go to the box, please

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at https://archiveofourown.org/works/75888841.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Heated Rivalry (TV)
Relationship:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Shane Hollander, Ilya Rozanov
Additional Tags:	Slice of Life, Domestic Fluff
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2025-12-16 Words: 1,533 Chapters: 1/1

go to the box, please

by savedby

Summary

Rozanov is staring at him, smirking.

There's cameras on the penalty boxes. They're definitely being watched.

Shane should look away, but as always, he’s caught up by those eyes.

or, two scenes in penalty boxes, more than a decade apart

Notes

They've got me, friends. They've finally got me.

I'm not telling where the title if from, real ones already know.

See the end of the work for more notes

Shane breathes in deep, taking stock of himself. His left knee hurts, but that's not surprising, because this late in the season he's always playing through something. He stretches it out, breathes through the pain. He'll beg a Percocet off the athletic trainer to get him through the third. It'll be fine until then.

The plexiglas of the penalty box is filthy but Shane can still follow the play. Behind him, Boston fans are hurling insults at him, like comforting background noise. Maybe crosschecking number 37 in a chippy game like this wasn't Shane's smartest move, but they're up by two. He won't beat himself up over a minor.

Besides, Boston are also shorthanded.

Shane was on the bench when Rozanov dropped his gloves and started throwing punches, so he hadn't really seen what started it. Gonch barely even retaliated, probably too surprised when the Ilya Rozanov started swinging at him. It's probably why he only served a minor while Rozanov was still sitting out his fighting major. The Boston fans were not happy about it.

Shane tells himself he isn't going to look. There's cameras on the penalty boxes, and he's supposed to be focusing on what's happening on the ice. If they caught him looking somewhere he's not supposed to look, it'd be bad. It'd be really bad.

But, Rozanov doesn't usually fly off the handle like this. He can be a pest, an agitator, but if someone challenges him, he usually just laughs in his face.

Shane tells himself it'll only be a quick glimpse. It'll be fine. No one will see. He chances a look. Fuck, he always forgets how close the penalty boxes in Boston are to each other, because Rozanov is right fucking there.

Rozanov is helmetless, hair matted down with sweat, nothing like his usually pristine curls. He's still breathing heavy. Shane doesn't know if it's from adrenaline or just exhaustion. Rozanov's been posting high minutes tonight, not that it's been helping his team any.

One of his hands is bare, missing a glove. He flexes it absentmindedly, his knuckles red and swollen. He keeps worrying at it, stretching all his fingers individually, rotating his thumb. He's got strong hands, thick knuckles and big palms. Just a few months ago those hands were -

Shane's staring. He makes himself look away, deeply embarrassed. People are watching. He knows they're watching, feels their phantom gazes all over. He hopes the flush on his face can be attributed to exertion, rather than what it actually is.

Shane swipes his hand across his chin, fixes his helmet strap, fiddles with his neck guard. Tries to focus on the play. They're outplaying Boston but their pointy goalie is standing on his head, and they can't seem to score. Shane's eyes drift left again.

Rozanov is staring at him, smirking.

Shane should look away, but as always, he's caught up by those eyes. Dark blue, lakewater caught underneath a sheet of pristine ice. Shane could swear he sees himself reflected in them, too transparent, too exposed. In a flash, he realizes Rozanov must know - that he's been looking and what he's been thinking.

They're probably being watched. Rozanov isn't looking away, still with that damnable smirk. Shane puts his gloved hand up to his mouth, doesn't know what he'll say, or if he's even remembering his room number right and-

"20 seconds," the penalty box attendant says and Shane slams back into mortifying reality. He gets up on legs that feel a little shaky. The penalty box door swings open and he goes flying out, hoping he's fast enough to escape his thoughts.

He and Rozanov get out at the exact same time, and almost collide. Shane could swear he sees Rozanov wink as he glides past him into play.

*

"Hooking?" Ilya says, after Shane had angrily slammed the plexi glass door shut. "I don't know how I feel about you hooking other men, Hollander."

"Oh, be serious," Shane mutters, but doesn't even try to suppress the small smile growing on his face. Ilya's smirk widens into a full grin when he spots it. "Better than a misconduct. Did that guy say something shitty?"

Somewhere to their right, in the other penalty box, the guy that Ilya tried to fistfight is seething. Ilya's hand is gloveless, his knuckles red. Shane tries not to notice. Knows Ilya has clocked that he's noticing.

"I wasn't listening," Ilya says dismissively. "He was messing with the rookie. I made sure he knew it was a bad idea."

"Big hero," Shane says, ducking his face behind his glove because he knows his smile is inappropriately big. "I'm pretty sure he's the kid's college situationship. I don't know if it'll help or stop his hero worship of you."

"Jealous, Hollander?" Ilya says, even as he's turning to squint at the other penalty box. "He's very ginger. Our rookie likes gingers? Seems out of character."

"I didn't think I'd like you, but here we are," Shane says, unthinking, too focused on the ice. The sudden silence next to him immediately lets him know he's made a mistake.

Ilya's grin is sleazy but his eyes are soft, affectionate. "Aw, babe," he says, "talking sweet in the penalty box. How sexy."

Next to them, the penalty box attendant clears his throat.

"Sorry for him," Shane says, face flaming. "He doesn't have a filter."

“It’s fine,” the penalty box attendant says, nodding stiffly. “Usually when he’s in here, he’s breaking sticks, so this is actually an improvement.”

“Ilya, that’s not nice,” Shane says, even if he quietly finds a pouting Ilya kind of cute.

“I apologized after!” Ilya protests, turning towards the attendant. “Tell him I apologized, or he’ll make me sleep on the couch!”

“He apologized after,” the attendant says dutifully, and the look on his face betrays that he’s more amused than anything.

“Well, sorry again,” Shane says, mollified. For a moment, it threatens to overwhelm him. The Ottawa fans behind them, loud even as they’re playing shorthanded. The penalty box attendant not even flinching when they mention their relationship. Their names, hyphenated on their jerseys.

Ilya bumps their knees together, and stays there, a warmth against his side. Shane turns his attention back to the ice, breathing out.

“You know,” Ilya says, low and sultry, and Shane’s focus flips so suddenly he almost gives himself whiplash. “I have a fantasy that starts just like this.”

He’s speaking quietly enough that it’s probably for Shane’s ears only, and Shane’s never been so glad that their fans are so damn loud.

“In the penalty box?” Shane asks, a lot scandalized, a little turned on. He can’t help it at this point.

“Oh, yes,” Ilya says, serious and sultry. “Some guy says something shitty to me, you overhear and come to my rescue.”

“I’m an enforcer in this fantasy of yours?” Shane asks, amused.

“Yeah, that’s how you can tell it’s a fantasy,” Ilya nods, smirking. “Everyone knows that in real life, you can’t fight.”

Shane elbows him in the ribs. “Focus on the game,” he hisses.

“It’ll be fine,” Ilya says dismissively. “Best penalty kill in the league, against the San Jose Seahorses? We’ll be fine.”

The moment he says it, number 18 spins around an opposing D-man and lobs it in the net for a beautiful shorthanded goal. They both fly to their feet, yelling. The penalty box attendant opens the door and waves them out. They’re out in time to join the group hug. On the bench after, their rookie looks at Ilya adoringly. Shane would be jealous if he didn’t catch him staring at his Seahorse buddy right after. One of these days, Shane is going to have to find some high ground and talk to the rookie about how more often than not, a decade old situationship with a member of the opposing team doesn’t work out.

Honestly, he doubts his ability to keep a straight face through that speech. His worked out pretty well for him, after all.

*

The picture of them in the penalty box is posted to the official NHL account with the comments turned off. The caption is just, “Husband time.”

BONUS SCENE:

“What are we having for dinner tonight?” Ilya says idly. He’s in for crosschecking, and Shane’s next to him, sitting out his unsportsmanlike for arguing on Ilya’s behalf.

“I don’t know, did you remember to order groceries for today? It was your turn,” Shane says, knowing full well that Ilya forgot.

“The app hates me,” Ilya says, even though the app always works for him when they run out of lube. “It senses I’m not Canadian enough.”

“If you say so,” Shane says dubiously. “I suppose we always have rice and chicken.”

“Ugh,” Ilya says, “and what else? Caesar salad?”

“What’s wrong with Caesar salad?” Shane says, almost offended. “It’s better than a tuna melt.”

“My tuna melts are delicious and you know it,” Ilya says, grinning.

“Whenever I want to spoil my wife, I make her my famous Marry Me Chicken,” the penalty box attendant offers.

“I would also like to spoil my husband,” Ilya says seriously, and Shane almost chokes on his mouthguard. “What is the recipe, please?”

End Notes

NOTES:
- I know the Boston Raiders aren't the Boston Bruins in this AU but it does amuse me to think about it, so both Bergeron (who Shane crosschecked) and Rask (the pointy goalie) appear in this text. Where is Marchand you ask? I dunno, but imagine the chaos he and Ilya could get up to. Gonch is Sergei Gonchar who briefly also played for Montreal but is mainly here because he was once a victim of a fighting major that he didn't get punished for because he didn't swing at the other guy. Idk either.
- I like the idea that alternative NHL teams exist in HR universe, but I don't know if a San Jose one already exists in-verse, so I'm pretending they don't. I used Jacob Tierny's naming conventions for the team (which he talks about on the What Chaos! podcast) and I swear like half the brainpower I spent on this fic was used on deciding what San Jose's team would be called. They're bottoms, obviously, but what would be the right equivalent to the Sharks? And then, delirious with fever from the super flu I bolted upright in the middle of the night: SEAHORSES! San Jose Trans, San Jose Non-binary. And of course, it wouldn't be San Jose if there weren't someone with a messy college situationship on it.
- In the interest of full transparency, I first started writing this fic because of something that happened in the PWHL a couple weeks ago. The Montreal Victoire captain Marie-Philip Poulin and her wife Laura Stacey are teammates and they got stuck in the penalty box together. Someone posted a tweet with the screenshot and the caption "Wife time". Here's the tweet. I love them.
- Saying that, I feel compelled to also say that if you're a new hockey fan and you're also a fan of starcrossed lovers, married lineys and girlfriend D-partners then I really hope that you can get into women's hockey. All games can be watched for free on the PWHL youtube channel.
- the bonus scene didn't really feel like it fit anywhere in the other two, even though timelinewise it's in the second scene but I kind of wanted to include it anyway. I just think it'd be hilarious if they talked about mundane domestic things in the penalty box like, 'Hey you didn't forget to take out the trash, right?' . Also the Caesar salad is a reference. If you know what it is, raise your hand in the comments for a cookie.
- that's all, congratulations for making it this far. if you're not put off, you can find me on my very new hockey bluesky

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