players in the league at one point.”

“Really?” Jane turns her head again to look at them. “Well, they invited the three of us over to play hockey in their driveway. So, I think we’ll probably just know them as Mila’s dads.”

End Notes

shoutout to my irl dad (who i hope is NOT reading this!!), who made wooden boards for me and my brother so we wouldn't lose pucks and balls down our driveway!

and shoutout to my forever friend positivejam for the feedback & notes on this, I am forever in your debt ❤️

If this fic found you when you needed a break from the angst, i hope it made you feel warm and happier inside! Thanks for reading :)

Works inspired by this one

Mr Hollander by laolafi

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!