

That's My Fucking Husband

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That's My Fucking Husband

by [CrazyJ](#)

Summary

It happens against Montreal, because of course it does.

Shane Hollander has accumulated hundreds of penalty minutes across his career, same as every other hockey player, but none have ever been from fighting.

That is until a bad hit by his former teammates leaves his husband laid out on the ice and a comment that crosses the line has Shane dropping his gloves for the first (and hopefully last) time.

Notes

Three things you need to know going into this.

1. Ilya is 100% fine, I promise you.
2. There is use of a homophobic slur twice in this story about midway through. If that makes you uncomfortable, totally understand, but please about face.
3. The author (aka me) does not condone violence. That is, unless it's against the Montreal Voyageurs. Fuck the Montreal Voyageurs.

With that, please enjoy x

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

It happens against Montreal, because of course it does.

As much as he hated to admit it, Shane had been on edge since the moment he had surfaced from sleep that morning, his brow already furrowed long before his eyes had even fully fluttered open.

It wasn't just that this was Shane's first game against his former team, or that it was his first game back in Montreal and Shane wasn't sure what to expect from the fans.

But it certainly didn't help that Shane knew *exactly* what to expect from the Voyageurs, and even having his husband standing by his side wasn't going to make the 2.5 hour game any easier.

In fact, Shane was pretty convinced that Ilya being there was going to make the game a million times worse.

"You okay?"

Pulling himself from the dark thoughts he had been chasing, Shane turned his attention to Luca, the younger man fast becoming a calming presence both in the locker room and on the ice for Shane, Luca having played on Shane's right wing since the start of the season.

"I don't know," Shane answered honestly, dropping his gaze to the floor and staring resolutely at the pattern in the carpet, one he had spent the last 11 years memorizing, though never from the visitors room.

"Will the fans be supportive?" Luca followed up delicately, his gaze a complicated mix of wonder and worry as it so often was.

"I want them to be, but...I don't think I'll be that lucky to be honest."

Stopping to force down the blockage that appeared in his throat, Shane glanced up briefly to seek out Ilya, realizing as he did that the entire room was watching them—his husband included—the concern obvious in their faces as they listened in on his and Luca's conversation, neither man having realized they had captured the attention of the room.

"We have your back, Shane" Wyatt said gently to Shane's right, smiling when said man turned his way. "I might not be a superhero, but I'll do my best to block as many shots as I can tonight. You guys might as well start calling me Doctor Hayes!"

Barking out a laugh along with the rest of the team, Shane shook his head with a rueful smile, grateful for just how nerdy their goalie was, though he wasn't 100% confident he knew what the other man was talking about until Evan Dykstra leaned over and whispered "Doctor Strange, Marvel superhero" in his ear, the team well aware that "pop culture" and "Shane Hollander" were not synonymous phrases.

"I think for the first time in my entire life, I actually **don't** want to play hockey tonight," Shane admitted once the room had quieted down, a pang striking through his chest as he did,

noting the way the words landed on the faces of his teammates, Ilya's especially. "The guys in that other room..."

"...they were your family," Evan finished for him after a moment when it appeared that Shane couldn't, an angry expression overtaking his features as he did.

"I mean...I thought so," Shane conceded, swallowing heavily around the blockage that persisted in his throat. "Don't get me wrong, I didn't think they were going to start painting rainbows in the dressing room and taping their sticks every night or anything, but after 11 years and three Stanley Cup wins together...I don't know, I guess I just thought I meant something to them."

For a long moment a heavy silence settled across the room, no one saying anything to break the tension that had infiltrated the space with Shane's words, a mounting anger rumbling through the 20 men sitting around the room as they processed the implications of what he shared, his husband clasping his hands together so tightly that Shane was worried he was going to snap his hands in two.

"I, uh...I don't know if it's okay for me to ask this of anyone," Shane continued, frowning as he tried to collect his thoughts and missing as the coaching staff quietly entered the room, their eyes locking in on Shane hunched over in his stall, his head down and his hands rhythmically squeezing the ends of his pads. "But I'd really, really like it if we found a way to show them what they lost. And I know that's selfish because I'm just one guy and people get traded and leave teams all the time, but..."

"...this was personal," Coach Wiebe finished for Shane, smiling kindly as the latter's eyes shot up to meet his own in surprise. "They made a hell of a mistake, Shane. One, for ever being stupid enough to not accept you for exactly who you are, and two, for ever being stupid enough to give you and your husband the opportunity to play on the same team."

A raucous roar that was half cheer, half laughter tore through the room at Coach's words and Shane found himself blinking back tears at the warm acceptance and understanding that flowed around him from his team, a team that didn't care that he was different, a team that *welcomed* the fact he was different. A team that accepted him for all that he was both good and bad, with all of his intricacies and weird food habits, and with the 200-pound Russian man that was perpetually attached to his hip.

His team. Not the team he was expecting, but the team he would forevermore choose if given the opportunity.

"Damn straight!" Bood called out as Coach finished, fist pumping the air. "These fuckers won't know what hit them!"

"You know, if they hate gay people so much," Troy added, sharing a soft look with Harris across the room, Shane shifting to see the social media manager smiling back at him with pure adoration, "then I think we better make sure every gay person on this team scores a goal tonight. Just in case. Show them who's better or something."

"Yes, Barrett!" A deep enthusiastic voice rumbled from the other side of the room, and Shane was already shaking his head with amusement before he looked up to see Ilya now standing in the middle of the room. "A rainbow goal for you! A rainbow goal for me! A rainbow goal for Shane! And a rainbow goal for whoever else of you perfect rainbow lovers want to score tonight and send Montreal home crying!"

"A rainbow goal for me," Shane laughed under his breath amongst the cheers in the room, shaking his head with a fond smile as Ilya's words sunk in, still struggling to wrap his head around the fact he could be out and open—could be *himself*—without making anyone else around him uncomfortable.

"And if we lose?" Someone asked as Ilya strode towards Shane, pulling his husband to his feet and sliding a hand between his shoulder pads and the top of his hockey pants, the warmth of his touch exactly what Shane needed to settle himself down as he leaned his head onto Ilya's shoulder and stepped further into his embrace.

"Is not an option. Tonight, we win." And with that, Ilya tucked a finger under Shane's chin, tilting his head back and kissing his husband passionately without a single care in the world.

"You're an idiot," Shane huffed once they pulled apart, his cheeks flaming red. He was still getting used to being allowed to do that.

"Yes, but I am your idiot," Ilya replied with a wicked grin, planting a disgustingly wet kiss on Shane's cheek, the older man shoving his husband away and wiping at the skin to remove the excess spit there much to the enjoyment of the rest of the team and to Harris who was most definitely recording this on his phone for the Centaurs' socials later.

"A good luck kiss before the big game! #GoCentaursGo #HollanovUnite #FuckTheVoyageurs!"

(Okay, maybe not the last one, but a man could dream couldn't he??).

Shane's head had barely cleared the tunnel before the boos began.

He knew the boos had been coming, had heard it happen dozens of times across his career as players changed teams, but never in a million years had he thought that he would ever be the target of such vitriol.

"Keep your head up," Ilya said quietly as he stepped onto the ice and skated past him, the team skating circles around their zone to get their legs warmed up, Shane realizing a moment too late that he had in fact dropped his head towards his chest, his shoulders pulled up high to drown out the sounds of the Montreal home crowd.

Puffing out a frustrated breath of air, Shane pulled his shoulders back and raised his head up high, completing a lap before receiving a puck on his stick from Evan and rifling it into the back of the empty net with a decisive snap, taking another lap and repeating the action.

Skate. Shoot. BOOOOOO. Skate. Shoot. BOOOOOO.

"Fuck this city," Troy said as he pulled up to a stop beside him, the players forming two lines in the middle of the ice as Wyatt slid into the crease and began his preparations. "Though I guess they aren't all bad."

"Hm?"

"Look left."

Swallowing heavily, Shane chanced a look towards the stands, his eyes landing on two young boys who couldn't be older than 15 with a yellow sign against the glass reading "Welcome Home Shane!!" dripped in rainbows and a heart that had "24 + 81" in the middle. Fuck.

Suddenly overcome with emotion, Shane willed the tears back into his eyes as he gave himself permission to face the crowd, drinking in the sights of all the signs pressed against the glass along the Centaurs end of the ice.

"Captain my captain! Montreal loves you!"

"Forever a fan of #24!"

"#Hollanov4Lyfe 

"Gays do it better 

"Ilya Rozanov? Luckiest man in the world!"

And Shane's personal favourite:

"#24. The best player ON the ice, the best husband OFF the ice."

Damn straight.

"Is nice, actually," Ilya mused thoughtfully from beside him, Shane taking a deep breath before turning to look at him, worried that he would burst into tears if he wasn't careful. "Some people boo, but fuck them. Some people cheer, thank you to them. Is about what I expected."

"Yeah, I guess that's about what I expected too," Shane admitted after a moment and another scan of the glass, resisting the urge to step into Ilya's arms and bury his face in his strong chest.

"You have not even looked at other end of ice," Ilya pointed out astutely, his piercing gaze never leaving Shane's face as he analyzed every furrow and every frown on his features.

"I, uh...", Shane started, gulping loudly in the space between them before continuing. "I don't really know what to expect if I do."

"Some glares," Ilya said easily, like it was simple and not something as soul crushing as how Shane currently felt. "But not all bad. Now that we are standing together most of them are looking at us, but this is probably because I am so hot and they are jealous I am your husband."

"Oh fuck off," Shane laughed sharply, pushing at Ilya and feeling the tension shrink back in his chest as the momentum pushed them both back a step, the matching grin on Ilya's face replacing the ugly emotions rearing up in Shane's mind with ones of warmth and love.

Fuck he loved his husband.

"Is true!" Ilya replied cheekily, his lips stretching even wider. "Am very good catch, yes? Great hockey player. Great husband. Great in bed. Who would not want to be you, Shane Hollander?"

"I mean he has a point," Bood said as he skated up to the pair, placing his hands on the top of his stick as he stopped beside Ilya. "Both of you are unfortunately very hot and very talented. It's honestly really fucking annoying."

"Is that jealousy I hear, Zane?" Ilya chirped, his grin turning feral. "Do you want Shane and I to come show Cassie how it's done? Only small fee I promise."

"Shane, leash your husband," Boodram said with a glare in Ilya's direction, not even bothering to respond to Ilya's comments, skating off to re-join the lines much to Shane's amusement. They all knew Zane wasn't actually mad.

A quiet settled over Shane's mind as he continued looking at Ilya, the Russian man's expression open and kind and supportive. As he continued to look into those beautiful eyes that he loved so much, Shane heard Ilya take a deep inhale, motioning for Shane to do the same until they were both standing across from each other breathing deeply, Ilya not even having to touch him to calm him down, but still finding a way to do so anyways.

Once he felt like his heart had stopped jack rabbiting in his chest, Shane steeled himself, turning his gaze towards Montreal's end of the ice, eyes taking in the sight of his former team, some who turned away as soon as he made eye contact, some who glared at him with open disgust, and two who looked as uncomfortable as he had ever seen them, skating towards center ice as soon as their eyes locked.

"Go," Ilya urged after a moment of hesitation from Shane, pushing on Shane's back to get him moving. "They are your friends. Let them do their job."

"Mon ami," JJ smiled sadly as the trio neared each other, the boos picking up with fervour around them, the Québécois man hesitating for just a moment before putting his arms around Shane and pulling him against his chest, Hayden doing the same a moment later. "I hate seeing you on the other end of the ice."

"Feels weird, that's for sure," Shane admitted, taking a look at Hayden and noticing the dim light behind his eyes. "The guys giving you shit?"

"Eh. Don't worry about it." Looking away for a second, Shane followed Hayden's gaze to the other side of the zone where Carter McLeod was glaring daggers at them, a left winger who had played for Montreal for years and who had always resented Shane for coming out, never once stopping his homophobic remarks in the dressing room or on the ice.

"You don't need to protect me anymore," Shane mumbled when Hayden turned back to him, flicking his gaze to JJ and noting that he was also watching Carter with a wary look. "Unless...maybe you do?"

"Just...keep your head up if you end up on the ice at the same time," Hayden replied quietly, his head dipping as he did. "I know I haven't always been supportive of you and Rozanov, but apparently that's nothing compared to how some of the other guys feel. Leaving Montreal they can apparently tolerate. Dating Ilya Rozanov...not so much."

"Yeah, well." If Hayden's words surprised him, Shane didn't let it show, not after the first however many games of the season had passed and he had seen this exact thing play out time and time again. Most players didn't care or at least didn't outwardly say anything, some players were supportive and had come up to them both to say something kind during warmups, and some players cared a heck of a whole lot—and not in a good way.

"I will say," JJ broke the silence after a moment, his gaze tracking Ilya back in the Centaurs end who was chirping Wyatt for letting his goal in, "that it is kind of insane that you and Rozanov are on the same team. It's weird to see it in front of my eyes."

Shane smirked but didn't say anything, turning to follow JJ's gaze and smiling as Ilya and Evan jostled near the net, grins on both of their faces even when Ilya came out on top and passed the puck to Luca who only just missed the net with his shot attempt, the trio laughing easily.

There was truth to what JJ was saying though, even Shane could admit that. Ten games into the season and the Centaurs had only lost twice, once in a shootout against LA the week prior and once in a 1-0 game where Wyatt had been too far out of position and missed a deflection. It was still early, still 72 games to go—including tonight's—but right now the Centaurs were first in the league, and Shane was damn proud of that fact.

(He'd never admit to being jealous that Ilya had more points than him though, but only because he was so damn proud of his husband. 31 years old and still on the top of his game and on top of the league. *Fuck he loved his husband*).

"I wish we could just get this game over with," Shane admitted after another beat had passed, taking a deep breath and turning back to the pair.

"Captain Canada does not want to play hockey??" JJ fake gasped in his thick accent, placing a hand on his chest and giggling brightly when Shane shoved him, shaking his head all the while.

"Whaaaat?" Hayden chimed in, a little twinkle in his eye for the first time that night. "You don't feel like getting booed for 2.5 hours? Dude, that's craaaaazy!"

"Right? What was I thinking?" Shane laughed mirthlessly, looking down at the ice and noting how strange it was that his uniform was a different colour. "Can't imagine why."

"We are still good for dinner after, yes?" JJ asked in French to seemingly change the topic, smiling sadly when Shane nodded in confirmation. "Will your husband be coming too?"

"He doesn't have to," Hayden muttered at the same time Shane said "we're kind of a package deal," the pair making eye contact and both huffing a laugh. At least some things hadn't changed.

"I should go finish warming up," Shane said eventually, rolling his neck and noting belatedly that a good number of Voyageurs were watching the three of them, though none made a move to approach. "Though maybe you don't want me to so you still have a chance of winning?"

"Oh fuck you!" JJ and Hayden cried out in unison, shoving Shane back who laughed genuinely as he began to skate away, crossing back into the Centaurs zone with a soft wave at his two closest friends, not missing the glare his former coach directed his way as he did.

"How did it go?" Ilya asked as Shane returned, his face carefully neutral, though his eyes were awash with a million unasked questions.

"It was good," Shane admitted, voice careful to disguise the hurt he felt that no one else from his former team had bothered to skate over. "Thank you for making me go."

"Always, *moya lyubov*. Now go take some shots on Doctor Hayes, we need to win tonight!"

Ten minutes later, Shane sat horrified in his stall as Coach Wiebe read out the starting lineup—his name included—Luca and Tanner to stand on either side of him, with Dykstra and Holmberg rounding out the five.

Good god, the Montreal crowd was going to eat him alive.

As if he could sense Shane's rising panic, Coach Wiebe turned to face him, squaring his shoulders and raising his head, almost like he was preparing to argue with a small child.

"The way I see it, Shane, we have two options," Coach declared sternly, though his tone was kind. "Either we let Montreal walk over you for the rest of the night, or we face it head on and put you where you belong: on center ice with your teammates who love you. Now I'd really like to keep you in the starting lineup, but I won't force you. The decision is yours."

For the second time that night, Shane felt as the rest of the team turned to look at him, their gazes a mix of emotions that ranged from questioning to understanding.

On the one hand, Coach Wiebe was right. Shane knew his former coach well enough to know he'd do anything tonight to throw Shane off his game, and if Shane was to start the game from the bench, he'd already consider that a win.

But on the other hand, being booed while his face was being shown on national television didn't sound all that appealing either.

As he always did when he needed comfort, Shane found himself seeking out Ilya's gaze on the other side of the room, the pair having been assigned stalls as far apart as they could even before the preseason had ended thanks to one very handsy Russian and one very scandalized Canadian.

When their eyes met, Shane was grateful to see the steadfast determination on his husband's face that he loved so much, his heart aching to run across the room and throw himself into Ilya's arms.

Instead, Shane turned to Coach Wiebe and nodded once, the only confirmation his coach needed that Shane would start from the ice.

He had to. Fuck Montreal if they thought they could keep him down.

But moments later as Shane stood on the ice and the boos began raining down upon his head, he momentarily wondered if he had made the right decision.

Thankfully, there was only one anthem tonight, and the crowd was at least patriotic enough to let up their ministrations to sing along proudly, Shane doing the same from where he stood in line, aware that cameras were on him from every angle and doing his best to keep his expression neutral and his voice steady as he sang along.

He may not be a Voyageur anymore, but he was still damn proud to be Canadian.

As the anthem finished and the lights returned to full intensity, Shane pulled his helmet back on and skated to centre ice, looking up to see Montreal's new captain staring him down, his expression icier than the literal ice beneath their skates.

"You ready to lose, rainbow boy?" The man asked, and for a brief insane second, Shane almost laughed in his face at the absurdity of the sentence he chose to start with, instead choosing to drop his gaze to the ice and ready himself for the game.

As the puck dropped, Shane won the face-off on instinct alone, the boos raining down upon his head near deafening as he snapped the puck back to Holmberg and stepped around the man before him, easily intercepting the pass back from the blue line and entering into Montreal's zone with speed, faking a pass to Luca and instead rifling the puck—

Directly into the back of the net.

Shane Hollander (13)
Luca Haas (7), Erik Holmberg (4)
OTT 1 - MTL 0 (00:12 - 1st)

Momentarily stunned, Shane was brought out of his reverie when four warm bodies collided with his own, the blood rushing in his ears quieting down only to be replaced with the absolute elation from his four teammates, their bodies wrapped tightly around him as Shane

finally began to process what had just happened and the venomous glares now being sent his way by his former teammates.

Smiling as the reality began to sink in, Shane ignored the boos from the home crowd and the glares from his former team as he skated back towards the away team's bench, smirking proudly as his eyes landed on Ilya, the Russian practically vibrating with pride and excitement, his husband rejecting his fist bump as he skated up to him and instead wrapping Shane in a massive hug over the boards.

"That's my fucking husband!!!" Ilya shouted into his ears, the pride in his eyes electric as the pair pulled back, Shane beaming as he skated away, finishing bumping fists down the line and waiting for Coach to direct him where he wanted.

Called back onto the bench to switch out with the third line, Shane found himself seated two players down from Ilya, leaning forward at the same time his husband did so the pair could debrief.

"Shane, I do not have work appropriate things to say to you right now, but please know that was sexiest goal I have ever seen in my life and I am best player in whole world!"

"Ew, first off," Troy said from between them, looking at Ilya with disgust. "And secondly, if we go by points alone, Shane here is the best player in the whole world. And also the best player tonight since, you know, he's the only player who's scored."

"Shut your mouth, Barrett," Ilya threatened jokingly, though his eyes were bright with mischief. "It has been 12 whole seconds. Let's see who is best player by time night is done."

"You're on, Rozanov," Shane said cheekily from where he sat, his blood pumping furiously in elation, eyes looking up into the crowd for his parents who were wearing one of each of their jerseys, though he couldn't quite remember where they said they'd be sitting. "Also Troy, don't pretend you'd be any better than Ilya if Harris was on the bench with us."

"Gosh, we'd be insufferable," Troy readily admitted, his smile immediately turning dopey at the thought of his boyfriend. "But let's be real, you'd give us just as much shit as I'm giving you if he were here."

"No I wouldn't," Ilya countered, leaning forward once more. "I like Harris more than you. I'd be very nice to Harris. He brings me puppies."

"That's fair," Troy conceded after a beat, shaking his head fondly at Shane as he and Ilya were tapped to head over the boards, the pair clambering onto the ice and skating into position in Ottawa's end.

Oh right, there was a game on.

As he refocused his attention, Shane realized with a sinking feeling that lining up across from Troy was McLeod, his gaze trained solely on Ilya. Not on the puck. Not on the man he was currently shoulder-to-shoulder with. On Ilya.

Leaning forward nervously, Shane watched as the puck dropped and Ilya cleanly won the face-off, taking a step around Montreal's centre to the right and bouncing off of Carter who instead of chasing the puck had beelined for Ottawa's captain.

Exchanging pleasantries that only seemed to incense Carter further, Ilya chased after the puck that Troy had already collected, receiving it on his stick a moment later and shooting at the net, Drapeau redirecting the shot towards the benches where it was picked up by one of Montreal's players, both of Ottawa's defencemen skating backwards as they tracked the man's movements, the rest of the players from both teams rushing to catch up.

Taking a shot, Shane buzzed with approval as Wyatt cleanly blocked the attempt, wrangling the puck onto his stick and passing it to Troy who without hesitation sprung Ilya for a breakaway, the centre speeding up the ice with momentum, eyes locked on Drapeau in the Montreal net.

But it was that focus that would prove to be his downfall. As Ilya lifted a leg to take the shot, Shane watched in horror as Carter—who had been headed for the bench—turned and cut diagonally across the ice, throwing his body into Ilya's unbalanced form and sending Shane's husband rotating like a spit as he flipped, bounced off the ice, and smashed into the boards with a thud that would haunt Shane's nightmares.

The gasp that echoed through the arena was matched only by Shane's own, shooting to his feet and locking his eyes on Ilya lying prone on the ice against the boards, a scuffle happening near the net as Troy and Bood threw themselves at Carter in retaliation, though Shane never took his eyes away from Ilya's to see it.

Distantly, Shane heard as the gate opened and Ottawa's two defencemen began to escort their medical staff across the ice, Troy seemingly having disengaged from the fight as he bent down alongside Ilya while Zane argued with the ref about the hit, though Shane didn't give two shits whether they got a power play from the incident or not—all he cared about was knowing how badly his husband was hurt.

Shocked at the turn of events, it took all of Shane's willpower to keep himself from climbing over the boards and rushing to Ilya's side, confident that the broadcasts would be alternating between showing Ilya's body on the ice and Shane's horrified expression, the latter having to physically restrain himself to keep himself in place.

But Shane knew his husband. Knew that Ilya would be furious at him if he gave the Centaurs a penalty for too many men on the ice in a 1-0 game that was only a few minutes in. Would be furious if Shane gave Montreal the satisfaction of knowing they had gotten under his skin by targeting his husband.

So he stayed, feet planted firmly on the bench and hands gripped tightly on the boards, releasing a breath of relief he didn't know he had been holding when Troy stepped back and Shane saw Ilya begin moving, pushing his arms tenderly under his chest as the crowd began to cheer.

As Ilya began rising slowly to his knees, Shane took another shuddering breath as he watched Ilya sway to the right, leaning into Zane and answering something Terry was asking,

attempting to push himself up of his own volition and eventually relenting, allowing Troy and Zane to help him to his feet, the pair pulling Ilya's arms over their shoulders as the group slowly began to skate back to Ottawa's bench.

As they neared, Shane released a genuine sigh of relief as he laid eyes on Ilya, his eyes blinking slowly, but his expression alert and his gaze focused solely on Shane, the rest of their teammates stepping aside so Shane could shuffle down to the opening, taking Ilya from Troy and feeling the weight of his husband sink into his arms as he was passed through the gate.

"Fuck, Ilya, are you okay?" Shane asked hoarsely, his voice not coming out as steadily as he intended as he righted Ilya and began walking backwards down the tunnel.

"Dizzy," is all he got in return as Terry stepped forward to help and the pair grabbed Ilya, hauling him back to the locker room, Shane realizing a moment too late that he should have probably asked permission to leave, but fuck it. If he had to choose between Ilya and hockey, he was going to choose Ilya.

Once settled in the medical room, Shane took a step back to give Terry and the other staff the opportunity to work, the three men pulling Ilya's helmet and jersey off as they began their initial assessment.

"Fuck that stupid piece of shit," Shane burst out after a moment, watching as Ilya winced when Terry prodded his shoulder, though his reaction was no better or worse than with some of the other injuries he had collected over the years. "I'll fucking kill him."

"Shane, I am okay," Ilya soothed, turning his head to look at him. "I did not see hit coming, that is all. I will be very sore later, but I do not think anything is broken."

"But it could have been!" Shane seethed, his breaths coming in short gasps. "Fuck Ilya, you are lucky you didn't get knocked out—and I say that from experience!"

"*Moya lyubov*, I am okay, I promise," Ilya tried again, reaching a hand out between them and just barely masking his wince, Shane gratefully taking it as he leaned down and pressed a lingering kiss into Ilya's curls.

"I was so scared," Shane whispered in the space between them, not even realizing the medical staff had stepped back to give them a minute alone together.

"I know, sweetheart. But I really am okay," Ilya replied gently, upturning his lips in an obvious request for a kiss, which Shane happily obliged him with. "I love you."

"I love you, too," Shane said wetly, frustrated at the emotions pulsating through his chest. "So much, Ilya. So much. I fucking hate that team. I cannot believe I played there so long."

"Yes," Ilya huffed with a laugh that seemed neither genuine or real. "But things are better now. You have new team, one who loves you very much. We will finish our careers here and things will be okay. And tonight? Tonight we will win. They do not get to push us around."

In lieu of answering, Shane simply dropped his head onto Ilya's chest, feeling as a hand came up and dug itself into his hair, Shane taking a few deep breaths to try and steady himself, realizing belatedly that considering the circumstances it probably should have been *him* comforting Ilya, not the other way around.

As if he could read his mind, Ilya gently pushed on Shane's face to turn it back towards his own, running his thumb along Shane's cheekbones and pausing to prod at his freckles, the movement so familiar and so comforting that Shane couldn't resist the smile that broke across his cheeks.

"Shane, you should go," Ilya said quietly, continuing to stare at Shane with open adoration. "I do not want Montreal to think they have got the better of us. Go back out there, I will join you when I can."

"Is that a possibility?" Shane inquired to Terry, looking at the older man with a questioning gaze as he pulled himself upright, his fingers threading themselves into Ilya's curls absentmindedly as he started running soothing touches across his hair.

"He'll have to go through concussion protocol considering he hit the boards, so he won't be back out this period, but there's a chance, yes," Terry assessed, stepping forward to flash a light into Ilya's eyes who blinked in surprise, but not seemingly in pain.

"From the looks of it, the hit surprised Ilya more than it hurt him, but we'll do a thorough assessment to check to see if anything is fractured or broken," Terry continued, speaking to both of them simultaneously. "I'd like to keep Ilya back for the remainder of the period, see how his body is feeling, but considering you players are tough sons of bitches, barring a concussion showing up in the next half hour, I imagine your husband will be back by second period."

"Thank fuck," Shane muttered under his breath, ignoring the small smile he saw on the faces of the team's medical staff around them, taking another deep breath before looking back down at Ilya. "Try not to be too annoying, Ilya. Listen to what Terry says, okay?"

"Who me?" Ilya gasped, placing his hands on his chest with an affronted look on his face. "Me? Number one nice guy?? I am never annoying!"

"Uh-huh," Terry answered before Shane had the chance, shooting his patient a bemused look. "Shall we talk about when you broke your finger last season and you refused to be taped up because it—and I quote—'is just baby injury, I'm fine'?"

"I do not know what you are talking about," Ilya retorted, and if Shane didn't know better, he'd think his husband might be blushing.

"Behave, Ilya," Shane chided, exchanging looks with Terry, the older man shaking his head in mock annoyance. Shane loved Ilya, but he couldn't deny that his husband was an absolute menace to society, *especially* when it came to injuries or being told he needed to slow down.

"Yes, yes," Ilya responded childishly, turning away from the pair and flicking his fingers in a "shoo" motion at Shane. "Will be on best behaviour for Terry so I can come back and beat

Montreal. Go back out there now, I need to 'rest.'”

“I hate you,” Shane laughed, placing a kiss on Ilya’s curls as he turned to grab his helmet, not even sure when he had taken it off.

“No you don’t,” Ilya called as Shane began exiting the room, shooting a look over his shoulder to see his husband watching him with an evil smirk as he did.

“Goodbye, Ilya!”

“Goodbye, sweetheart! Try not to miss me too much!”

“GOODBYE, ILYA!”

"Is he okay??" Troy asked a moment later as Shane exited the tunnel and plopped himself on the bench beside Zane, the fourth line currently putting pressure on Montreal in their own end based on what Shane could see in the two seconds he looked at the ice before he turned his attention to his teammates.

"He's still Ilya if that's what you mean," Shane sighed, ignoring the bemused look from the coaching staff behind them. "He's in concussion protocol, but other than annoying Terry, he should be back for the second period."

"Nothing broken?" Coach asked, his eyes watching Shane's expression carefully.

"Doesn't appear to be. He seemed to be moving okay and, you know, he’s still being Ilya, sooooo..."

"...he's fine," Coach finished with a shake of his head. "Well, what says you, Shane? Wanna head back out and score another goal after this shift?"

"Abso-fucking-lutely."

"That's kind of hot actually," Zane said from beside him, watching Shane with an expression Shane had never seen on him before.

"What is?"

"You just..."

"Yes?" Shane pressed, raising an eyebrow as he waited for Zane to elaborate.

"I don't know man, you look pissed. And very determined. Ilya would be jizzing in his jock right now if he could see the look on your face."

"Oh shut up," Shane huffed, shouldering the other man as the pair swayed together on the bench before eventually adding: "That's my fucking husband."

"God you two are in love," Zane sighed, patting Shane on the back as Shane stood to climb over the boards along with Luca and Tanner once he got the signal. "Go get 'em tiger. Remind

them who the fuck they are dealing with."

As Shane skated to centre ice, his eyes tracked the Montreal players also doing a line change, brows furrowing in surprise when he realized that Coach Theriault had sent McLeod back out, Shane seemingly in the medical room long enough that McLeod had finished serving his penalty, though Shane wasn't sure how long he had gotten in the end.

"Done playing house with that little faggot of yours?" Carter asked as they neared the middle, Shane flinching despite himself, turning to glare not at Carter, but at Theriault, the asshole grinning from behind the bench as the pair made eye contact.

"Worry about yourself, Carter," Shane replied more steadily than he felt, taking the face-off and huffing in annoyance as he lost, chasing the puck into the Centaurs zone where it was being carried by one of Montreal's players, poke checking the puck back into the Centaurs possession and racing back down the ice, passing the puck to Luca who just barely missed the net with his attempt, the play being blown down as the puck hit the netting above the glass.

"Did you kiss your faggot better while you were gone?" Carter continued as the 10 players skated into position around the face off dot in Montreal's end once more, Shane wisely choosing to bite down his retort and ensuring to win the face-off this time, skating away and back to the bench when he saw Coach Wiebe's signal as play crossed into the neutral zone, Shane watching as their first line went out after him, their third line centre now in Ilya's place.

"What did he say to you?" Luca asked with genuine concern as the two sat down, reaching forward and grabbing both he and Shane a bottle of Gatorade which the latter gratefully accepted.

"Same old homophobic shit he's been saying for as long as I've known him," Shane replied after taking a few deep sips from the bottle, frustrated at himself for letting Carter get under his skin.

For the next several shifts, Shane found himself across from Carter time and time again, the man throwing insult after insult in his direction, his barbs getting bolder the more Shane tried to resist reacting.

But it wasn't until 68 seconds left in the period that Shane snapped, the puck nowhere near either of them when the Montreal winger whispered into his ear, "too bad he didn't stay down like the rest of his fucking family."

Overcome with a blinding rage, Shane turned, dropping his gloves before he even had time to think and socking Carter directly in the jaw, launching himself at the falling man and smashing his body into the ice, pulling back and releasing a torrent of punches onto his ugly face as Carter tried to fight back, Shane not stopping his barrage until strong arms wrapped around him from behind and yanked him up and off, Shane's chest heaving with rage as two referees and a Montreal player pulled him back, noting with pride the heavy amounts of blood pouring from Carter's face as they did.

Before he knew it, Shane was in the middle of an all out scrum as the Montreal and Ottawa players converged in the middle of the ice, elbows and fists blurring Shane's vision as he threw out another punch to protect himself, watching Luca and Evan doing the same, Shane's fist catching Montreal's defencemen in the chin and grinning when Tanner wrapped a forearm around said man's throat and yanked him back from the pile, only for another Montreal player Shane didn't recognize to step forward and take his place, Shane wincing as he felt an impact on his left cheek, turning to respond before being yanked roughly from the pile by one of the refs.

"Settle the fuck down, Hollander!" said man screamed in his face, pushing past Shane to extricate a Montreal player from Evan's grasp, the Ottawa defencemen choking him out as the scrum began to dissipate into smaller skirmishes, barbs and insults flowing freely between the players.

But it wasn't until the fight had fully broken up and the men were separated onto their respective sides of the ice that Shane began to register the noise around them, not boos like he expected, but a raucous cheer so loud that he could barely hear himself think, looking up at the jumbotron and blinking in surprise as he saw his own face reflected, blood dropping down from a cut on his cheek and eyes ablaze with a fire that even Shane found alluring.

Glancing up into the crowd, it took Shane a few extra beats to realize that the crowd was cheering for **him**, their roar of approval because of **his** actions, whether because he defended his husband or beat the shit out of Carter he would never know.

Looking around, Shane watched as Carter was hauled up from the ice by a trainer, a towel pressed roughly against his face to staunch the bleeding, his shoulders up by his ears as he was escorted off the ice and down the tunnel, the cheers from the home crowd turning to boos as McLeod was shown on the screen above their heads.

Smirking, Shane looked down as he registered the throbbing in his hand, catching sight of the split knuckles, holding his hand closer to his face to inspect the damage and surprised at the pride he felt in his chest. His first ever hockey fight.

(Also—admittedly—hopefully his last. He would leave the fighting to his husband).

"Hollander!" The lead referee barked as he skated up to Shane, his brows furrowed angrily, though his voice was anything but when he continued. "That was fucking awesome, son."

"W-what?" Shane sputtered in surprise, trying and failing not to smile as the other man's words registered. "Aren't you supposed to be kicking me out of the game or something?"

"Oh I'm absolutely kicking you out of the game you little shit," the ref retorted stonily, though Shane had already caught on to the fact that the other man was acting with the cameras likely pointed at the pair of them. "Doesn't mean I don't approve of what you did. McLeod is a fucking asshole and I heard what he was saying to you. Serves him right honestly."

"Ha. Well...thank you?" Shane replied, his voice raising with the last syllable, not sure if he should be happy or not at the other's words.

"Head down to the locker room, Hollander. It will take us a minute to get all these penalties sorted out, but both of you are out of the game, so go hit the showers and get that hand checked out."

"Yes sir," Shane answered with a small grin, making eye contact with the rest of his team both on the ice and on the bench, all 19 players beaming with pride.

"Shane, that was the most amazing thing I have ever seen," Wyatt said proudly as he skated up to him and the others, throwing an arm around Shane's shoulders. "I don't know what McLeod said to get you so riled up, but that was the sexiest thing I've ever seen and I'm straight!"

"Oh shut up!"

As the group started making their way across the ice, Luca and Tanner babbling in his ear all the while, Shane chanced a quick peek at Montreal's bench, the Montreal coaching staff seething as they argued with the refs over the penalties, but finding himself surprised to see the amount of impressed nods sent his way from his former teammates, both Hayden and JJ barely hiding their grins as they made eye contact and did the same.

But it was Ottawa's bench that fully captured Shane's attention as the group neared, Shane's grin turning into a full blown smile as he took in the absolute pandemonium of his teammates, the rest of the team *still* banging their sticks on the side of the boards and cheering much louder than Shane felt the moment warranted.

"SHANE MOTHERFUCKING HOLLANDER!"

"DUDE!"

"THAT WAS FUCKING SICK!"

"SHANE! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD IT IN YOU!"

"Honestly, neither did I," Shane admitted shyly as he stepped off the ice, laughing when Troy and Zane threw themselves at him and pulled him into a bear hug, welcoming their warm embrace as the three rocked in place, the rest of the Ottawa players reaching out to pat him on the shoulder or back, Shane feeling like more of a celebrity now than he ever had in a singular moment in his life.

Pulling back from the hug to make eye contact with the coaching staff, Shane grimaced at the disapproving looks he saw reflected there, his gaze settling on Coach Wiebe who wore an expression Shane couldn't quite place.

"I, uh...I know I shouldn't have done that," Shane started nervously, ignoring the ribbing from his teammates who vehemently disagreed with his statement. "But Carter crossed a line. I don't regret my actions, but I am sorry I—"

"What did he say?" Wiebe interrupted, his expression one Shane still couldn't decipher.

Hesitating, Shane looked across the faces of the men around him for a few long seconds, a slow realization dawning on him as he processed that it wasn't disapproval he saw reflected on their faces as he had first suspected—it was concern at what could have caused Shane to snap like that.

“He said that Ilya should have stayed down like the rest of his family,” Shane replied after a moment, barely able to force the disgusting words out of his mouth, watching as the expressions on the men around him contorted from pride into rage, Carter's words being passed down the bench until all 26 of the players and coaching staff looked murderous where they stood, muttering venomous words amongst themselves as they did.

“Should have punched him harder,” was all Coach Wiebe eventually said, his eyes angrier than Shane had ever seen them. In fact, prior to this moment, Shane didn't even know Coach *could* be that angry, not thinking the usually even-keeled man had it in him. “I imagine you are getting a game misconduct, so go hit the showers and please remind your husband that this is a workplace setting when you see him.”

Oh god.

Nodding with a deep flush on his cheeks, Shane waved pathetically at his teammates as he began walking down the tunnel, looking up and somehow going redder as he took in the sight of Ilya shirtless at the other end, still wearing all his gear on the lower half, his face split in the biggest grin Shane had ever seen.

“MOYO LYUBOV!!!” Ilya roared, meeting Shane halfway and hastily removing Shane's helmet before smashing their lips together, pushing him against the wall and ravishing him with the most intense and sexy kiss Shane could remember (which was saying something considering their history).

“Fuck, Ilya,” Shane gasped as he came up for air, barely able to keep himself from combusting on the spot, tilting his face towards the roof as he sucked in some much needed air, Ilya nibbling at his neck with an urgency that had Shane's cock going rock hard in his gear.

“Shane,” Ilya murmured into the skin along his jaw as he continued to kiss at Shane's face, peppering kiss after kiss after kiss wherever he could reach. “Shane, that was hottest thing I have ever seen in my life and I see you naked almost every day.”

“It wasn't a big deal,” Shane tried, flushing red at his husband's words.

“Not a big deal?” Ilya gasped, his tone genuinely offended. “You take part in your first ever hockey fight and you think this is not a big deal?? You fight your former teammate—your homophobic teammate—and you think this is not a big deal? Shane, what the fuck?”

Smiling despite himself, Shane pushed at Ilya's chest until his partner stepped back, ushering them both into the locker room as Shane began to remove his gear, noting the approving gaze his husband sent his way as he pulled his undershirt over his head revealing his sweaty toned abs before focusing on the lower half.

“Are you just going to stare at me while I get undressed?” Shane asked, lifting a brow, just barely managing to push down the urge to launch himself at his husband, Coach Wiebe’s words floating in the back of his mind.

“If I touch you right now, we will both be suspended for inappropriate workplace behaviour,” Ilya replied honestly, devouring Shane whole as he removed the rest of his gear and tossed it into the cart along the side of the room, pulling off his leggings and shooting Ilya a cheeky wink, his smirk turning into a grin when Ilya groaned as he pulled down his underwear leaving him naked in the middle of the locker room.

“I assume you are going to come watch while I shower?” Shane teased, laughing brightly at how fast Ilya turned and strode out of the room, flicking the water on for Shane before he even got there. “Eager much?”

“Yes, need this game to end now so I can take you home,” Ilya replied earnestly, his eyes locked on Shane’s hands as he began rubbing soap into his body, trailing them seductively over the wet skin and smiling at the quiet intake of breath from his husband as he moved his hand lower, the Russian groaning and turning away and seemingly putting himself in time out as he stood resolutely against the bathroom corner.

“You okay over there, big guy?” Shane ribbed, finishing wiping himself down quickly now that Ilya was no longer watching, turning off the water and grabbing a towel from the nearby pile as he began drying himself off, whistling at Ilya to follow him, the latter of whom glared threateningly his way, but did just that. “I take it you are fine then.”

“I hate you,” Ilya muttered darkly.

“No you don’t.”

“No, I really don’t.”

Sitting down in Evan’s stall as Shane got re-dressed in his game day suit, Shane tried to figure out the expression that had taken over his husband’s face once they got back to the locker room, slipping from the teasing joyful look from earlier, and settling on a new look that was a mix of worry, concern, and something else, something Shane couldn’t place.

“Talk to me,” he said eventually, eyes still on Ilya’s even as he began buttoning up his shirt, hissing as the movement stretched the skin on his knuckles and he remembered that he needed to go see the medical staff, pausing to remove the garment he had been putting on since there was no point getting stitched up in a blazer.

“Why did you do it?” Ilya asked after a good minute had passed, his gaze focused on his fingers interlocked in his lap. “Seeing you fight...”

“Yes?” Shane pushed, sitting down beside him and reaching out to interlock their hands, pulling their fingers towards his face and dotting Ilya’s knuckles with gentle kisses.

“Yes, it was sexy,” Ilya admitted, looking up at Shane with an expression so vulnerable that Shane was momentarily taken aback. “But I know you did it for me. I worry that you have

made life harder for yourself now. You were already outed because I kissed you outside Hayden's house, I could not keep my hands off of you. Now you have gotten first ever game misconduct because you were protecting me... somehow I just seem to make your life worse."

"Oh, Ilya," Shane breathed, already moving to climb into Ilya's lap, surprised at the sudden wave of emotion from his husband, the position he found themselves in eerily reminiscent of a few years back when Shane had done the exact same thing to comfort a crying Ilya in his hotel room.

"Ilya, no," Shane breathed, pulling his face up so he could kiss his husband, rubbing his thumbs across his cheeks as he noted the unshed tears. "You have never once for a single second made my life worse. Don't ever say that shit again, you hear me? You are the best thing that has ever happened to me. I did punch him because he was talking shit, but what kind of husband would I be if I didn't?"

"Still a good one," Ilya replied wetly, burying his face into Shane's chest and taking several deep inhales, tightening his hold on Shane's back even as noise started filtering down the hall suggesting the period was over.

For a moment Shane considered pulling back and sitting in his stall before their team got there. But the bigger part of him wanted to remind Ilya it was okay to be vulnerable, that his emotions weren't something he needed to hide. So as the team re-entered the locker room, it was to the sight of Shane and Ilya holding each other tightly, neither man moving to pull away.

"Who is comforting who?" Zane asked without judgement as he walked in, yanking his jersey over his head and stripping down, grabbing a protein bar from the top shelf of his stall and ripping open the packaging, most of the men around them doing the same.

"Probably a bit of both," Shane admitted, his voice muffled into Ilya's curls, eventually pulling back and sliding off Ilya's lap and letting the rest of the team see his husband's downcast expression as he tried to work through his influx of emotions.

"You okay, cap?" Evan asked as he walked over to Ilya's stall and plopped down since his stall was taken by the large Russian man, stretching his legs out and sinking into the wood behind him.

"I, uh..." Ilya started, his expression shifting between expressions as he tried to decide which answer to give, eventually settling on the truth just as the coaching staff walked in.

"I am feeling a lot of emotions seeing my husband fight to protect me," he eventually admitted, his gaze focused on the carpet so as not to see the expressions from his teammates. "Is very sexy, yes, but also scary. I do not want Shane to have to be a fighter because we are together."

"Ah," Troy hummed aloud as he began nodding in understanding, many of the others in the locker room doing the same. "I get that."

“Yeah that makes sense,” Wyatt conceded. “Though with the beat down Shane gave McLeod, I can’t imagine too many guys will want to challenge him.”

“Oh shut up,” Shane replied with a flush, glancing at Coach Wiebe who had a kind expression etched into his features as he watched Ilya trying to pull himself together. “I honestly don’t know what came over me.”

“You love your husband,” Coach said simply, as if it were the most obvious thing in the world. “Now boys, we’re down one of our best players, so I need the other 19 of you to lock in. We’re seeing some really good stuff out there, but I want to see more shots on net and more high quality scoring chances around the crease. Ilya, are you sitting out the rest of the game or you coming back?”

“Am I what?” Ilya sputtered, looking up in genuine surprise. “And miss chance to send Montreal home crying?? Never! I will avenge my husband and score so many goals that Montreal coach makes them do lines for days!”

“Oh my gosh,” Shane laughed as the rest of the room cheered, feeling a part of his worry lessen as he saw Ilya settle back into his own, seemingly finished working through his emotions and now ready to get back on the ice.

“Alright boys,” Coach Wiebe directed, tossing a towel at Wyatt when he motioned for one. “Get some energy in you, use the bathroom, do what you need to do to re-center. We’re back out in 15. Ilya, you willing to double shift next period?”

“Yes coach!”

“Alright. Rozanov, Jackson, Myers, I want the three of you ready to do a few extra shifts to fill the hole at centre. Shane, go get those knuckles looked at and then go park yourself in the press booth. Ilya...score some fucking goals, yeah?”

“Oh I plan on it,” Ilya replied with a wicked grin on his face, and as he leaned over to kiss him, Shane was confident he was going to do just that.

Ilya Rozanov (12)

Troy Barrett (6), Zane Boodram (4)

OTT 2 - MTL 0 (04:24 - 2nd)

Troy Barrett (3)

Ilya Rozanov (11), Zane Boodram (5)

OTT 3 - MTL 0 (06:58 - 2nd)

Ilya Rozanov (13)

Zane Boodram (6), Evan Dykstra (5)

OTT 4 - MTL 0 (11:51 - 2nd)

Luca Haas (6)
Tanner Dillon (1), Nick Chouinard (3)
OTT 5 - MTL 0 (18:16 - 2nd)

Ilya Rozanov (14)
Troy Barrett (7), Wyatt Hayes (1)
OTT 6 - MTL 0 (2:22 - 3rd)

Ilya Rozanov (15)
Unassisted
OTT 7 - MTL 0 (19:12 - 3rd)

“Really?” Shane demanded two hours later from where he sat waiting in Ilya’s stall, his tone laced with annoyance though his heart swelled with pride as Ilya walked back into the room at the end of the game, the exuberant noise of their teammates swelling around them. “Four goals?? Really? You fucking show-off.”

“Eh, what can I say?” Ilya replied with a laugh, his face radiating pride and happiness.

“Fuck the Montreal Voyageurs.”

Sportsnet
@sportsnet

BREAKING: Montreal Voyageurs RW, Carter McLeod, out 6-8 weeks with a broken jaw following a scrap with Ottawa Centaurs C, Shane Hollander. Read more here:
www.sportsnet.com/fuckthevoyageurs

End Notes

I finished The Long Game a few days ago and really wanted to punch a Voyager. Since that's not possible, I decided to write a story in which it was.

I spend far too much time in hockey barns as someone with season tickets to the Calgary Flames, so did this get super hockey focused at points? Yes. Do I apologize? Not really.

As always, I hope you enjoy! Feedback and encouragement welcome. If you want to connect on socials, feel free to come say hi on [Tumblr](#) or on [Threads](#)!

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!