

broken frames

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/76268961) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/76268961>.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Heated Rivalry (TV) , Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid
Relationship:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Ilya Rozanov , Shane Hollander
Additional Tags:	POV Shane Hollander , Fluff and Humor , Ilya Accidentally Breaks Shanes Glasses , Obviously He Offers to Buy Him New Ones , Comfort No Hurt , Domestic , Banter , small gestures , Awkward Flirting
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2025-12-23 Words: 1,772 Chapters: 1/1

broken frames

by [hightowered](#)

Summary

“You didn’t have to dress up,” Shane says as he approaches, wishing he could hide somewhere between his worn jeans and beat up Vans.

“I did not dress up,” Ilya says. “This is coat.”

Shane Hollander breaks his glasses in a media scrum and spends a week pretending it’s not a problem--until Ilya Rozanov, armed with Russian guilt and zero sense of boundaries decides to fix it himself.

Notes

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

Shane Hollander breaks his glasses on a Tuesday.

Which is already a bad omen because Tuesdays are naturally cursed, and also because he very much needs those glasses to see.

It also happens during a post practice media scrum.

A shared practice between teams has just ended and both teams have been herded into the concrete corridor outside the locker room.

Reporters cluster in a loose semicircle and someone's camera rig whirs obnoxiously close to Shane's ear. Knowing these things are part of his job, he does his best to smile and be polite, but they're certainly not his favourite part of playing hockey.

He's still half in practice mode with his jersey damp and his hair curling at the nape of his neck as they crowd closer. A blue hoodie is pulled roughly over his shoulder pads because he forgot again--to take them off before entertaining the media.

Before they even start talking to him, his glasses are already fogging from the temperature change in his breath. And they're perched precariously on his nose like they're waiting for an excuse to droop.

Shane's halfway through a sentence about center line chemistry--something earnest and rambling about communication and trust--when someone jostles him from behind.

A hard bump that's rough and impatient. Probably another pissed player ducking out or a reporter trying to get a better angle.

There's a sudden press at Shane's back.

Too close and too fast and suddenly he's knocked half a step forward before he can brace himself.

His elbow comes up on reflex but it doesn't make much of a difference, and then it's his face that takes the hit--his glasses snagging against the hard slope of Ilya Rozanov's shoulder as Ilya turns into the space at the same time.

The frame bends the wrong way by his ear.

It gives with a small crack.

For a second Shane doesn't know what to do with himself.

Someone's phone is still recording with the flash on.

Ilya is standing there with his jersey clinging at the collar, his sleeves pushed up to expose taped wrists, and a line of sweat still drying on his temple.

Shane feels it before he sees it.

The sudden looseness on his face. The way the left arm of his glasses slides uselessly downward. He reaches up and touches the frame timidly. And then watches in horror as the lens pops clean out and skitters across the concrete floor, spinning once before coming to rest near a cameraman's sneaker.

"Oh my god," Shane blurts. "Oh my--fuck no."

The reporters are already buzzing, delighted. This minimal drama is better than platitudes about forechecks. A camera zooms in on the fallen lens like it's breaking news.

Ilya looks down at the glasses, then back at Shane.

His expression appears blank, maybe amused, maybe annoyed. Hard to tell.

His English is good, but his face is still very Russian about these things.

"You break your glasses," Ilya says.

"Yes," Shane says, kneeling. "I've noticed."

Someone laughs. Shane does not know who and he frankly doesn't care.

"You just--someone pushed me--are you okay? Did I hit you?"

Ilya flexes his arm, rolls his shoulder once, and shrugs. "I am hockey player. I survive."

That somehow makes it worse.

A PR person from his team swoops in with the urgency of someone who senses a headline forming and ushers them apart. She hands Shane the lens and urges him to let it go for now.

"We'll figure it out later. Don't make a scene."

Shane finishes the interview blind on one side, nodding earnestly at questions he can no longer see being asked.

For a week, Shane pretends this isn't a problem.

He switches to contacts full time, which he hates, because they make his eyes feel like they're being deprived of air.

He squints at his phone.

He stands too close to the TV.

He avoids mirrors because everything looks a little wrong and he doesn't want to think about it.

He also, very deliberately, does not text Ilya Rozanov.

Which is a shame, because he keeps thinking about him.

Not in a way--not exactly. Just... the moment. The look on Ilya's face.

On the seventh day, his phone buzzes.

Ilya

you fix glasses yet?

Shane

Hey. And no. Not yet.

Ilya

why?

Shane

They fell even more apart when I got home. Also I'm kind of bad at errands.

Ilya

what is "errands"? do not know this word.

Shane

Errands are like... things you need to do? Like buy groceries. Going to the pharmacy. Anyways, I should've fixed them already.

Ilya

i will take you

Shane

What? Take me where?

Ilya

to errands. to get new glasses

Shane

You really don't have to do that. I can pick up a new pair myself.

Ilya

i broke them

Shane

You didn't.

Ilya

you would not have broken them if I was not there

Shane

That's coincidental.

Ilya

i am Russian. this is how guilt works

Shane

You don't owe me, seriously.

Ilya

i insist

Ilya

tomorrow. i pick you up

Shane

You know where I live??

Ilya

obviously you tell me, Hollander

Ilya shows up exactly on time.

Shane knows this because he's been pacing the cracked sidewalk for fifteen minutes, tugging at his hoodie and trying not to look conspicuous, when his phone buzzes.

Ilya

Outside.

He nearly trips over his own shoes getting to the door.

Ilya is leaning against his car, a dark grey Audi. His sunglasses on, hands in his jacket pockets like he's posing for a catalog. He's wearing a dark wool coat that swallows his frame, black boots scuffed at the toes, and his hair is damp from the winters cold. Shane squints at him and waves awkwardly.

"You didn't have to dress up," Shane says as he approaches, wishing he could hide somewhere between his worn jeans and beat up Vans.

"I did not dress up," Ilya says. "This is coat."

"Sure," Shane says. "That coat probably costs more than my rent."

Ilya opens the passenger door for him, which throws Shane off balance emotionally for reasons he will not examine.

The drive is... nice. Surprisingly so.

They talk about nothing. About traffic. About how bad the radio is. About how Shane hates contacts and Ilya hates how Americans put ice in everything.

“You put ice in water,” Ilya says, disgusted. “Water is already cold.”

“It’s refreshing,” Shane argues.

“It is betrayal.”

Shane laughs, loud enough to make his throat hurt.

The optometry place is bright and minimalist, white counters and walls. And it smells faintly like plastic and cleaning solution. Shane immediately feels out of place as they slouch into two chairs side by side and wait to be addressed.

Ilya, somehow, does not.

They’re approached by a woman with tightly braided blonde hair who looks at them like she’s trying to place where she’s seen them before.

“Hi! What brings you in today?”

Shane gestures vaguely at his face. “Vision failure.”

“I broke his glasses,” Ilya says.

“He did not.”

“I did.”

The woman smiles. “Well, either way. Let’s get you set up and see what you need for today.”

They try on frames and Shane thinks it will be a quick affair. Or, he hopes it will be. If his PR manager didn’t want him to be caught being handed a broken lens by a camera she definitely didn’t want him to be seen doing something so domestic as... buying eyeglasses?

Either way, this takes... a while.

Shane keeps reaching for safe options. Thin black frames. Neutral shapes. Glasses that won’t draw attention to him.

Ilya keeps handing him things that absolutely will.

“These,” Ilya says, holding up a pair with thicker rims.

“No, I’ll look like a substitute teacher,” Shane says, peering into the mirror to examine a pair he picked for himself.

“You will look intelligent,” Ilya tries, and he reaches to pull the frames from his face.

“I already am,” Shane says as he swats his hand away.

“Yes,” Ilya agrees. “But people can see if you wear these ones instead, no?”

Shane laughs despite himself.

They somehow land into an easy conversation. He might have been even having fun, though he wouldn't admit that to anyone. Not even himself. Shane tried something on, Ilya reacted with complete sincerity. A kind he wasn't used to while playing against the Russian on the ice.

“These are good. You look... warm.”

Shane pauses at that one. “Warm?”

Ilya shrugs. “Like someone who drinks tea.”

“I do drink tea.”

“Yes. This fits.”

Shane ends up choosing a pair he never would have picked on his own. Dark green frames. Subtle, but different.

When he settles them on his face Ilya looks up from a moment on his phone and stills.

Shane's stomach flips for no reason at all.

“What?” Shane blurts out, suddenly self-conscious.

“They are good,” Ilya says simply. No extra words. No teasing. Just... approval.

“Yeah?” Shane bites his lip.

“Yes.”

At the counter, Shane fishes in his pockets for his card.

Ilya puts his hand over it when he finally finds it.

“I pay.”

Shane hesitates. “Ilya, no--”

“I insist.”

The cashier raises her eyebrows like this is the highlight of her shift, two grown men fighting over a pair of glasses.

Down the street, they get coffee. Shane keeps awkwardly pushing his new glasses up his nose even though they sit perfectly fine.

“You know,” he says, stirring sugar into his cup like he’s trying to distract himself, “this is probably the weirdest way I’ve ever made a friend.”

Ilya hums. “In Russia, is normal.”

“Everything about Russia sounds fake when you say it like that.”

Ilya smiles, teeth and all and Shane hates what it does to his heart.

They sit by the window, watching people pass. Its rather quiet and it should be comfortable. Shane keeps his hands wrapped around his coffee cup, though he doesn’t feel cold. It’s just... comforting. And nerve wracking. His brain is screaming, don’t stare, don’t stare, but he can’t help sneaking glances at Ilya.

“I am glad I broke your glasses,” Ilya says suddenly. Shane lifts a brow. Hes happy about that?

“You absolutely should not be.”

“I am,” Ilya says. “Otherwise we would not do this.”

Shane looks at him. At the sunlight catching on the edge of his cup. At the way his sunglasses are pushed up into his hair now.

“Yeah,” Shane says softly. “I guess so.”

Ilya reaches across the table and taps the frame of his new glasses gently.

“They suit you.”

End Notes

first time trying formatting with css... please forgive me <3

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