

Shane and Ilya fill out immigration paperwork

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Shane and Ilya fill out immigration paperwork

by [dowhile](#)

Summary

Shane and Ilya take a trip down memory lane, as told through the joys of filling out legal documentation.

Notes

inspired by [this reddit post](#). and of course, I did literally download and reference the linked document in it from the Canadian government 😭

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

Shane had filled out exactly two lines of paperwork and was already leaned over at the kitchen table, his fingers digging into his temples, exhaling a long, tired sigh.

Ilya opened the back door of the cottage and ushered Anya inside, throwing off his sandals and stretching tall. It had taken a moment to hear the sigh of Shane's resignation before his ears perked up, finding him at the table in a state of distress.

"Did you start incredibly exciting paperwork without me?" asked Ilya, massaging Shane's shoulders gently. Ilya watched his tension dissipate at his touch, his shoulders loosening and his jaw relaxing. Calming Shane down had become as natural to him as breathing air. At Shane's feet, Anya curled herself into a ball and laid politely on his toes.

"You know there are teams of lawyers that can do this for me," said Ilya, taking his hands sadly off his husband to pull up a chair beside him.

Another sigh from Shane. Ilya wasn't telling him anything he didn't already know. The Centaurs would help do it for them, but it'd just be a continuation of the same work permit Ilya was already familiar with. The paperwork here was a signal that they were really in this together: Shane as Ilya's husband, but sponsor for permanent residency too. A possible path for citizenship.

Ilya slid the sheets of paper out from under Shane's elbow. Shane looked up at him.

"It is okay," said Ilya with an air of false confidence that for whatever reason, still reassured Shane. "We will knock this out, okay? Easy peasy lemon... whatever the fuck."

Shane laughed, and Ilya couldn't help but lean over to give his husband a kiss.

—

"Fuck the fucking Voyageurs," said Ilya, looking at the employment history section of the form. "Can I write that? You think they will enjoy that at the immigration offices?"

Ilya looked expectantly at Shane, the pen readied in his hand. Shane didn't reply, and Ilya wrote down something anyway, which made Shane double check he wasn't about to send the Canadian government a list of expletives cursing out his former team, even if it was deserved.

"How much did you make a year, sugar daddy?" asked Ilya. He gave Shane those ever-expectant eyes again.

"10.5," mumbled Shane, bashfully. He didn't like saying it out loud. It felt weirdly boastful.

"10.5 what? Cookies? Butterflies? Grains of rice?"

"Shut the fuck up," said Shane, rolling his eyes but feeling heat rush to his face. He finished his sentence hesitantly. "\$10.5 million a year."

Ilya whistled a low whistle. “You do not pay me so well.”

“Well I can’t, anymore. Salary cap, and all.”

Shane had signed with the Ottawa Centaurs, leaving almost one and a half million dollars on the table in his desire to move. And he’d do it all again in an instant.

“It actually asks for monthly salary. Divide by twelve.”

Shane pulled his phone from his pocket and typed the numbers in.

“Mr. Glasses needs a calculator, yes?”

“Mr. Glasses is far-sighted, not a math nerd. \$875,000 per month,” said Shane, putting his phone away in his pocket and reaching under the table to give Anya a scratch.

Even though Ilya had been paid nearly as much as Shane while playing for Boston, the numbers they both put up were eye-watering. The amount Ilya had made outside of Russia was almost inconceivable to him. If he’d ended up with the KHL, he likely wouldn’t be making in a year what he’d made here in a single month. Taxes, cost of living... all of it added up, of course, but sometimes he could forget how little he thought about money now compared with how much he used to.

“Wait,” said Shane, pulling over the papers. “Under ‘Occupation’ you just wrote ‘Hockey Player’?”

Ilya shrugged. “It is not true?”

“I mean,” said Shane, scrunching his face as he tried to rationalize why this bothered him.

“You are ShaneHollanderHockeyPlayer,” said Ilya with a teasing smile. Ilya would never get tired of the Instagram handle that he knew his husband would never change. And even if he did, Ilya would promptly make him change it back.

“I don’t even get a ‘Captain’ or even a ‘Professional’ before ‘Hockey Player’?”

Ilya looked at him with an unbemused expression. “The box is this big,” he said, lifting his pursed fingers that were millimeters apart. Shane admitted the box was small, but didn’t seem convinced. Ilya still wrote a tiny “Professional” above his previous scrawl.

“Ok, now Ottawa Centaurs and the salary: less.”

“Don’t write that,” said Shane reflexively. Ilya gave him a look that told him to calm down, he hadn’t written a word that wasn’t approved.

“Get your calculator out again,” said Ilya.

Shane sighed and did the math again. “For the Centaurs, it’s \$666,000 a month.”

Ilya scribbled this down dutifully, and the more they filled out this stupid paperwork, the more Shane had found himself at ease.

“Before this relationship, was your sponsor related to you in any way?” said Shane quietly under his breath.

“I hope not,” said Ilya with a shudder. “I do not want to be a Hollander.”

“You’re basically a Hollander now, Rozanov.”

“Okay, let me say that again. I would not want to be *born* a Hollander. I would come out of the womb doing crosswords.”

Ilya stuck his tongue out in disgust. “Awful, awful.”

“Have you ever been married or in a common-law relationship with another person?” Ilya read aloud.

“I can read too, thank you,” said Shane.

“What, do you have something to fill out here?” asked Ilya, eyebrows raised. “Secret marriage to Rose Landry? Shall I write it down?”

Shane rolled his eyes. “You’re more hung up on her than I ever was.”

In his nightmares, Ilya could see it so clearly: the tabloid headline with some stupid Rose pun announcing Rose and Shane’s marriage. It was the type of thing that could wake him in a cold sweat.

“Actually—” Shane began.

Ilya snapped his head around at him.

“What?”

“I was married to this really annoying guy from Russia,” said Shane. “It... it didn’t work out though.”

“Oh?” said Ilya, his hard stare melting into a playful smile.

Shane shrugged. “He was a huge dick.”

“What was that again about his huge dick?”

They had taken a breather after the relatively straightforward Parts A and B of the Sponsorship Evaluation document. Anya seemed little concerned with her parents' immigration worries, bounding through the backyard as she retrieved her tennis ball over and over again.

They had made dinner together, a pasta dish Ilya had added too much salt to but ended up tasting relatively fine. Ilya had made sure to hide the paperwork in a side table drawer, feeling it better it should be out of sight, out of mind. It seemed to work, as Shane made no mention of it and his shoulders hadn't been tensed up to his ears since they had stopped in the late afternoon.

Ilya decided they'd pick it back up again tomorrow. The night time could be a terrible menace sometimes. He still sometimes felt it; that irritability and anxiety that only crept in when the sun went down, as though light had been the only thing keeping his bad mood away. He'd seen it in Shane too, the not-infrequent anxiety spike that came with allowing his mind to ruminate at night. Ilya would lie there, still, feeling Shane's head pressed against his chest, their breaths slowing to a steady rhythm. Shane would fall asleep and Ilya would watch the gentle rise and fall of his chest. Sometimes this would be enough to lull him to sleep, and others, he would regretfully shift and get out of bed, pacing the house until he was too tired to do anything but sleep.

Tonight, he wasn't sure what would happen. Spousal sponsorship wasn't strictly necessary for Ilya, but they had chosen this route anyway. Everything in his life had always revolved around hockey. His childhood, his work, where he lived, how he trained, what he did in his spare time. Even Shane. But this was a renunciation of that. A reminder that he was here in Canada because of hockey, yes, but because Shane had chosen him. This life they were building was so much more than the sport that had initiated it.

"You okay?" asked Shane, lifting his side of the duvet and sliding into bed. Ilya had been staring, his eyes unfocused, out the windows into the blackness of night.

"Yes, yes," Ilya said quickly. And then, more honestly, "You have me stressing about paperwork, now. I did not think it would come to this."

Shane laughed and slid over to Ilya's side of the bed. It was Ilya's turn now to rest his head on Shane's chest, Shane's fingers twirling Ilya's soft curls. Ilya savored the feeling that at least for tonight, he was feeling that even the darkness could not bring him down.

—

"Okay," said Ilya, retrieving the papers from the living room side table the next morning and lifting them up triumphantly. "Paperwork time."

"I was wondering where those went," said Shane, mild annoyance on his face shifting quickly into amusement. "I see. Getting laid is hard when you're up all night doing paperwork."

"I mean, we can try doing both..."

“You’re disgusting,” said Shane with a laugh. “I’m not sending in papers that are also a biohazard.”

“You are the disgusting one,” said Ilya. “Dirty, dirty mind.” He pointed to his temples and then shook his head disprovingly.

They sat again side by side at the table, ready to tackle Part C.

—

When was the first time you met in person?

They stared at the question.

The line was the width of the paper but only a centimeter and a half high.

“Let’s not overcomplicate it, I guess,” said Shane. “2008. December 23, 2008.”

“Do you have the exact time? Minute and second?”

As much as he needed Shane for his neuroticism, the truth was, Ilya could probably pinpoint the time down to the second if he tried hard enough. There was something comforting about the memory of that first meeting; that dreadful but exciting thrill of a new crush he knew would soon become all-consuming.

He remembered Shane as he was then, eighteen, still baby-faced and innocent. God, those freckles. The first words Shane had ever spoken to him were, “You’re supposed to smoke over there.” It had taken his slow brain ages to decode the English, but ever since, he had remembered those words like a prayer. He would remember it if it was the last thing Shane Hollander ever said to him.

“World Junior Hockey Championships,” said Shane with a reminiscent smile. “I remember being surprised—”

“Telling me off for—”

“That you smoked.”

Ilya rested his elbow on the kitchen table, unable to stop the smile creeping onto his face. “But you thought it was hot, yes?”

Shane avoided his eyes.

“Yes?” Ilya prodded.

“Fuck you.”

“It is okay. You can admit it.”

“It smells disgusting is what it is,” said Shane. “And bad for your health. And yeah, hot, for whatever stupid reason. You should stop doing it.”

Ilya was nodding but not really listening anymore. He was remembering the brutal cold of that December day and how his day got just a bit better when Shane introduced himself.

“You’re an awesome player to watch,” said Ilya slowly.

Shane narrowed his eyes. “What?”

“You told me that,” said Ilya. “I always thought it was cute. Funny, a little.”

“Yeah?” said Shane. The butterflies in his stomach would always reappear when he recalled their first memory together. “I always thought it was funny I was complimenting you and you basically told me you wanted to crush me.”

Ilya laughed. “It was true! Stupid beautiful Prince of Hockey Shane Hollander and his stupid freckles. He *should* be crushed. And he was.”

Suddenly Shane was back there too, on the ice. Watching the first of a lifetime's worth of Ilya's irritating smirks. The teenaged version of him would probably skin him alive for letting him into his house. Or maybe not. Because even back then, there had been something about Ilya, something absolutely magnetic that had always pulled Shane in.

Shane looked at Ilya with his doe-brown eyes.

“Did you think we’d be here?” Shane asked seriously.

Ilya swallowed, his gaze searching the kitchen table. Of course he hadn’t. It was better than anything he could’ve dreamed of, let alone lived. He figured he’d be an average KHL player still in Russia, if that. The world he had imagined for his future was overwhelmingly bleak.

“Of course, of course,” said Ilya. “I, um... I always get what I want.”

He winked, but Shane sensed the melancholy behind it. Ilya could never have *everything* he wanted, but Shane would do his damndest to give him what he could.

Ilya threw him the pen and slid the papers over.

“You write this one down. And keep it short. Do not get too sappy on me.”

—

Did you have any contact before you met in person?

I wish, thought Shane.

God, I wish, thought Ilya.

They filled in the bubble for “No.”

Are you living together now?

If yes, how long have you been cohabiting (living together)?

“Too long,” said Ilya. “I checked the tags on Anya’s sweater before drying it so it would not shrink. You did this to me.”

Shane smirked. “Good. I like that sweater.”

What language(s) do you use when communicating with each other?

“English, Good Russian, and Bad Russian,” said Ilya, his tongue between his teeth as he wrote out his response. He watched as Shane couldn’t help every time but check whether or not he had actually written his sarcasm down, suppressing a small smile.

Shane sat back in his chair. *English and Russian* was all he had written.

“Do you want me to fix it?” asked Ilya.

“No,” said Shane quickly.

“*Relax,*” Ilya said gently in Russian. “*Everything here is Shane Hollander approved.*”

“*I’m sorry,*” said Shane back, in Russian. Ilya loved the Canadian accent that slipped through when he spoke.

“*Nothing to apologize for,*” said Ilya, shaking his head. “*I would never let the Canadian government know that you still cannot pronounce Ъ.*”

“Ъ. Ъ. Ъ,” repeated Shane, getting a little less confident each time. He was starting to feel he really was speaking gibberish.

“You can’t blame me for the Russian. It’s my shitty teacher’s fault,” Shane said in English.

“You are getting Russian lessons from Hayden Pike?”

Do your close friends, family and children know about your relationship?

“Maybe a bit too much,” said Ilya. “Speaking of which, your father—he does not need any dishwashing detergent? Laundry detergent, maybe? Soap?”

“You’re never letting that one go, are you?”

“No,” said Ilya. “I don’t think I can.”

Shane looked at the five boxes listed below the question. “I guess we should put my mom, my dad, Hayden—”

“Woah, Hayden? He gets a special spot here?”

“It’s either Hayden or Rose,” said Shane.

“Why is that? Like, oh would you like a snake or cockroaches with your meal, sir? And I am like, why do I need either?”

Shane laughed at the absurdity. “God, what kind of restaurants are you going to? Remind me to steer clear.”

Ilya sighed. “Fine. They are good contacts. You can put them both.”

“Wow, you’re turning into a big softie, aren’t you?” said Shane with a huge grin.

Ilya blew a raspberry at him which made Shane smile wider.

“And Svetlana in the last spot—” began Shane.

“Of course.”

“Of course.”

On that they would always agree.

—

Were there formal ceremonies or events to recognize or celebrate your relationship, e.g., engagement ceremony, traditional or customary marriage ceremony, commitment ceremony, partnership ceremony, reception, honeymoon, etc.?

“I am writing down the first ceremony,” said Ilya, matter-of-factly.

Shane didn’t appear to stop him.

Ilya hesitated.

“You want me to write it down?”

Shane nodded.

“Was it formal?” asked Ilya. Shane wasn’t one to break the rules, especially on legal documents.

“I guess that’s in the eye of the beholder, isn’t it?” Shane said, a half-smile on his lips.

Ilya blinked back at him. “The eye of the what? The bee holder? You are holding a wasp or something? What the fuck does that mean?”

Shane laughed so hard there were tears in his eyes. Ilya broke after fifteen seconds, only laughing because Shane was laughing.

“Tell me!” Ilya insisted.

“It’s like... it’s formal because I said it’s formal,” said Shane, wiping his eyes. “Bee holder. Jesus Christ.”

Ilya wrote down “Jade and Ruby Pike” below *Who performed the ceremony, if applicable*.

He wrote down the *other* ceremony, the one in the backyard, but they both knew when it came down to it which the real one was.

—

“Shane,” said Ilya, watching Shane flick through the papers at the kitchen island. “I promise this will be the best documentation the IRCC will ever see.”

“You’re right,” said Shane, gathering them up into a pile and tapping them in line on the counter. “It’s fine. Let’s just... send it.”

Shane grabbed the large orange envelope he had prepared and inserted the form inside, licking it closed.

Ilya felt his heart race. It felt different, somehow, than the wedding. That was romantic. This was real in a different way. If they weren’t in it together before, they’d really be in it now. Ilya was making his way to Canadian citizenship with Shane by his side, if he so chose. This was just the first stop.

They walked together to the mailbox to drop it inside.

“You okay?” asked Shane, watching Ilya’s unreadable expression.

“Yes, yes,” said Ilya, shaking his head to steady himself. “It’s... it’s feeling real.”

End Notes

I am in no way an immigration lawyer or anything of the sort. If you're looking for complete and total Canadian immigration accuracy, please do not look for it in a Heated Rivalry/Game Changers fanfic 😭 all I have is Google and my best guesses

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