

Sugar, Spice, and Hollander Measuring Everything Twice

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Sugar, Spice, and Hollander Measuring Everything Twice

by [leialoo7](#)

Summary

Just a little Holiday Hollanov to take the edge off.

Shane and Ilya turn a wholesome Christmas activity into a very serious competition because they are adorable.

“What are you getting?” Ilya asked. “I bought everything we need to do this!”

Shane came back with a ruler in hand before sitting down to start studying the instructions on the back of one of the gingerbread kit boxes.

“Oh my god, Hollander, you are so boring.” Ilya said, the grin on his face betraying his attempt at an exasperated tone. “Is cookies and candy. For fun. We do not need to measure.”

Ottawa - December

“We are building gingerbread houses tonight.”

Shane Hollander looked up from the couch where he was lying with their dog Anya sprawled against his chest. “What? Why?”

“Because I saw children making them on TikTok,” his husband, Ilya Rozanov responded, haphazardly dumping grocery bags full of gingerbread kits, icing, and candy out onto the dining table while humming Mariah Carey’s ‘All I Want for Christmas Is You’ under his breath.

Shane sat up gently, trying not to disturb Anya, who was still snuggling into his warmth, one ear pointed in the direction of the noise coming from the dining room. “We aren’t children.”

“No,” Ilya agreed gravely. “We are better.”

Shane squinted. “Are you trying to compete with kids?”

“I am competing with you,” Ilya corrected.

Shane smirked and finally got up from the couch to head toward the mountain of supplies that now took up their entire table, Anya trotting happily behind him.

This was the first year in their entire relationship that they would get the full holiday season together. The NHL always gave them a few days off around Christmas, but it was just enough to rest and recover from months of travel, muscle aches, and getting slammed into boards and ice for a living. They still had games to play but now that they were on the same team, they got to spend all of December together. Really, they got every day and every night of the year together, which still felt like a dream after so many years of only seeing each other a handful of times during the regular season.

Ilya didn’t used to care much about Christmas, happy to spend a night cooking and eating a festive meal with Shane’s parents, but this year he had decided to truly get in the spirit. Apparently starting with making a giant, sticky mess on their beautiful dining table.

“You know, those kids probably had adult supervision,” Shane said. “Who’s going to supervise you while I’m busy building my masterpiece?”

“That is why we have Anya, world’s best dog!” Ilya said, getting on his knees to scratch her behind her ears and kissing her on the soft fur between her eyes.

Shane sighed and bent down to join their cuddle fest. “I love you, but this is going to be a disaster.”

“For you, maybe,” Ilya grinned.

Shane stood back up and headed toward the kitchen.

“What are you getting?” Ilya asked. “I bought everything we need to do this!”

Shane came back with a ruler in hand before sitting down to start studying the instructions on the back of one of the gingerbread kit boxes.

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“I want mine to stay up!” Shane explained. “Then I can have fun adding cool details once I have a perfect foundation.”

Choosing to ignore the overly amused look Ilya was burning into the top of his head, Shane got to work precisely laying out cookies and carefully securing them with thin lines of icing. Just enough to ensure stability, but not so much that the icing wouldn’t dry in time. He thought it actually looked pretty good! He wanted to start adding some candy, maybe some peppermints or blue M&M’s, or it looked like Ilya had gotten some pretty cool candy that looked like snowflakes. Gummies seemed gross to add, so he planned to avoid those. Did it matter? Do people even eat their gingerbread houses or are they just for deco-

His thoughts were interrupted by Ilya loudly munching on gingerbread.

“Ilya! Why are you eating the roof tiles, you need those!” Shane cried out, horrified.

“I am testing structural integrity,” Ilya said, still chewing.

“I think it failed the test,” Shane deadpanned, gesturing to what was left of the integral roof piece.

Ilya waved him off. “I will improvise. I never had these exact cookies before; they taste a bit like ones we had growing up called pryaniki.”

Shane smiled at him, momentarily setting aside his very genuine concern for Ilya’s gingerbread house. Ilya didn’t talk about Russia a lot but Shane loved any glimpse into where Ilya came from. The good and the bad. “Maybe we could try making those together this week.”

Ilya grinned back. “Yes, a new cookie activity for every day of the month.”

“So... just ignoring the directions, then?” Shane asked, raising one eyebrow as Ilya took another bite of roof cookie.

“I do not follow directions,” Ilya said, grabbing a handful of gumdrops and popping one into his mouth seductively. “I follow instincts.”

“Your instincts are made of sugar.”

“Yes.”

They decided they would give themselves one more hour to finish up before judgment time. Shane took a look at his final product.

His walls were even, obviously. His roof looked really nice with icing delicately dripping off the edges. He'd used the perfect amount of candy to add color but not take away from the other icing details he was really proud of like the windows and some swirls and dots. He had even tried to make the front door look exactly like theirs by replicating the vertical panels, the style of doorknob, and he had piped the tiniest little wreath in the center to match the one he and Ilya had put up yesterday.

He was really pleased. I mean, there was still a huge mess around where he was working, and his hands were sticky, and really this seemed like a huge waste of food unless Ilya was planning to eat all of this, which would be disgusting, but it looked good and he had actually had a lot of fun.

"Ready?" Shane asked.

Ilya nodded and they both turned their houses toward the other for the grand reveal.

Shane burst out laughing at the sight of what could best be described as a puddle of icing with a bunch of broken cookies and candy assembled on top of it in a very loose house-like structure. It was leaning at an angle that suggested imminent collapse and actually seemed to be getting deeper by the second.

"What?" Ilya said through laughter, as if he didn't know.

"Oh my god, Ilya. We've been working on these for hours. Is this what you saw on TikTok?" Shane asked.

"I took some creative liberties," Ilya said, covering his face with his hands adorably. "And I maybe ate too much building material and am having a sugar crash."

"Holy shit, is that supposed to be us?" Shane said, pointing at the front of the structure. There were two gingerbread men. But it looked like the legs of one of them had been cut off at the shins and glued Frankenstein-style to the bottom of the legs of the other, creating a massive and comical height difference.

"Of course," said Ilya. "See, I added my tattoo."

Shane clutched his side laughing and gasping for air as he recognized the severed head of a gummy bear sloppily stuck to the chest of the taller gingerbread man. "That is so stupid." He said, between giggles. "What is the pile of glued together gumdrops in front of us?"

"A near perfect sugar replica of Anya!" Ilya exclaimed as if upset that Shane couldn't immediately recognize the colorful blob monster as their dog.

"Oh no. I can't believe I'm saying this but... why do I kind of like yours better?" Shane said, wiping tears from his eyes.

"This means I win?" Ilya asked, standing up to give Shane a sticky kiss on the cheek.

"You definitely win." Shane said, turning his head and kissing Ilya back properly, tasting sugar, and ginger, and him.

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