'cause I'm still breathing on my own

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'cause I'm still breathing on my own

by vettelian19

Summary

The first time Ilya mentions, off-handed and self-assured, that they would hyphenate their names after the wedding, Shane is surprised that his very first thought is a crystal clear, resounding *no*.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

The first time Ilya mentions, off-handed and self-assured, that they would hyphenate their names after the wedding, Shane is surprised that his very first thought is a crystal clear, resounding *no*.

And maybe that, on its own, wouldn't be that bad. It could even be romantic: he could say that he's opposing it because he wants to take Ilya's name, that he wants them to have the same name Shane's been worshiping ever since that first day they met. It could make sense—Rozanov is a strong name that could carry them both.

But that's not the case. Because Shane does not want to become Shane Rozanov either.

No, the truth, the painfully simple truth of the matter is that he knows, with a confidence he hasn't felt in a while, that he wants to stay Shane Hollander.

—

The first time it comes up (and the first time Shane has such a scorching, almost visceral reaction to the idea of hyphenation) they're having a team cookout. It was Ilya's idea, wanting to make sure that the new guys joining the name would have the chance to meet everyone away from the pressure cooker environment of the arena.

It was an idea that clearly showed that Ilya wasn't a captain just because he was good at hockey and could light a fire under their asses during the moments they needed it the most (peppering in some Russian profanities that make Shane—who has been slowly, but surely learning Russian for a while—blush furiously on the bench. That man has a mouth on him.) No, Ilya is the captain of this team because he gets these boys, every single one of them, and would stop at nothing to make sure that the moment someone becomes a Centaur, they know they can rely on the group around them. It's something that the team has got truly great at, this unwavering, unbreakable trust that they have in each other. And it's built up of moments like this, moments that need preparation and energy and an instinct that Shane has only seen in a handful people in his whole life.

But Ilya is, without a doubt, one of these people.

So the cookout is, of course, a success. The guys scarf down a truly terrifying amount of burgers and drink an even more ungodly amount of beer, but by the end of the afternoon, the vibe is so optimistic about next season, someone could mistake the time for the beginning of the playoffs.

"So by next summer, we will have the cup ring, that's decided, but when are you putting a ring on your pretty boy's finger, Captain?" Bood asks as he raises his bottle towards Ilya and Shane.

Shane looks at Ilya, wiggling his eyebrows, but Ilya just rolls his eyes at Bood theatrically.

"Patience, old man," he says, then, "what will come, will come," adds cryptically.
Shane is in love with an idiot and he couldn't be happier.

“Okay, but now that I’m thinking about it, Roz, it’s gonna be super fucking weird to have you guys married. What will the call be, Rozanov passes to Rozanov and Rozanov scores? So confusing.”

“Bood, you stupid doormat, we’ll—how you call it? The line between the names?”

“Hyphenate?” Shane says distractedly.

“That. Rozanov-Hollander. Nice long name, will take up our whole jersey.”

“So it will be Rozanov-Hollander passes to Rozanov-Hollander and Rozanov-Hollander scores? Don’t get me wrong, Roz, loving the equality here, love is love and all that, but that doesn’t make it any less fucking confusing.”

And normally, Shane would start chirping in here, because—well, first of all shouldn’t it be Hollander-Rozanov if they’re doing it alphabetically?

But he’s kind of distracted by the, you know, very, very assertive reaction to the general idea of hyphenation, to even get a word in before the conversation diverts again, this time talking about—god knows what, Shane’s not even paying attention anymore.

And the most befuddling thing? He doesn’t even know why he’s feeling this way about their new names. Not even a fucking clue.

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The second time it comes up, Shane does not hide his reaction that well. Or maybe he does, because his parents notice nothing when they discuss it during their Thursday night dinner, but Ilya’s eyes linger on him for just a beat too long for Shane’s liking.

(Well, that’s not entirely truthful. Ilya’s eyes on him are not something that could ever be too long for his liking. He wants Ilya to look at him as much as he wants, as long as he wants and as hard as he wants, because when you have someone like him in your life, someone Shane is so desperate to keep around forever, you’d also want them to think you’re someone precious to look at.)

Ilya doesn’t bring it up on their drive home, chattering instead about a new guy Svetlana has started seeing whom he decidedly doesn’t like, and for a little longer, Shane is lulled into a false sense of security.

It’s later, when they’re in bed, naked limbs interlocked with naked limbs, when Shane is unable to run away—it’s then that Ilya brings it up. Naturally.

“Do you not want us to have the same name?” he asks simply. His voice doesn’t carry any judgement or hurt. It’s not pointed or even probing—it just sounds like he’s curious to understand what is on Shane’s mind.

“Of course, I want that.”

The side eye Shane is getting is scorching hot.

“Let’s try that one more time, love, and I might even believe you.”

“Come on, Ilya. Why would I not want that?”

Ilya shrugs his shoulders. “I don’t know. I think it would be nice to have your name. Would be easier for the kids, too. But maybe you have reasons for not wanting it. Maybe good reasons. Reasons I did not think about.”

“I—”

“Shane.” Ilya says, and Shane thinks it’s stupid that even after all these years they’ve spent together, the fact that Ilya says his first name instead of his last, makes him weak in the knees.

“I don’t know, okay? I really don’t. It’s just—there’s something in me that doesn’t want to change my name.”

Ilya looks at him, seemingly waiting for him to continue, but when Shane remains quiet, he just nods. “Okay, then. We keep the names.”

And Shane could leave it at that. He could be happy that he got his way. But there’s something in him that feels like there is a lack of finality to their conversation, to his thoughts, to his feelings on the matter. It feels unfinished, lacking, incomplete.

“But you want us to hyphenate it.”

Ilya hums and slightly re-arranges Shane in his arms. He does it so naturally, just moving Shane around in his space, that Shane’s not even sure he realizes that he’s doing it. “Sure. But I’m fine with separate names, too. We’ll still be married. Is no big deal, love.”

“But—”

“But?”

“I don’t know,” Shane says, feeling frustration rising in his throat. “I just feel dumb now.”

“Good. You are dumb.”

“Ilya.”

“Do you think it has something to do with how we call each other? You maybe want to keep calling me Rozanov. That would make sense. It is a very sexy name.”

“Maybe.” Shane says, but that doesn’t feel quite right. Maybe it’s part of it: such a huge chunk of their relationship was made up of all whispered Hollanders and teasing Rozanovs—it would make sense if he wanted to keep doing that indefinitely.

But there is still something else, Shane can feel it. Something that is more connected to that very first time this topic was brought up.

Rozanov passes to Rozanov and Rozanov scores.

“I think—”

The jumbotron showing Rozanov-Hollander, name flashing across the screen, twice. The same.

“I—”

Hollander-Rozanov raises the Cup.

Ilya grabs his hand. “Мышка.” He says quietly, and gently, but firmly pushes Shane’s head into his chest.

The pressure helps, grounds Shane a bit. There’s too much and not enough in his head at the same time, and it feels disorienting.

For a few minutes, all Shane can hear is the quiet patter of rain on the window. He didn’t even notice it started to drizzle outside, but now it’s almost close to pouring rain. He hopes the thunderstorm doesn’t come. He doesn’t like thunder.

“I think I—I think I want to stay Shane Hollander, the hockey player.”

“You know you don’t have to change sports if we change names.”

Shane rolls his eyes. “I do know that. It’s just—I think in 20 years, when people will think back, the first thought that will come to their mind will be Shane Hollander, married to his life-long rival, Ilya Rozanov. And I can’t change that, you know? I’m not even sure I would want to. I want people to know I am married to you. I want people to know me as the hockey player who won Cups with the love of his life by his side. I swear I want that.”

“But a part of me, some stupid little insecure part of me, wants them to also think of Shane Hollander, second overall pick, captain of the Metros, and a Stanley Cup champion. Shane Hollander, a hockey player who worked his ass off for this stupid sport. And I’m just not sure people would ever remember that if my name was—” Shane says, scared to say it out loud after such a stupid monologue.

He’s scared to even look up at Ilya, scared shitless that his stupid pride and completely unnecessary hissy fit might have actually hurt the feelings of the man he’d quite literally give his life for.

“Rozanov.” Ilya supplies eventually when the silence grows too long.

“Well, Hollander-Rozanov. But yes.”

“Hmm,” Ilya says.

Okay, Shane can’t do this anymore. He has to look up. He has to—

Ilya is smiling at him. His curls are all mussed up on the top of his head, almost making him look like the little angel statues in a church. And gosh, his smile is *blinding*.

“You think too much.” He says eventually when Shane quite literally forgets to speak.

“I think a normal amount. I just don’t want you to think that I’m not the luckiest person that I get to marry you. Because I am. I love you so fucking much, it’s honestly ridiculous.”

“You think too much,” Ilya repeats, a smile still playing on his lips.

“So you’re sure you don’t mind? You won’t regret not taking each other’s name?”

“Hollander, we will get married. That is the only thing that matters. Taking each other’s name, that’s what fancy gay men in Canada do, so I thought you wanted to be a fancy gay man, too.”

“We are not fancy gay men at all.”

“Well, yes. I am bisexual.”

“And we’re the farthest thing away from fancy.”

“Speak for yourself. I am fancy man. I have the watch, the cars, the sexy husband.”

“That you do,” Shane grins. “But okay, so you don’t—”

“Hollander, if you ask me one more time if I mind not taking your name, I will not fuck you for a week.”

“I just—”

“Нет.”

Shane raises his hand in surrender. “Okay, okay. I won’t ask. Mr. Rozanov.”

“Mr. Hollander.” Ilya says, and then nuzzles his nose against Shane’s temple. He slowly kisses his way across Shane’s face, and stops when he gets to his mouth. “Actually, I think I have a way to make you think less. What do you think about that?”

And that, that is an offer Shane is all too happy to take.

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End Notes

Hollanov is apparently bringing my writing mojo back... And keeping it hostage. I swear 'trying to remember' will get another chapter after the current, hmm, 6-month hiatus it's been on.

(title from Green Day's 'still breathing' because I saw a post the other day about shane and angsty pop punk music and it just makes perfect sense)

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