The Best Game You Can Name (the good ol' hockey game)

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The Best Game You Can Name (the good ol' hockey game)

by ARustySpork

Summary

> "Why would anyone want to mic you up, Hollander?" Ilya asked, getting down to his knees next to Shane to join him in his stretches. "All they will hear is you discussing boring statistics and complaining how I am so much more talented than you."
>
> ___
>
> Or, Shane and Ilya on the ice, over the years

Notes

> The name of this fic comes from Stompin' Tom Connors best song of all time: The Hockey Song
>
> I've been addicted to watching hockey compilations, so this is just the culmination of all my favourite moments I've collected over the years. I apologize I was unable to fit in a reference to Quinn Hughes seeing ghosts, but maybe that's one for the next fic. Enjoy!

See the end of the work for more notes

November, 2011
Boston

"You look extra pretty today," Ilya says. He had been skating back and forth past Shane along the red line. "I am glad the bubble is gone, it did nothing for your freckles."

Shane blushed, looking down at the ice where he was stretching. "I'm mic'd up, Rozanov," he whispered harshly. "Don't say anything stupid."

Though he could tell that Shane was already stressed out about the knowledge that they were being listened to, Ilya couldn't help but smile. He wasn't worried, he was sure this was a clip that would be shared widely, but would only be interpreted as typical Rozanov chirping to get under his opponent's skin.

"Why would anyone want to mic you up, Hollander?" Ilya asked, getting down to his knees next to Shane to join him in his stretches. "All they will hear is you discussing boring statistics and complaining how I am so much more talented than you."

"I'm literally beating you in goals this season."

Ilya waved a hand casually. "Is not important. Season has just started."

"I just won rookie of the year."

Ilya looks around dramatically. "Wow, you see this guy? So full of himself he cannot stop bragging about his awards."

"Fuck off I'm not–"

"Is okay Hollander, I get it, you do one Rolex commercial and you are too good for me."

Shane didn't grace that with a response, rolling his eyes.

"Listen, Hollander. If I win this game, you will admit that I am best player."

"Not a chance."

"Ah! You are no fun! Because you know I will win."

"No, because we're about to beat your ass."

Ilya leaned in towards Shane, speaking into where his mic was. He noticed Shane tense up. "Voyageurs staff that is listening, please mail me a signed Hollander jersey. I will put it on my wall and anytime I worry I am doing badly, I can look at it and remember I am never as bad as Hollander."

"I'm leaving," Shane said, getting to his feet and starting to drift away.

Ilya reached out again, blowing a messy kiss across the ice. “Good luck Hollander! I miss you already.”

* * *

February, 2012
Montreal

“Boiziau, our goal is on other end of rink, this one is yours!”

Boiziau looked just about ready to throttle Ilya. Scoring an own goal was embarrassing enough, but doing it in your own barn was another level of humiliation. In his defense, it had been messy, and the Montreal defenseman had obviously been trying to get it out of the crease, but it had been too chaotic in their zone, and one accidental flick of the wrist was all it took to bring Boston up one.

Ilya watched as Shane brought Boiziau back around, directing him away from confrontation. He sent an exasperated look Ilya’s way, which only made the Russian grin wider.

“I can’t believe that fucking happened,” Marly said, the shock evident in his face.

“Is Montreal, what do you expect? I think is accident when they score on our goal.”

Marly laughed, patting Ilya on the back as he skated to the bench to switch shifts. He watched Hollander continue to play, seemingly invigorated by their fumble. He moved faster, with more energy, with fancier footwork and some of the craziest dangles Ilya had ever seen from the Canadian.

He watched Hollander get hold of the puck, racing past the Bears’ defence into their zone. Pike was on his wing, perfectly placed to receive the puck as Hollander slipped it right through a defenceman’s legs. With a terribly ugly slapshot, Pike sank the puck in the back of the net.

Ilya frowned. The game was back to one-one, and he would have to be the one to make it budge.

Ilya slipped through the door, stepping onto the ice just as Shane hopped over the boards into his own bench. Perfect, now Hollander had no choice but to watch as he scored on him in his own city. Maybe he would get a hat trick, just because he could.

He won the faceoff in his zone, against some little boy from Finland whose name Ilya had never bothered to learn, immediately passing the puck to his wing. Ilya took off into the neutral zone, turning to look behind him as he waited for the imminent pass back into his club. Ilya received the puck, only for a moment, before he spotted Boiziau, disgruntled defenseman, charging straight towards him. He flicked his wrist, sending the puck back to his linemate, but there was no stopping the Voyageur as he landed a hit straight into Ilya’s chest, sending him flying backwards.

Ilya waited for the familiar feeling of his shoulders slamming against the glass before he dropped to the ice, bruised in a way he knew he'd be feeling it for a week. But that feeling never came, and instead, Ilya just catapulted backwards, turning until he landed in the nice warm lap of Shane Hollander.

Ilya blinked, taking a moment to compose himself and remember where he was, temporarily distracted by the face of freckles hovering over him. He moved his legs, trying to get himself upright, but only began to flop around like a fish. A chorus of groans and hands grabbing him brought Ilya back to where he was, laid across the players of the Voyageurs bench.

"Get the fuck up, Rozanov" Pike shouted.

In Ilya's defense, he really was trying. As much as he fantasized about being in Shane's lap, those fantasies didn't include Hayden Pike and a grocery stick he didn't recognize. But the more he tried to wriggle himself up, the more he started to slip upside down, his skates turning into weapons of destruction far too close to his opponent's heads.

He felt someone grab onto a skate, craning his neck to notice that a linesman had finally joined the party to help Ilya reenter the game. He felt Hollander's hands on his ass hoisting him back over the boards, where he rolled onto the ice.

The play had not stopped during his quick vacation to Montreal's bench, and before he even properly had the chance to reorient himself, he was back in the game.

* * *

November, 2013
Montreal

Shane did not expect for a fight to break out near the end of the third period.

Maybe he really should have. The Bears had been more aggressive than usual, dishing out harder hits and taking bigger penalties accordingly. Yet, despite the fact that Rozanov had seemed to spend half his playing time in the sin bin, the Bears were still up by one.

No gloves had been dropped, but it looked like just about every player on the ice had jumped into the scrum, arms and sticks were flying, and at the center of it all, was Ilya Rozanov. Rozanov was currently locked in a bearhug with Beaulieu, both of them wrestling to take the other to the ground. Behind Beaulieu was another Bear, a massive guy, looking to tear him off his captain.

With the rest of the players engaged, sans the goalies, there was no one else there to back up Beaulieu. No one but Shane.

Shane did not fight (barring his attempt with Scott Hunter, which didn't even count, his gloves stayed on!), but he was good at de-escalation. He had done it dozens of times. Drag his opponents off, let everyone cool down, and let the game resume. It was an unfortunate fact that as team captains, Ilya and Shane were often expected to pair off during these kinds of scuffles, with most players not wanting to risk touching the captains.

When it came to Montreal, touching the captain was like touching the goalie, nothing was off limits after that.

Beaulieu was an absolute beast of a guy, a defender new to Montreal. He was from a remote reserve in the north of Saskatchewan, and seemed to have a never-ending supply of crazy stories from back home. He was big, and he could hold his own in a fight, but he was really a gentle giant. Shane needed to get in there.

Shane skated into the mix, reaching out his gloved hand to grab Rozanov by the collar of his jersey, yanking him out of Beaulieu's hold. Unaware of who had just scruffed him like a feral cat, Ilya spun around violently to lay eyes on his newest target.

Ilya grinned when he laid eyes on Shane, the two of them still pressed up against each other. When Shane had moved to pull Ilya out of the fight, he had not planned for the fight to simply follow them, with more hands and bodies surrounding the two captains, trying to force them apart.

Ilya's grip on Shane's jersey was like iron as he got into his face, close enough he could still smell the tobacco on his breath.

"Back the fuck off, Rozanov," Shane warned, noticing a linesman had now begun shoving his arms between the two.

Ilya didn't respond, instead leaning forward, and licking a strip right up Shane's face.

"What the fuck?" Shane shouted, shoving Rozanov hard, finally forcing him out of his personal space.

Ilya just laughed, skating backwards as the fight had finally dissolved.

Rozanov did not get an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty, despite the efforts of Shane's coach, but Shane was asked about the incident during locker room press.

"I think we were all a bit surprised to see the altercation between you and Rozanov on the ice, can you confirm for us, did he lick you?"

The reporter seemed to be holding back a shocked laugh at the situation, which pretty much summed up how Shane was feeling about the situation.

"Yes." Shane replied simply. "He did do that."

"Do you know why?"

Shane paused for a moment, hoping that whatever stupid look that was on his face was not going to be turned into a reaction meme. "I don't think I'll ever understand what goes through his head."

Later that night, Shane pulled up Bears interviews on YouTube. Trending right on the front page, was a post game interview with Ilya Rozanov.

“I thought he wanted to cuddle,” Ilya replied simply, signature smirk plastered across his face. “He was getting so close to me, I wanted to be close to him. I guess I misread the signals.”

Shane glared at his own reflection through his laptop screen. “Asshole.”

* * *

November, 2014
Boston

Ilya chased Shane across the ice, the two men too fast for anyone else to keep up. The puck bounced against the boards before being picked up by Montreal’s captain. Shane rounded behind the net, moving to swing around the back to tip in the puck on the goalie’s left.

This plan was squashed as Ilya checked him into the boards. However, Ilya did not emerge unscathed, as he felt his feet slide out in front of him, barrelling skates first into the boards.

Both men recovered quickly, Hollander first back to his feet, racing off to find the puck. Ilya was close behind, pushing off with his right skate, then his left.

He nearly faceplanted straight onto the ice, just barely catching himself as he flopped onto his stomach. He looked behind him, where his left skate blade was strewn across the ice. He looked to his bench, which was almost literally as far away as you could get from him.

He tried to crawl forward for a few seconds, before realizing that he looked like a complete idiot. Luckily, the play had stopped thanks to the puck being covered by the Voyageurs’ goalie, but most of his team was way past the blue, caught in a small scuffle due to an apparent high sticking.

There was only one player anywhere near his vicinity.

“Hollander!”

Shane looked around, his eyes going first to the stands, confused about where the voice was coming from. As if there was some other sexy Russian that might be needing his attention.

“Hollander! The hockey player! On the ice!” He called again.

Shane’s eyes finally found him, his face scrunched up when he noticed Ilya turtled on the ice, his skates in the air. He looked back to the scrum, as if he was hoping for literally anyone else to be capable of helping, to no avail.

“A little help here, pretty please.”

He finally skated over, stopping just in front of where Ilya lay.

“I lost my blade,” Ilya said, simply.

“Yes.”

They both waited, a pregnant pause between them.

“Can I have a ride?”

Shane frowned.

“Wow. Here I thought you Canadians were so polite. Cannot even help me to my bench.”

Shane rolled his eyes, but relented, holding his stick out behind him. Ilya got to his knees with a grin, grabbing hold of the blade as he tried to keep himself balanced.

Shane didn’t look back as he towed Ilya across the ice, even though Ilya was treating it as if he had just been picked up from elementary school in a Lamborghini. He whooped as Shane swung him past, letting go of the blade as he coasted the rest of the way to the bench.

“Thank you Hollander!” He shouted, just before he was forcibly surrendered to the equipment manager. “I will give good review on Uber.”

* * *

October, 2015
Montreal

“Long time no see, Mr. Turtleneck.”

Shane turned to look at Ilya, who had regularly begun to reserve a section of his warmup time whenever he played Montreal, just to bother Shane. Shane had complained about this to him last game, to which Rozanov replied:

“Oh Hollander, I know you like our chats. Otherwise you would not always be hugging the red line.”

Shane had scowled, and had not brought it up again. But also did not stray from the red line.

“I knew you were gonna say something, asshole.”

Ilya shrugged. “No, no, I like it. Very fashion, very cool, you will let me stand behind you if any flying ninja stars come this way, yes?”

Shane had recently begun wearing a neck guard. It was uncommon among NHL players, but had slowly begun to grow in popularity. If anyone asked, Shane stated that it was important to set an example, show that it wasn’t uncool to take safety seriously. In a sport that was already so dangerous, it was important to take precautions.

While all that was true, his new decision to wear a neck guard had been directly driven by a late night rabbit hole, in which he watched a video of a Florida Panthers game where Richard Zednik was hit with a skate to the neck, slicing open his carotid. This then sent him into a Wikipedia deep dive about all of the other many incidents where players had received skates to the neck. Really, he couldn’t see any reason not to wear a neck guard. He certainly wasn’t going to tip his visor up anymore. He wondered if it was allowed to wear a bubble full time.

“You laugh, but with the amount of dives you’ve taken into the net, you should be wearing one too. All it takes is one stray skate blade.”

“Sure, sure, soon you are going to tell me I should be wearing my mouth guard regularly. Come on, Hollander, we cannot protect against every alien invasion.”

“Do you not wear your mouthguard regularly?”

“What is point? None of my teeth are real anymore.”

“The mouthguard isn’t for your teeth–”

“Ugh, Hollander, please, even you cannot make discussing dental health sexy, please spare me this.”

Shane rolled his eyes. He was not winning this battle.

“My place again?” He asked instead quietly.

Ilya turned to Shane, waggling his eyebrows. “Only if the neck guard stays on.”

* * *

December, 2015
Boston

Games against Boston seemed to be synonymous with some sort of scrum breaking out.

Shane rolled his eyes at the pileup, debating if it was worth getting involved this time around. It seemed to be resolving itself, the crowd against the boards now calming as the linesmen became involved.

Shane heard him before he felt Rozanov’s arm land on his waist.

“What are you doing?” Shane heard himself ask.

“There is fight. Is only normal to pair up. Don’t want you going and fighting anyone.”

“Right. Because I’m the one you have to worry about there.”

“I think Scott Hunter would agree with me.”

Shane put his own arm around Ilya’s back, trying to calm his breathing. This was normal, he did this all the time with other players. Two players holding each other, side by side, making sure neither got involved with a fight. But the problem was that there was never this much sexual tension when he was buddied up with the center from Vancouver.

They stood side by side for a moment, listening to the echoes of the screaming crowd, the shouts from the fight, and each other’s breathing.

“Do you think one day you will be big and strong enough to join in the fights?” Ilya said, out of nowhere.

Shane elbowed Ilya in the gut. “Don’t be a dick.”

“That was me being nice. If I was dick I would say that your hands are too small and delicate to drop gloves. Soft like baby. Like model in Aveeno commercial.”

Shane pulled away. He knew Ilya was just trying to rile him up. If he got a reaction out of him, Boston might be able to come back from where they were down two points.

Just as Shane had started to release himself from Ilya’s grasp, he felt his stick vibrate, then drop out of his hand. He turned to Ilya, who was looking at Shane innocently, as if he hadn’t just whacked Shane’s stick out of his hand with his own.

Shane, still refusing to take the bait, reached down to grab his stick, only for it to slide across the ice as Ilya pushed it out of his grasp.

“Are you fucking kidding me?” Shane shouted.

Maybe it was that he was overheating, or that Ilya was being more of a dick than usual. Maybe it was what he had said about Shane not being tough, or that Ilya had once again moved to grab onto Shane’s jersey as he poked and prodded his patience.

To the surprise of everyone in the stands, the players on the ice, the ref, the coaches, the equipment managers, the announcers, Ilya Rozanov, and Shane Hollander himself, Shane dropped his right glove, and decked Ilya right in the face.

You could have heard a pin drop in that stadium. Shane’s hand was killing him, but the only thing he was paying attention to was the sparkle in Ilya’s eyes, and the grin that broke out across his face.

Ilya dropped his gloves, and punched Shane straight in the jaw.

With the linesmen no longer distracted by the scrum, they were between the two captains before any more fists could go flying. Not that Shane had been planning to do any more fighting, he was already so shocked at what he had done. Shane had been taunted much worse by much meaner players, but there was something about Ilya that could so easily get under his skin.

He didn’t miss the way Rozanov giggled as they were both pulled to their penalty boxes, as if this was some kind of weird foreplay. For the first time in his NHL career, Shane had received a major penalty for fighting. His jaw ached, not as much as it probably should have, if Ilya really meant to hurt him. Shane was mortified, he couldn’t imagine what his teammates, what the media would have to say.

God, what would Ilya have to say?

It turned out that Ilya had found it incredibly hot, waxing poetic all night long at Shane’s penthouse. Shane had been right that Ilya had not punched back as hard as he normally

would, which he emphasized several times when Shane tried to apologize.

“Hollander, I barely noticed you hit me. Your small fist landed like cool pillow after long day.”

Luckily, Shane had the chance to shut him up in more ways than one that night.

* * *

March, 2016
Montreal

Shane was back on the ice, Ilya always seeming to lurk in his peripheral vision.

Hayden had possession of the puck, trapped behind the net in Boston’s zone. He sauced it up over Rozanov’s stick, who had moved to position himself between the two, the puck heading right for Shane’s tape.

But, the puck wasn’t in his stick.

He looked to his left skate, where the puck had wedged itself perfectly in the space above his blade mount.

He lifted up his foot, banging down his skate against the ice trying to dislodge the puck, all while he continued to glide forward. When that didn’t seem to work, he brought down his stick against his foot, trying to whack it loose.

He was so distracted trying to keep the puck alive, he was caught off guard when he suddenly bowled forward, a body coming in from behind and pushing him down, continuing to hover over him as he slid forward on his stomach.

He suddenly felt a crowd gather around him. Hayden, another Boston player, a ref. Ilya was still hovering over him, grasping at his jersey like he was a dog who had something suspicious in his mouth.

“It’s in my skate,” Shane offered, muffled against the ice. He wasn’t really given much leeway to get up, he felt a bit like he was a hospital patient being used as a learning opportunity for a group of med students as the mix of players over him murmured in fascination.

The ref grabbed his skate, pulling his leg up behind him and wiggling the puck out from where it was wedged. He could hear Hayden laughing at him.

“Does this hurt the horse?” Ilya asked.

* * *

February, 2017
Boston

Things were good between Shane and Ilya.

They finally had the chance to talk at All-Stars, and while there was still a lot that they needed to discuss, they were in a good place. Shane could see a future.

He hadn't told anyone, not even Rose, but Shane was plotting. He was thinking about this summer, about the cottage, about how much nicer it would be if Ilya was there with him. He had to approach it delicately, he didn't want to scare Ilya off.

He hadn't decided anything yet, he needed more time to psych himself up, but he knew what he wanted. He wanted to invite Ilya to the cottage.

Shane filed onto Boston's ice, the first one on for warmups. Warmups were always something he looked forward to. He loved interacting with fans, reading the signs, and giving away pucks. He was lucky, being from a legacy team like Montreal, it seemed like wherever they played, the stands always had a showing of Habs fans. Even in places like Boston, even in St. Louis.

He rounded his half of the rink, collecting a puck as their EM began tossing them out on the ice. More players started to file on, starting drills, passing pucks, catching up with teammates. Boston had begun to fill the ice, and Shane had once again found himself drifting to the red line to start his stretches.

He stayed there for several minutes, even joined by Hayden for a bit, but Ilya never slid up beside him. Shane was trying not to be too obvious, looking to the other half to see where the Russian had gone off too.

"Hollander! Hey, Hollander!"

Shane whipped his head around, eyes eventually landing on Ilya, who was hugging the glass on the red line, at the small grouping of seats that laid between the two team benches.

"Yes, Hollander, come here!" He called again, unrelenting.

Shane sighed, but began to skate over. Far too curious about what he was inevitably going to be roped into.

Ilya seemed to be gesturing to a fan through the glass, a fan that was wearing a Montreal #24 jersey. It was a girl, still about elementary age, her cheeks plastered with temporary tattoos, and her thick dark hair braided into tiny plaits, all held together by what looked to be a handmade Voyageurs scrunchie. She also held a sign against the glass that read: "HATTY FOR HOLLZY!"

Next to her was a man Shane assumed to be her dad, evident by his similar dark complexion and proud expression.

Shane let a smile creep onto his face as he skated up to the glass.

"Do you see this, Hollander?" Rozanov announced, tapping on the glass with his stick. "Can you believe this? Montreal fan in Boston?" He turned so he was now talking to the girl,

raising his voice so he could be heard through the glass. “This is Boston! You are wearing wrong jersey! Where is Rozanov jersey?”

Luckily, the girl didn’t seem to feel attacked, and instead giggled back at the stern-looking Russian.

“No, she knows what she’s doing,” Shane said, smiling as he elbowed Ilya in the shoulder. “She can recognize real talent.”

Ilya scoffed, rolling his eyes. “Do you play hockey?” He asked the girl.

She nodded excitedly.

“Well then, Hollander, I don’t think she’s a fan at all. She’s gunning for your position.” He pointed at her, “hey, if you become Voyageurs Captain maybe you will finally win cup again.”

“We literally just won last year.”

“Yes but you will not win this year. Not without her.”

Shane laughed, tossing his puck up out of his stick blade and into his hand, preparing to toss it over the glass.

“Hollander, wait, wait, let me take picture.”

He turned to Ilya, who had skated backwards a bit to get a good angle, holding up his phone.

“Do you keep your phone in your gear?”

“Only during warmups. I also have sour patch kids.”

Shane rolled his eyes but relented, going up to the glass to pose. The girl was so excited she just about pressed her face against the glass as she waited for Ilya to snap a couple pictures.

“I will send them to you,” Ilya said, pocketing his phone. “She looks very cute. You look very tired and old.”

“Shut up.”

“Not very role model of you Captain Shane Hollander,” Ilya tsked, before finally retreating to his side of the ice.

Shane turned back to the glass, finally tossing the puck up and over to her. Her dad caught it, placing it in her hands. Shane didn’t think he’d ever seen someone so happy over a hunk of rubber. He sent one more wave her way before retreating to finally finish his warmups.

But not before he made a stop at his bench, getting the attention of his equipment manager to request he deliver one of Shane’s game-used sticks to his biggest fan in Boston.

End Notes

Thanks for reading! I apologize for the essay in the notes you're about to see.

Players getting thrown into the bench happens all the time, and it's funny every time. It doesn't constitute a stoppage in play unless there's a serious injury, but nonetheless the opposing team and linesmen typically help them get out anyway. One of my favourite occurrences of this happening is with Connor McDavid, who kind of stays propped up like a toddler wiggling around trying to get out.

McDavid Thrown into the Bench

Ilya licking Shane is inspired by a series of incidents of Brad Marchand licking opponents while he was a Bruin. Brad Marchand is one of the most infamous pests currently in the NHL, especially now that he's a Panther (disclaimer, even though the panthers are my #1 opp I actually do love marchy and he's my guy). The quote he says to the press is also pretty much what Marchand said after he licked Komarov. To make it even better, when Komarov was asked about how he felt about the lick, he said he "kind of liked it."

Marchand Licking Callahan

Skate blades fly off all the time, especially in playoff games. It doesn't constitute a stoppage in play, which means you get a lot of videos of players struggling to get to the bench. You'd think they'd practice getting around on one skate because they're all so bad at it. This method of getting around was inspired by a clip of Auston Matthews getting towed across the rink by his own Leafs teammate.

Auston Matthews Skate

Neck guards are not mandatory in the NHL, though they have become so in England and Sweden following fatalities. They are very rarely worn among NHL players, but are more popular with goalies. I saw a tiktok where someone headcanoned that Shane would be a champion for neckguards, and I'm inclined to agree. It's also mentioned that Shane had stopped tilting up his visor. It's mandatory in the NHL to wear a visor with your helmet, but some players (especially young players) will tilt them up to prevent fogging and increase visibility, even though it provides less coverage. This is actually something you can notice Shane doing in the show. I also briefly mentioned bubbles, which is just a full face plastic cover that players will wear when recovering from injuries like broken noses or jaws.

I liked the idea of Shane and Ilya getting into a fight not because of a moment of high tension in their relationship, but because Ilya was just being so incredibly annoying. Once again, this is inspired by true events: a scrum between Zach Hyman and some Dallas guy Jamie Benn. My man Hyman held it together better than Shane did in this fic. Some of my favourite interactions on the ice happen when guys are buddying up during scrums. Especially when you get two former teammates and they're just standing off to the side hugging and gossiping.

Zach Hyman Jamie Benn

Shane getting the puck stuck in his skate is a direct recount of the time this happened to Mitch Marner against the Penguins. I analyzed the video a lot to describe it, and I was sitting there giggling far too long watching the way everyone stands over him like he's a horse getting his nails trimmed. I don't know if the horse hoof videos were around at this point in time, but I just couldn't resist the reference.

Mitch Marner Puck

A few things about this last one. First, you would not believe how hard I was digging trying to find a way for Shane and Ilya to discuss a sign at a game. Players are not allowed to cross the red line at warmups, but I spotted in a tiktok that the Bruins have a tiny little bubble with a few seats between the two players benches, so small that the players often lean over to chat to each other during the game. I also referred to the Voyageurs as the Habs here, which is the nickname for the Canadiens in real life. Habs is short for Habitants, which is the name for the early French Canadian settlers. Considering that the name in the books means relatively the same thing, I figured the nickname could stick.

Seth Jarvis, from Winnipeg but playing for the Canes, has been caught several times during warmups with candy falling out of his gear. I thought this was a very Ilya thing to do.

Just to explain some of the terms, a grocery stick is a name for a player that sits on the bench dividing the offense and defensive lines, never really getting to play. Hockey rinks are often called barns, since back in the day that's where they were built originally.

Thanks for reading! You can also reach me on tumblr @arustyspork

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