

We Can Burn Brighter Than The Sun

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We Can Burn Brighter Than The Sun

by [overlycaffeinatedgalaxy](#)

Summary

Hollander gestures to where they're sitting and asks, "This okay?"
Rozanov yells, once more, "Puppies!"

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OR: The Stanley Cup Champion Ottawa Centaurs Do BuzzFeed's Puppy Interview

Notes

1. WE ARE GETTING SEASON 2--I fear I may never return to being able to have normal human interactions
2. Even though I knew what was coming, Episode 4 was more painful than actually being stabbed in the gut, and writing this felt like exorcising a demon. The episode was a legit masterpiece, I'm just not emotionally stable enough for any of this.
3. Listened to All The Things She Said by Harrison for the majority of the time I cranked this out--help, I'm still at the Montreal Night Club with the queer-coded lighting watching Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov stare each other down while Shane realizes he is in love with that man and Ilya realizes this may actually kill him
4. This is meant for shits and giggles and will hopefully help tide everyone over until next episode ("Ilya, they can see us" is going to send me to an early grave)
5. Title comes from We Are Young by Fun. ft. Janelle Monae

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

The video opens on a hot pink backdrop, the outlines of what appear to be a physical therapy exercise room peek around the edges of the screen. Elastic bands and exercise balls line the walls, weight machines and resistance training mechanisms carefully pushed out of the way for today's event.

There is a long beat of silence, followed by a shuffling of bodies from behind the camera, then a booming shout of, "Puppies!"

The hulking frame of Ottawa Centaurs Captain and starting center lineman, Ilya Rozanov, clad in sweats and a Centaurs t-shirt, comes sprinting into frame. He skids to a stop upon reaching the backdrop.

From behind the camera, someone calls, "Ilya, careful. *Tovye plecho.*"

Ilya collapses to the ground, saying, "My shoulder is fine." He gently shrugs his left shoulder and arm, which are currently held close to his body by a sling. "Where are the puppies?"

Ottawa Centaur center and Rozanov's husband, Shane Hollander, practically matching Rozanov's outfit, shuffles into frame. He folds his body gracefully to the floor on Rozanov's right. They both look to the camera.

Hollander gestures to where they're sitting and asks, "This okay?"

Rozanov yells, once more, "Puppies!"

There is a beep as the screen blacks out. Rozanov and Hollander are replaced by Ottawa Centaurs players Evan Dykstra and Troy Barrett. Dressed similarly to Hollander and Rozanov, Dykstra is wearing a hat that reads Stanley Cup Champions 2025 as he glares at Bennett, who has three puppies in his lap, two sleeping in his arms, and one gnawing on the sole of his sneaker.

Dykstra says childishly, "You are hogging them!"

Another beep, another black screen.

Hollander and Rozanov return. Rozanov is slapping his thigh with his free hand and chanting, "Puppies! Puppies! Puppies!"

Hollander glares at Rozanov with fond exasperation, as he murmurs something in Russian that is garbled on the microphone attached to his t-shirt.

But the video kindly captions with an English translation anyway.

We are not taking any of these puppies home.

Rozanov grins widely at him, his enthusiastic chant rising in volume.

Another beep, another blank screen.

Now Zane Boodram and Wyatt Hayes are seated on the backdrop. Wyatt Hayes is lying on the ground with multiple black and brown fluffballs climbing over him. “Such adventurous little guys.”

On his left, Boodram holds a puppy at eye level. “Don’t you dare pee on me.”

A stream of urine splashes onto his chest.

Another beep.

Rozanov and Hollander return—Rozanov is glaring with righteous indignation, Hollander appears politely perplexed.

Rozanov’s booming excitement has been brought down to a muted belligerent volume as he says, “What do you mean ‘no puppies’? I was told puppies. If there are no puppies, why are we even here?”

Beep.

Luca Haas is seated on the floor, quietly speaking to the black-and-white puppy in his arms. The view of Haas is interrupted by the pumping legs of

Ottawa’s newest additions—rookies Max Nelssen and Paul Williams, as they chase each other and a group of puppies around the room.

Beep.

Hollander and Rozanov are back, in contented quiet.

Hollander lies on the floor beside an absolute behemoth of an animal with thick brown fur. Hollander is stroking the dog’s back and whispering, but the mic once again cannot pick up his words.

Rozanov, dogless, is staring at Hollander with something bordering on worship in his eyes.

Another cut to Dykstra and Barrett.

Dykstra says, “Hi. I’m Evan Dykstra.”

“And I’m Troy Barrett.”

Cut to—

“Zane Boodram, but everyone calls me Bood,” Bood says, reaching over and wrapping his arm around Wyatt Hayes’s shoulders. “And this is the greatest goalie to ever hit the ice, Wyatt Hayes.”

Hayes blushes furiously.

Cut to Luca Haas waving to the camera. “I’m Luca Haas.” There is silence as Nelssen and Williams grin at the camera. Haas pinches the bridge of his nose. “Rooks! Introduce yourselves.

“Oh, shit, right—”

Hollander and Rozanov return to screen.

Hollander says, “Hi, I’m Shane Hollander.”

“Where are the puppies?” Rozanov asks, craning his neck to look beyond the cameraman in search of his adorable query.

Hollander drops his head into his hand, groaning, “Jesus Christ.”

“I am frustrated by the lack of puppies too, *moya lyubov*,” Ilya says.

Hollander looks to Rozanov, his teeth grit. “You’re actively trying to kill me.”

“Not really trying at all. If trying, I think you’d be dead.”

“For fuck’s sake,” Hollander says, turning back to the camera. “I’m Shane Hollander. This asshole is Ilya Rozanov. We’re the Ottawa Centaurs, and this is BuzzFeed’s Puppy Interview.”

Rozanov thrusts his good arm into the air triumphantly, his smile practically splitting his face in half. “Puppies!”

Bright blue text scrawls across their faces. It reads: Ottawa Centaurs Do BuzzFeed's Puppy Interview

Hollander and Rozanov are replaced by a recording of a replay of last month’s Stanley Cup finals.

At the top of the screen, the score reads 3-3, with only 19 seconds remaining on the clock. The noise cuts in at an absolute roar as the camera zooms in on a man in Ottawa black and red, leaping over the boards and landing on the ice with the grace of a dancer. The announcer screams, “And they’re doing it! I cannot believe they’re actually doing it—Ottawa is sending in the injured Rozanov to right wing with Hollander at center, even without the powerplay—Hollander with the puck, LA’s Bouchard attempts to goose the puck away but Hollander dekes left while passing to Rozanov who catches—here comes Merriman to take him into the boards—*Oh my god, he misses*—and Rozanov keeps control of the puck—”

On screen Rozanov ducks and spins away from LA’s massive defenseman. He returns the puck to Hollander, who keeps it moving to Haas. “Time is running out. If Ottawa wants to put this series to bed on home ice to avoid game seven, they have to make a move—”

The time on screen dwindles below ten seconds. The noise is cacophonous as Haas returns the puck to Hollander, who ratchets his stick back and takes the shot. *Eight seconds, seven seconds*. The crowd holds its breath as the shot goes to the high right corner of the net.

Six seconds. Five.

The crowd collectively groans as they all see it—the shot is too high, too easy to block. LA's goalie knocks it to the ice. Where Rozanov is waiting.

Four.

Rozanov winds up.

Three.

And the puck flies.

The goal sirens flare red but go unheard as the home crowd drowns out every sound for several square kilometers, including the announcer. On screen the Ottawa bench empties onto the ice, gloves, helmets, and sticks flying into the air. On the far side of the ice, Wyatt Hayes collapses in front of his goal, his helmeted head held in his hands as Boodram and Barrett race to him. The rest of the team converges on Rozanov and Hollander. Rozanov has Hollander hoisted into the air; Hollander is gripping Rozanov's shoulders. Both men are screaming at one another.

There is a softening to the cacophony of celebratory noise, the sound mixer raising the volume of the drowned-out announcer, who is joyously shouting along with everyone else, “—they did it again. Back-to-back cups for the Ottawa Centaurs. Three in four years. Everyone said they couldn't do it, but there they are folks—” The camera zooms in on the pile up of grown men now at center ice, arms thrown around one another and not a single dry eye among them. “—hockey's newest dynasty, The Ottawa Centaurs, led by two of the greatest players the game has ever seen, Rozanov and Hollander.”

The screen blanks, and Hollander and Rozanov in the present reappear, seated side-by-side on the pink backdrop. They are both listening attentively to someone behind the camera.

Rozanov looks bereft. “Harris, what is this garbage? What do you mean, I get no puppies?”

A voice behind the camera—Harris—says, “There were concerns about excitable puppies and excitable you,” Hollander snorts at this, “that something was bound to happen with your shoulder. And we don't want to agitate it.”

Rozanov argues, “But puppies.”

Hollander places a hand on Rozanov's thigh, says, “You're almost out of the sling, we don't want to mess that up.”

Rozanov glares but nods, conceding the point.

“With BuzzFeed coming all the way to us for this interview, we spoke with the Ottawa Animal Rescue, and we thought we'd do something a little different for you two,” the voice behind the camera calls.

Rozanov's eyebrows raise, his interest piqued. “Different how?”

The shot cuts to Dykstra and Barrett, excitedly looking off-camera. The sound of a creaky door opening, then both men audibly squeal. Dykstra says, “Holy shit, they are so cute.”

Half a dozen black, brown, and cream fluffballs waddle onto the screen, yipping and sniffing.

Dykstra immediately drops to his stomach and reaches for the puppies.

They are replaced by Haas, Nelssen, and Williams. All three men are staring at the puppies—these five different from the six allotted to Dykstra and Barrett—around their legs. Williams picks one up and asks, “Why are you so cute? It makes me want to bite you!”

Rozanov and Hollander return to screen, from off-camera, Harris says, “Why don’t we just show you?”

Unseen noises filter in as Rozanov and Hollander look at one another, unsure looks on both their faces. A door opens, and Rozanov gasps. Hollander’s face folds into a smile as a young woman shepherds a small white dog towards the seated hockey players. He’s a terrier mix with milky eyes and is clearly full-grown.

Rozanov holds out his good hand toward the dog, “*Bozhe moy!* Who are you?”

“This is Sausage Roll,” the woman says by way of introduction as Sausage Roll tentatively sniffs Rozanov’s hand. “He was found wandering along the side of the road just outside of Ottawa. We don’t know how old he is, the vet says maybe seven or eight, but we do know he is completely blind.”

Rozanov melts as Sausage Roll delicately licks his fingers. Hollander turns towards someone behind the camera, his eyes wide. “Harris?”

“We thought since you and Ilya have already adopted a rescue who wasn’t a puppy at the time, you’d be the best advocates to showcase the dogs from the shelter who don’t get the attention the puppies do. This little guy has been there for almost three months and has received no applications.”

“Nonsense,” Rozanov tells Sausage Roll in a gently serious tone. “You are handsome, perfect gentleman. Who would not want to bring you home?”

Sausage Roll sniffs at his pants, allowing the man to pet him. Rozanov looks at Hollander with a radiant smile.

Hollander returns the smile, says, “*My zhe zaberem vsekh etikh sobak domoy, pravda?*”

The captioning on the screen reads, *We’re taking all these dogs home, aren’t we?*

Rozanov shrugs. “Most likely.”

Hollander turns to the camera. “Aren’t we supposed to be answering questions?”

Bood and Hayes return to screen, both men attempting to give multiple puppies attention at the same time.

The disembodied Harris asks, “What does it feel like to be Stanley Cup Champions for the third time in four years?”

“It isn’t the worst feeling in the world,” Hayes answers.

Bood says, “Fucking great. Hey, hey, none of that,” he breaks apart two puppies who are nipping at one another, “who do you think you are? Rozanov and Hollander?”

Evan Dykstra’s grinning face pops up. “It’s amazing.”

Barrett, leaning back on his elbows as two puppies try to summit his chest like a mountain, nods. “Also kind of unreal? If you told us back in Spring of 2021 that this is where we would be, we wouldn’t have believed you.”

“Yeah,” Dykstra agrees. “We would’ve wanted to, but we wouldn’t have.”

“The team had all the right components; we just needed that extra something to lock it all in.”

“Oh, you mean like adding another once-in-a-generation talent to the line-up?” Dykstra asks.

A third puppy joins the others on Barrett’s chest as he fully drops to the ground. He laughs. “Something like that.”

The scene changes. It is hard to tell who is more excited—the puppies or Haas, Nelssen, and Williams.

“Unbelievable,” Haas says. “It feels unbelievable.”

Nelssen bobs his head, says, “It’s only the first one for me and Williams, but holy shit—”

Williams chuckles as he lifts a puppy above his head like it’s the Stanley Cup, “It’s awesome.”

Hollander pops onto screen, grinning. “It’s cliché, but it’s almost impossible to describe.”

“Not impossible,” Rozanov refutes, looking up from where Sausage Roll has curled up in the basket of his crisscrossed legs. He is gently stroking the dog’s snout. “What my too-polite husband would say if he weren’t so Canadian is that it fucking rocks.”

Hollander laughs, scrubs at his neck sheepishly. “He’s right. It does fucking rock.”

Haas returns to screen as the next question is asked: “Outside of winning the cup again, what was your favorite play or moment from the season? Regular season or play-offs?”

“Watching Hollander go full beast-mode and hit Montreal with a hat-trick in Games 1, 2, and 3 of Round 1 of play-offs,” Haas replies immediately.

The screen cuts in half. On the right is a replay of Hollander’s nine goals against the Montreal Voyageurs in the first three games of the first round of playoffs. On the left, the video cycles through Boodram, Barret, Hayes, and Dykstra, repeating Haas’s answer.

Hollander's pleasantly surprised face fills the whole screen. "The guys really said that?"

"Of course they did," Rozanov says. Sausage Roll is now snoring in his lap. "Was awesome. Fuck Montreal."

Hollander laughs before reigning himself in and saying, "Ilya, that's... not polite."

Rozanov shrugs, looks directly at the camera, and slowly repeats, "Fuck Montreal."

Bood and Hayes are now facing one another as the puppies run back and forth between them, playing some game only they understand.

"Hardest part of the season?" Bood asks the camera.

"The entire month of February," Hayes replies.

"I was going to say the game against Vegas in November, but you're right. February was a shitstorm."

Dykstra groans at the camera. "That losing streak we had in February." Barrett, not even paying attention to the camera or the question, curses as he wrangles the puppies. Dykstra continues, "Not to mention the injuries."

Nelssen pops up, saying, "I didn't know that many guys could get injured at the same time. If it wasn't Roz, it was Hollander. Then Hazy, then Barrett. And the recoveries took forever."

Haas says, "Wait until you aren't twenty anymore. Your body doesn't bounce back as fast."

Williams snorts. "Okay, grandpa."

"February was terrible," Rozanov commiserates.

Hollander nods. "I'd still say, for me, the worst moment was the hit you took against Tampa in Round 2."

The video cuts to Rozanov rushing down the ice only to be rammed into the boards with such intensity that he collapses to the ice. Many seconds—too many seconds—pass by before he starts to pick himself back up.

Hollander's grimacing face returns to the screen. "Distinctly not a good time for me."

There is a moment while the two men look at one another, and Rozanov leans forward to kiss Hollander's cheek sweetly; Sausage Roll's snoring is the only sound. The moment is broken by the young woman who brought out the senior dog coming to retrieve him, despite Rozanov's protests.

"But we are soulmates—"

"Would've been great to know that before I answered the previous question," Hollander jokes.

“We’re bringing out another dog, Ilya,” Harris promises.

There is a pause, and then the scrabbling of nails against the hard floor. Hollander gapes at the dog off-screen. “Oh my God, is that a dog or—”

“This is Bear,” the woman says as a gargantuan brown dog drags her into view. Rozanov has his arm raised hopefully, but Bear only has eyes for Hollander. The dog, a Newfoundland mix of some sort, tackles the hockey player onto his back and begins enthusiastically licking his face.

“Whoa, there, buddy,” Hollander says.

“Sorry, sorry,” the handler apologizes, pulling him back. “He’s very excited to be out of his kennel. Most people are too intimidated by his size and energy level to be interested in him. He’s got so much excess energy, no matter how much we try to exercise him. He’s a very sweet boy and smart. Just needs attention.”

Bear continues to bathe Hollander’s face as Rozanov, arm still raised towards the dog, beseeches, “I am right here, Bear. I can give you all the attention.”

Bood and Hayes return to screen. Bood has a sleeping puppy cuddled to his chest. Hayes has two between his thighs, the other two chewing on his shoelaces. He is cheerfully doling out pets to them all equally.

From behind the camera, Harris says, “Let’s change gears: what are you most excited for over summer break?”

“Sleep,” Hayes replies automatically.

Bood says, “That would also be my answer. Except my wife is due with our second baby at the end of the month.”

“So you’re excited to continue to be exhausted?” Hayes concludes.

Bood smiles with all his teeth. “I really fucking am.”

Hayes says, “And camp! We’re all really excited for camp this year.”

Bood adds, “A lot of guys from teams all over the NHL have reached out wanting to help. So Roz and Hollzy have them running camps all over North America. Check out the Irina Foundation website,” the website text helpfully appears at the bottom of the screen, “if you want to donate or have one of your little ones come to camp!”

“Vacation,” Barrett says with a small smile. “My husband and I always try to go somewhere with minimal Wi-Fi for a couple of weeks in August.”

From where he is prostrate on the floor, a puppy lying across half of his face, Dykstra says, “I’m going somewhere where they haven’t even heard of wi-fi yet.”

Haas says, “Sleeping in. Napping. Going to sleep early.”

Nelssen punches Haas in the shoulder. “You’re starting to sound like Hazy, Haas.”

Haas glares at the younger player as Williams says, in an elevated voice, “Boys trip!”

“Yes,” Nelssen holds out his hands to Williams as they do a complicated handshake, “boys trip!”

Haas turns his glare to the camera and shakes his head.

The noise of the boisterous rookies cuts away to a quiet scene. Hollander is lying on the ground with Bear spooned up against him, Bear’s tail is thwapping vigorously against the floor, but the dog is otherwise content to allow Hollander to pet his back in soothing sweeps. Hollander speaks to the dog in low tones as Rozanov watches them, no longer pouting about Bear’s lack of interest in him.

After a long moment, Hollander seems to realize it has gotten too quiet. He pops up and looks to Rozanov, “What was the question?”

Rozanov beams at him.

“Favorite place to eat in Ottawa has got to be...” Dykstra trails off. “Shit, I don’t know, man. I order it on DoorDash, so I don’t even know what the place is called. But they’ve got the best burgers in the city.”

The screen returns to Rozanov, shaking his head. “No. Not telling. Is secret.”

Hollander snorts as he continues to lavish Bear with affection.

“JOEY Rideau,” Haas answers. “It’s popular for a reason.”

Dykstra and Barrett return to the screen. Harris asks, “Alright, final round of questions: who’s the most likely to be first on the ice for practice?”

A rapid-fire string of clips of every single Ottawa Centaur saying:

“Hollander.”

“Hollander.”

“Hollzy.”

“Shane.”

Then Hollander himself, “Me. But that’s just because Ilya has Captain duties—meetings and stuff before practice.”

Rozanov nods, a new canine friend—a three-legged border collie mix named Easel circling him with trepidation. Rozanov seems keen to remain calm and let the dog come to him in her own time.

Haas returns to screen as the question, “Most likely to get in an on-ice fight?” is asked.

Haas chuckles, “Is this seriously even a question?”

A series of clips from the last fifteen years of Ilya Rozanov in a Bears then Centaurs jersey, seemingly fighting the entire NHL plays.

Rozanov laughs as Easel props herself gently on his back to sniff the top of his head. “Is fun.”

“Not fun, dangerous,” Hollander cuts in. “It’s a miracle the majority of your teeth are the ones you were born with.”

“Most of the fights I don’t even start,” Rozanov defends himself.

“*Lzhets*. As someone who played you for a decade, absolute bullshit,” Hollander argues. “You might not throw the first swing, but the way you run your mouth—”

“You like it when I run my mouth.”

Hollander’s face twists as it flushes. He takes a big breath, says, “Harris, what’s the next question?”

“Who’s the best cook?”

Every player’s face is shown side-by-side and vertically like the opening sequence to the *Brady Brunch* as they all shout, “Bood!”

Harris asks, “Who’s the most likely to almost miss the plane for an away game?”

“I don’t know,” Dykstra says, looking to Barrett. “You got any ideas?”

Barrett shakes his head. “I’d say one of the rooks, but they got their shit together real quick after that away game in New York. Roz got super Captain-y on their asses.”

Dykstra nods. “He did. I’m not into dudes, but I have to say after that, I get it, Hollander.”

It cuts to Hollander’s blank face staring at the camera; it is clear he is working very hard to keep his facial muscles under control. “Dykstra really said that?”

Hayes and Bood, and their now sleeping horde of puppies, return to the screen.

“You guys really wore yourselves out, huh?” Hayes says to them.

“A nap would be so good right now,” Bood adds.

Hayes smiles, “Got to get it in before the end of the month.”

“This has been fun,” Dykstra says as the puppies are collected, and Barrett nods.

It cuts to Haas, Nelssen, and Williams. Nelssen and Williams are holding up signs with the Ottawa Animal Rescue's Information and Website, while Haas says, "All of these dogs are adoptable from the Ottawa Animal Rescue. If you're looking for a new friend, remember to adopt, don't shop."

Hollander and Rozanov return to screen, Hollander asks, "That's it?"

Harris finally emerges onto the screen and says, "We have those other questions we discussed, if you two would be okay with it?"

Hollander blows at a breath, turns to Rozanov. "Ilya, you need a break, or do you just want to keep going?"

Rozanov tests his slinged arm, says, "I'm fine. We can continue," then returns to gently petting Easel who has sat down just within his reach.

Hollander gestures to Harris, who returns to behind the camera and asks, "What's your favorite part of playing on the same team as your husband?"

"Easy," Rozanov says immediately.

"Ilya," Hollander hisses in a warning tone.

"*Moya lyubov'*, is not dirty answer," Rozanov says. "Even though we don't play on the same line majority of time, when we do, it is like... magic. Like having another me on the ice who knows exactly what I'm going to do before I even do it. You can't beat it."

Hollander smiles at his husband. "That's a great answer. What he said."

The men look at one another adoringly before Rozanov says, "Also, the sex after a win is insane."

Hollander's head drops into his hands. "Jesus Christ, Ilya."

The screen cuts, Hollander and Rozanov are still sitting beside one another, this time with Sausage Roll, Bear, and Easel are all around them.

Harris asks, "What's the hardest part of playing on the same team as your husband?"

Rozanov says, "There are no hard parts to playing with Shane. Playing with Shane, against Shane, it is all the same. Is all fun. All the best. He makes me better." Rozanov tilts his head back and forth. "But I could do with less homophobia."

Hollander sighs and leans forward, grabs Rozanov by the collar of his t-shirt, and kisses him. Rozanov makes a surprised, happy noise as his good hand rises to Hollander's neck. After a few long moments and no sign of them pulling apart, someone clears their throat. When they separate, Hollander says, "If we weren't already married, I'd marry the shit out of you."

"That is disgustingly sweet," Harris says. "Let's move on to some fan questions. Shane, centaursfan2481 asked, 'You've been notoriously anti-social media for most of your career,

but the last few years you've been posting a lot more. What happened to make you more pro-social media?"

Hollander scratches at his forehead, says, "Well, centaursfan2481, my best friend accidentally sent a FanMail video with me making out with my husband in the background to some guy named Brad—"

"Fuck you, Brad," Rozanov interrupts.

From behind the camera, multiple voices shout, "Yeah, fuck you, Brad."

"--and Brad posted it to the internet, outing us without our consent, and sending my life into a tailspin. After that happens, why not put all my life out there?" Hollander jokes. He shakes his head. "Sorry, that was flippant and kind of douchey... the truth is, I'm a private person by nature, and I spent the majority of my adult life keeping the most important relationship I had secret. Not posting about my life outside of hockey and work made sense.

"But once, everything was out there, and Ilya and I could just be...it got easier sharing." Rozanov reaches for Hollander's hand, pulls it up to his mouth, and kisses his palm. Hollander chuckles, says lowly, "Such a sap." Still holding Rozanov's hand, Hollander turns his attention back to the camera,

"I'm never going to be Mr. Social Media, I'll leave that to Ilya, but yeah, I think that answers the question?"

"Thank you, Shane," Harris says. "Ilya, maddyp8696 asked, 'Your husband was named People Magazine's Sexiest Hockey Player last year. Can you fight off-ice? Asking for a friend... and like a lot of other people, too.'"

The screen splits; on the right, Hollander's photo shoot for People's Sexiest Man Issue appears. He is standing in the middle of an ice rink kitted out in his hockey uniform, except he's completely shirtless. He has a hockey stick behind his neck, resting across his shoulders, with his hands hanging off the ends, and he's staring directly into the camera.

On the left side of the screen, the camera zooms in on Rozanov's menacing smile. He says, "I am Russian. I learned to fight before I learned to skate. Next time you are in Ottawa, I welcome you to find out."

The left side of the screen shifts to Hollander, a furious pink painting his cheeks, as he says, "Harris, please don't have them show the picture during this question."

"Sorry, Shane, I'm absolutely having them show the photo," Harris replies with a laugh. "Maybe have them zoom in on your glistening abdominals while they're at it."

The right side of the screen does just that.

Hollander drops his hand into his hands. "Jesus Christ."

"Ne smushchaysya, lyubimyy. Eto khoroshaya fotografiya. Ty vyglyadish' prekrasno. Ty vseгда vyglyadish' prekrasno," Rozanov says.

At the bottom of the screen, the English translation reads, *Don't be embarrassed, my love. It's a good picture. You look beautiful. You always look beautiful.*

Hollander's face flushes further.

"That's a great segue for the next question," Harris says. "Shane, canadahockey5 asked, 'Shane has been vocal about learning Russian—how fluent is he?'"

"Decently?" Hollander says with an upward lilt, looking to Rozanov for confirmation.

"He learned much very fast," Rozanov says, petting Easel with one hand and Sausage Roll with the other. "Much faster than I learned English."

"I understand more than I can speak," Hollander says. "I understand Ilya almost always now. There are still some words that escape me. I'm still a very slow speaker, and I can't write it at all."

"His accent is horrendous," Rozanov says. "Is very cute."

"Final fan question, is from livinlavidadeath, who asked, 'Rozanov, what is your favorite part of living in Canada?'"

Rozanov perks up at this. "Oh, easy, Shane."

Hollander snorts, "Other than me, Ilya."

"Anya, the cottage, hockey, the team, your parents," Ilya rattles off smoothly. "All things that relate back to you or you are a part of, *moya lyubov'*."

Hollander's eyes slam shut, and he exhales as though he just finished a triathlon. "How are you the biggest shit-stirrer in the entire NHL, but also this soft?"

"I am—what is the saying in English?" Rozanov snaps the fingers of his good hand, the noise waking Sausage Roll from his nap. "Ah, yes, I contain multitudes."

"You certainly do," Harris says. "Alright, guys, just a few more questions and then we're done. These three questions are for both of you, and we aren't attributing them to any specific person or online handle as they came from hundreds, if not thousands of people."

"Thousands?" Hollander repeat. "Jesus."

Harris clears his throat and asks, "You're both well into your thirties and with this last cup win sealing your legacies as two of the greatest to ever skate on NHL ice, any thoughts of retirement?"

"This is rude question," Rozanov sputters. "I am still very young. Grandfather Hollander on the other hand—"

"I am only five weeks older than you," Shane protests.

Rozanov snorts. "Tell your knees that."

"At least I'm not the one in a sling."

"Hey, guys," Harris calls before the bickering can devolve further.

"Oh, right, the question," Shane says.

"Very rude question," Rozanov reiterates. "But no, unfortunately for all of NHL, we are not retiring yet. More games to win—"

Hollander whispers, "More like more teams to terrorize."

"Not to mention Winter Olympics this year," Rozanov continues.

"Which leads us beautifully into our next question," Harris says. "Ilya, your Canadian citizenship finalized at the beginning of the year, meaning you did make the cut off for quals and will be playing alongside Shane, representing your new home country in the 2026 Olympics. How are you guys feeling going into Milan?"

"Is complicated," Rozanov says. "English word... nice but also sad?"

"Bittersweet," Hollander supplies.

"Bittersweet," Rozanov repeats. "I am grateful to Canada, it is great place. Has given me... everything that is important to me. It is home now, and I am proud to represent it. But I also love Russia. Russia just does not love me."

Hollander whispers, "*Ya tebya lyublyu.*"

Rozanov repeats the words, his voice equally as soft.

The on-screen caption pointedly does not translate this sentence to English.

"Alright, guys, you've been great sports," Harris says. "Here's our final question: You've brought home six and four Stanley Cups, respectively. Is there any one of those that stands above the rest as the one you're most proud of?"

Rozanov shifts, on his left, Easel sniffs his sling. He gestures for Hollander to be the first to answer.

Hollander says, "The first is always special, right? Finally summitting the mountain top. Like this goal I have worked literally my entire life towards is finally achieved."

Rozanov nods.

"But also," Hollander continues, "these last three have been..."

"I speak two languages," Rozanov picks up where his husband left off, "but there aren't words for these last three. What they mean to us. Us, Shane and me, specifically. What our

team means to us. Ottawa, the fans. Their support has been...”

“To bring the cup home with this team to my hometown,” Hollander nods, his voice cracking, emotion flooding into every word. “To have this group of guys to do it with.”

Hollander shakes his head as Rozanov threads their fingers together and squeezes. Hollander looks up, and his smile is brighter than the sun when he says, “We love our team, and we love Ottawa, and we can’t wait to do it again next year.”

The video fades to black.

The information for the Ottawa Animal Rescue rolls across the screen, followed by the information for The Irina Foundation—Rozanov and Hollander’s non-profit.

The words fade to a selfie of a smiling Bood, tears in his eyes, a baby in his arms. Text beside the photo reads: Bood’s wife gave birth to the couple’s second child, a healthy baby girl, the day after these interviews were filmed. Bood is not upset about missing any naps.

The photo and text fade and are replaced with another. Another selfie. This one of Ilya Rozanov in sunglasses, his phone held high above his head as he smiles at the camera. Behind him is a dock that leads to a glistening lake where Shane Hollander sits, his back to the camera. His feet dangle in the water as he leans back on his hands and lifts his face to the sun. A Centaur’s t-shirt stamped with Rozanov and the number 81 stretches across his back.

He is surrounded by dogs.

The text reads: Hollander and Rozanov did end up leaving with all the dogs they met at the interview. Sausage Roll, Bear, and Easel have taken to their new doggy-sister, Anya.

The final photo shown is of the entire Ottawa Centaurs team, each man holding a puppy. At the center of the photo are Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov, the Stanley Cup, filled with squirming puppies, sandwiched between them.

End Notes

Hope you enjoyed! Feel free to come shout about these wonderful idiots in the comments if you want! xx

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