Absolutely no PDA!

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Absolutely no PDA!

by PrincessOfTheDesert

Summary

What’s harder: adjusting to a new team or unlearning old fears?
As Shane settles into Ottawa and Ilya refuses to stop being unapologetically in love, they discover that maybe
absolutely no PDA was never the rule they needed.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

"Absolutely no PDA," Shane stated as Ilya entered the kitchen.

"What?"

Shane had been awake for several hours by the time Ilya stumbled sleepily into the kitchen. Today was the first joint training session of the new season, where Shane would meet all his new teammates.

Shane was nervous because he hadn't had to fit into a new team since his rookie years.

"Absolutely no PDA at training later or in front of the team. Okay?"

"Shane, everyone knows you're my husband. Yes?" Ilya's face broke into a big grin. "The whole team was at our wedding."

"Yes, but I want to be taken seriously as a hockey player, not just as your husband." He could practically sense his teammates, the spectators and the coach sneering at him if he made one mistake.

Ilya looked at him thoughtfully. "Shall we go to the trophy room? Everyone in Ottawa knows how lucky they are to have you on the team."

"I don't think we have time for that. I really don't want to be late today."

In a few steps, Ilya was at Shane's side and hugged him. Shane squeezed him tightly. Being hugged grounded him a little, relaxing his shoulders.

"What is this really about?" Ilya asked in a quiet voice.

"What if everyone thinks we're bad at being husbands?"

"They won't," Ilya assured him. But Shane wasn't convinced. They had tried so hard for so long to hide the fact that they were a couple. Now, he felt that they were bad at showing how much they loved each other.

"Almost all of our teammates have wives who raise their children full-time while the men tour half the country and get drunk after games. None of them have the right to say we're bad at being married."

That made Shane laugh. "But they're all so good at being loving husbands and adoring their wives."

"Yeah, they'd better be, because they have amazing wives! Besides..." Ilya's eyes sparkled. "I can easily show the locker room how much I worship you."

"Fuck off." Shane pulled away from the embrace. "Ilya, please. Absolutely no PDA."

He had to focus entirely on integrating himself into the team and being a good player. He didn't have the mental capacity to think about how he could also demonstrate that he was a good and loving husband.

"Of course." lya kissed Shane and went to make himself a cappuccino from the coffee machine.

Shane finished his smoothie, which sat heavily in his stomach. But at least he had Ilya by his side.

When Ilya and Shane entered the locker room, several other players were already there. Evan Dykstra was lacing up his skates. Zane Boodram and Wyatt Hayes were deep in conversation as they put on their gear. Troy Barrett was rummaging through his bag.

Dykstra was the first to spot the two of them. "The Hollander-Rozanovs!" he shouted, and the attention of the players present turned to them both.

Cheers erupted.

"Hey, it's Rozanov-Hollander. Much better this way around," muttered Ilya, but no one seemed to pay him much attention.

"Hollzy! Welcome to the team!" Hayes came up to him, grinning widely, and hugged him. Dykstra patted him on the back. "Welcome, Hollander!" Bood greeted him with a hug, too.

Shane took a deep breath. The locker room was chaotic, and it was quite overwhelming. But he would get used to it. After all, he knew how much Ilya liked the team.

Once all the players had greeted him and Ilya, they got changed too. Shane had just taken off his shirt and was standing in his boxer shorts when the door to the changing room opened.

He thought he heard a loud gasp. Slowly, he turned around. Luca Haas was standing in the doorway, staring at Shane with a startled expression. The thermos halfway to his mouth.

Haas flinched and stared at the floor, his face turning red. Shane was also feeling a little uncomfortable in the situation and slipped into his trousers. It had been a long time since a teammate had been starstruck upon meeting him. What would Haas think of him when he knew him better? Would he still be so impressed by him?

"Come on, Haas! Say hello to your new teammate, and more importantly, greet your captain."

After training, the mood in the changing room was relaxed. The players patted each other on the back, congratulating each other on an intense game. Some also praised Shane, who returned the compliments.

Ilya took his time getting changed, chatting and laughing with various players. Shane, on the other hand, had already changed, packed his things and let Ilya know that he was leaving. It had been an intense day, and he needed a few minutes of peace and quiet.

He stood outside the training rink, letting his thoughts wander. Gradually, his teammates emerged, said goodbye, and drove away in their cars.

Then Ilya was one of the last players to exit. He walked over to Shane and held out his hand. Shane took it, and together they walked to their car.

Once they were seated, Ilya slowly leaned towards him. Most of the other players had left and they were sitting in their car. The parking lot was almost empty. No one would see them. Still, if Shane had wanted to, he could have avoided the kiss. But he didn't want that. He wanted to feel so comfortable around the team that Ilya's affection did not distress him.

So Ilya gave him a gentle, lingering kiss. "That went well, yes?"

Shane smiled and nodded. Then he started the engine, and they drove home together. It had gone well and he couldn't believe that they could now spend the whole evening together. And the next day, they would wake up together again and drive to the practice rink together.

Shane was sitting on a chair in the middle of the room. The ring light was shining on him, making him want to squint his eyes.

The camera was pointed at him, with Harris standing behind it, grinning broadly.

"I just need to attach the microphone and then we can start. Are you nervous?"

"A little," Shane replied. He couldn't believe he had agreed to this. But he also didn't feel like saying no had been an option.

Harris attached the microphone to his T-shirt and started talking about Chiron. Shane only half listened, too preoccupied with wondering what to expect and whether he would be able to answer the questions. Then Harris finished and moved back behind the camera.

"As soon as you're ready, I'll start with the video. They're pretty basic questions that we ask all our new players. Okay?"

Shane nodded. He tugged at his shirt, which was clinging uncomfortably to his skin. Why was it so hot in this studio?

"Who's your favourite current player?"

That was easy. "Scott Hunter." Shane smiled and Harris nodded encouragingly. But Shane didn't know what else to add.

After a short pause, Harris continued. "Are you excited to play on the same team as your husband, Ilya Rozanov? And what are you most looking forward to?"

Shane choked and coughed. Playing on the same team as Ilya in the All-Star Games used to be the highlight of the season for him. Of course, he was incredibly excited to play on the same team as him.

But what would the outside think of them if a pass went wrong. Would everyone think they're arguing? Or would they be on the verge of divorce if they didn't show the outside world how much they loved each other?

These thoughts terrified him.

Shane cleared his throat. "Oh yes, of course. We can definitely make a difference in the power play."

Harris said nothing but frowned a bit. Then came his next question: "Are you a dog person or a cat person?"

"For a long time, I thought I was a cat person. But it turns out I really like dogs. Especially our dog, Anya."

"I love Anya. She's such a sweet dog. And we're so glad you took her in," gushed Harris. "Do you have any hobbies?"

"Well, besides hockey, there isn't really much time left. I try to stay fit. I do yoga. It's good for my flexibility. And in the evening, I like to read to relax."

Harris laughed. "What's your favourite ice cream flavour?"

Shame hesitated. Thanks to his therapist, he had managed to normalise his eating habits. Nevertheless, he still found it difficult to eat sweets.

"I don't know when I last had ice cream. It was probably years ago. But I always liked pistachio."

"What? How is that possible?"

Shane shrugged. "No idea. I don't really have a sweet tooth." That was only half true. It had been easier to give things up if he had convinced himself that he didn't like sweets that much.

"If you had no dietary restrictions, what would be a treat for you?"

"Oh, hm. I don't know. Sometimes Ilya brings me a Snickers. Those are quite nice."

"Just a few more question, then we're done. Are you okay?"

Shane's shoulders relaxed, and he nodded. "Okay, I realise this isn't your favourite thing to do, but a little more enthusiasm would be nice." Harris laughed.

"Sorry!"

"It's okay. I’m used to it. Most of the players don’t really like those videos." He shrugged. Then he asked, "What's your favourite place on earth?"

That was easy. "My cottage!" Shane felt a smile spread across his face.

"Is this where you spend your summers?"

"Yes, in addition to running hockey camps for two weeks, we spend the whole summer at our cottage

"And by 'we' you mean you and Ilya?"

Shane's brow furrowed. "Of course. And Anya. My parents usually spend the summer at their cottage, which ist ten minutes away from us."

"Okay, thanks Shane. We've got it."

Shane let out a long breath. "Finally."

Harris laughed, walked over to him and removed the microphone. "I know this probably isn't your favourite thing to do, but the fans really love these videos."

"Okay."

"You know, it's okay to talk about you and Ilya. Here in Ottawa, the fans can't wait to see the hockey husbands play together."

Shane nodded, stood up and headed for the door, muttering a goodbye to Harris. He had no idea how he could talk about Ilya and still protect their privacy. But he feared he would have to find out, as everyone wanted to know more about them than Shane was prepared to give. Yet.

Ilya was feeling great. This was the first game in which he and Shane played on the same team.

During the power play, he switched to wing and Shane was centre, as they had done so often in the All-Star Games. No matter where Ilya was on the ice or where he wanted to pass, he knew Shane would be in the right position. Every single pass worked. They were the perfect team.

It was exhilarating.

It worked the other way around, too. Shane passed to Ilya, who was in the right place and sank the puck into the goal. The Centaurs had now extended their lead so much that they

were almost certain to win the game.

He turned automatically and grinned, his eyes already searching for Shane. He wanted to celebrate with his centre, his linemate. His husband.

For half e second, he forgot where they were. His body moved before his thoughts caught up. He raised his arm to hug his husband.

Shane was skating to him. He lifted his gloved hand and tapped Ilya's glove once, cleanly and efficiently. Then he skated away to reset for the face-off.

Ilya let his arm drop.

Before he knew it, Barrett and Dykstra were with him, hugging him and pushing him against the boards.

Ilya was a bit disappointed. The opportunity had been right there and now it was gone.

Their first interaction on the ice had been so good that he wanted to hug Shane and kiss him on the cheek. Just like when they had played on the same team for the first time at the All-Star Game.

The urge to do so lingered, stubborn and aching, even as his teammates laughed and jostled him.

However, Shane had made it a rule that they showed absolutely no PDA on the team or on the ice. And he would abide by Shane's wishes.

Ilya swallowed, jaw tightening for just a moment before he forced himself to relax. After they had talked about it, he could understand why, even though he still thought it was ridiculous. Understanding didn’t stop it from stinging.

He knew Shane needed more time to come to terms with the move to Ottawa, to feel comfortable with his new teammates and to get used to the new situation. He was sure that they would find a way that worked for both of them.

At the next line change, he sat down next to Shane. Close enough that he could gently nudge Shane's knee. Of course, only after he had made sure that Shane was okay with it.

Shane's face lit up. That smile was everything. Proof that Shane was still there, even if they had to postpone the proper celebration until later.

He couldn't wait to find out what Shane would be like at home once they had won a game together.

"I'm sorry, guys! I know I didn't give it my all today. I'm so sorry we lost." Shane sat down on the bench in front of his stall. He had lost the puck to the opposing centre, leading to the decisive goal that gave the opponents the win.

Since joining Ottawa, he had never let the team down like this before. And he hadn't achieved enough yet for the team to simply overlook this mistake.

"I messed up. I'm sorry."

"No, Hollzy. It wasn't your fault. Today wasn't our best game." Wyatt patted him on the shoulder encouragingly.

"No, Hollander, it's definitely not your fault." Bood came over too and patted him on the back.

It was nice to hear. But it only helped to a point. He hadn't lived up to the expectations he had set for himself. And that made him angry.

When Haas and Barrett offered a few words of encouragement, Shane just nodded.

"Hollander, as captain, all I can say is we win as team and lose as team. It wasn't your fault we lost. Today wasn't our day, but we still have the whole season to qualify for the play-offs."

When Shane remained silent, Ilya sat down next to him on the bench. Slowly, he moved closer and put his arm around Shane.

The touch was gentle. Familiar.

Shane startled. He instantly froze and slid away from Ilya. He hadn't meant to, but it happened.

For a split second, Ilya didn’t move. The hurt crossed his face before he could stop it. His eyes were flickering, his jaw tightened.

Shane saw all of it. Every bit.

Very quickly, however, it was replaced by a neutral look.

Ilya got up, undressed, and went into the shower. Shane put his head in his hands. He could feel his teammates' eyes on him. He knew he had messed up twice.

The drive home later was awkward. Ilya didn't say anything until they got home. Shane turned off the engine, stayed seated and looked at Ilya. His husband looked out the window, his arms crossed.

"I'm sorry, Ilya."

"Okay." His tone was deliberately neutral.

"Really! I know it was a shitty move. I was just surprised."

"Okay."

Shane cleared his throat. "Over the last few weeks, I've realised that I might have been a bit too strict about the no PDA rule."

Ilya finally turned to him. "Yes. The team is great. They will accept us as we are."

"I know." His chest felt tight. Saying it out loud suddenly made it real. "I want to apologise for that. Maybe we can relax the rule a bit." His hand came up to his mouth. Picking at his lip. "What do you think?"

"I'd like that." He paused. "But only if you feel comfortable with it. Even though today's situation hurt me, I don't want to do anything that makes you feel anxious."

His pulse was racing. The thought was scary, but he wouldn’t backtrack. "I think it's okay if we try to be ourselves in front of the team."

Ilya smiled and nodded. Shane turned to him, took Ilya's hand in his and intertwined their fingers. "Everything okay between us?"

"Everything okay." Ilya brought their hands to his mouth and gently kissed Shane's knuckles.

"Now let's go inside. I want to show you what a good player you are."

Before the evening's home game against Montreal, Wyatt wanted to squeeze in a light workout. When he entered the gym, he saw Haas, Bood and Barrett standing together. A little further away, rookie Virtanen was on the treadmill.

"Hey boys! What's up?"

The three of them jumped, looking slightly panicked at Wyatt. "Oh, are you gossiping? About whom?"

Haas blushed and Barrett looked at the floor, seemingly embarrassed. Only Bood dared to look him in the eye. He had probably caught them gossiping.

"We're talking about Roz and Hollander," Bood said with an apologetic look.

"What about them?"

"Well... we're a little worried about whether everything is okay with them." Barrett and Haas nodded.

"I mean, when Roz scored on the power play in the first game, Hollander just gave him a fist bump," Bood continued.

"Really?" Wyatt looked at Bood in disbelief. "That's your reason?"

"No, I mean, do they even come to the practice rink together? Hollander is always so quick out of the locker room, and Roz takes forever to get changed. I don't think they even drive together."

"Okay, I'm still not really convinced." He looked at Barrett and Haas.

"Harris told me that Hollander was quite uncomfortable talking about Roz."

"When?"

"In the first video about his start in Ottawa."

"Troy, really?" Wyatt had been concerned, too, but he found these examples a bit silly. They sounded like something out of a gossip magazine.

Barrett now looked a little guilty. "I know it sounds ridiculous. But you're worried too, aren't you?"

Wyatt nodded. Even if reluctantly. He didn't like the fact that they were talking about them behind Shane's and Ilya's backs. "Haas, what do you have?"

Haas looked at the floor, seeming very uncomfortable with the conversation. "Well, after the last game, when Shane was so upset about the loss... he actually flinched when Roz tried to comfort him. That was pretty brutal."

"Hmm. I saw that, too."

"I mean, if my husband reacted like that..."

"What? They're married?" Virtanen interrupted their discussion. He had stopped running and was slowly moving to the edge of the treadmill with backwards with the belt. He looked at the group in shock.

"Yes," they replied in unison. "Where have you been living, Virtanen?"

Virtanen shrugged. "I'm not really interested in hockey gossip."

He grabbed his water bottle and left. They looked at each other in disbelief.

"I was actually a little worried," Wyatt continued. "Maybe we need to show them that they can behave like a couple around us. You know?"

"I guess," replied Troy. "And I mean, Shane has a hard time adapting to new situations."

"What should we do?" Luca wanted to know.

Wyatt had an idea. "I'll talk to them. After the game, okay?"

His teammates nodded.

When Wyatt jogged into the locker room after his workout, he first heard hushed voices and then saw that Ilya and Shane were already standing to one side. No one else seemed to be there yet and the other two hadn't noticed him.

It looked as if Shane was having a panic attack. Today was, after all, their first game against Montreal since Shane's difficult departure. Naturally, he wasn't feeling particularly well.

Shane let himself fall into Ilya's arms, their foreheads were touching, and Ilya whispered something that Wyatt couldn't understand. Then Ilya pulled back slightly, looked deep into Shane's eyes, probably whispering more words of encouragement and then he kissed him gently.

Wyatt turned around and went back to the gym. This moment was not meant for him to observe. With a smile, he had to admit to himself that he had worried for nothing. The two of them were doing well. In fact, they were doing great.

He would tell the others what he had just seen. Not in detail, of course. But this would reassure them.

Shane allowed himself a beer, even though it was still early in the season. At least they had got through the first game against Montreal.

Before the game, he had felt bad. Really bad.

Thankfully, Ilya had managed to calm him down and reassure him that the team was behind him. As captain, he had reminded his teammates of the importance of the game.

Now, Shane could say that he finally felt like he had arrived. Looking around, he saw his teammates sitting at various tables. He noticed that his shoulders had dropped at some point without him realising it. And he felt a tiny bit like he belonged.

He was sitting next to Ilya, who had his hand on his knee. It still felt strange, and he sometimes caught himself thinking that Ilya should take his hand away because someone might see it.

But instead of pulling away, Shane moved slightly closer.

Haas, who was slightly drunk, was telling the story of how, when he first arrived in Canada, he thought everyone was flirting with him because everyone was so friendly. "Believe me, that led to some awkward situations."

Bood, Hayes and Harris, who were sitting at the same table, laughed.

"No, really. At first, I thought that everyone was flirting with me. I mean, when I go to a supermarket in Zurich and someone starts talking to me, it's usually either because they're old or because they're flirting."

Haas took a sip of his beer. Shane had never heard him say so much at once, but it was quite sweet how he was becoming more comfortable and telling stories. Shane smiled before he could stop himself.

"But here mothers, older women, men my age were all talking to me. I was quite confused."

"Is flirting if you're brave" said Ilya cheekily.

"He's not wrong," Harris replied with a smile.

"Roz, is that how you charmed Shane? With your insane flirting skills?" Bood wanted to know.

Shane noticed that more of the players were now turning their attention to them. Someone in the room asked, "Yeah, how did that even start?"

His face turned red. Ilya looked at him questioningly and he nodded. Now that he felt more comfortable in the team, it was okay for them to talk about how they met. He also knew that it was important for Ilya to be able to talk about these things with his teammates. And if Ilya went into too much detail, he could always jump in.

"Well, I noticed Shane checking me out. " A few of the guys whistled. "So I took a shot and it paid off. Shane couldn't resist me."

Ilya laughed, squeezed Shane's knee. Ilya wasn't wrong.

"Not true." Shane added, surprising even himself. A couple of heads snapped toward him, amused.

"Hey! " Ilya added with a smile.

"I mean…He is very convincing, " he finished, lifting his beer in quiet surrender.

"But when?" asked Bood.

"At an All-Star Game or the awards? That takes a lot of courage," Haas interjected.

Both shook their heads. Shane saw a few of the players frown. Sharing a look, they decided that they didn't have to tell the story they told the media: That they began to respect each other when they set up a charity together.

"In the summer before our rookie season, " Ilya explained.

"Wait! What?! Have you been a couple since your rookie season?" asked Haas.

"No!" they both exclaimed.

"But what were you then?" Haas's voice was full of disbelief

"You'll figure it out," Ilya replied with a laugh.

Later, as they were saying goodbyes, Wyatt took him aside for a moment. "Hollzy! The boys and I want you to feel comfortable with us."

"Okay, um... Thanks?!"

"Especially together with Roz, as a couple, you know?"

Shane nodded. "That means a lot to me." And it was true. It had actually felt good to talk about his and Ilya's relationship with their teammates.

"We love hearing stories about you two. Okay? We just want you to be yourselves."

No sooner had he spoken the words than he gave Shane a hug. Those words meant so much to him that a tear spilled from the corner of his eye.

"You guys should talk to Harris and make a cute couple video," Hayes quipped.

Shane grimaced. He couldn't imagine anything worse. Not necessarily the couple video. That would probably be okay. When he felt more comfortable being a couple in public. But the thought of making a second video was absolutely unbearable.

"Well, maybe. We'll think about it..."

The team was sitting in a restaurant in Vegas enjoying a night off. They had arrived earlier that day and weren't due to have a light training session until the following afternoon, before the evening game.

This was why Ilya turned a blind eye when a few of the players ordered a beer or two.

Bood had probably already had three beers by the time he called across the table, "Roz and Hollander, are you guys actually following the rule Coach Wiebe gave us?"

Ilya and Shane looked at each other. "No sex before a game?", Bood added.

Next to him, Shane blushed bright red and stared at the table. Ilya saw how Shane's shoulders tensed but a moment later he relaxed.

Ilya grinned. He loved sharing a room with Shane on the road. Not only did he get to celebrate victories with him, but they could also cuddle up and fall asleep together after tough games.

And he loved how red he turned at every innuendo. And the team had started to makee a lot of playful innuendos. Soon he wouldn't be the only one calling Shane *pomidor*.

Even now, Shane's appearance was closer to a tomato than a human being.

"Is a myth. Sh..." Then he felt Shane kick him lightly in the leg and glare at him.

"Finish that sentence and I swear you're sleeping on the ground," Shane muttered, just loud enough for Ilya to hear.

He cleared his throat. "I play much better after sex."

Shane buried his face in his hands and groaned.

"You're the worst, " he said, but there was a smile in his voice when he finally looked up.

The team around them burst into wolf whistles. "Who's lucky enough to have the room next to Roz and Hollzy?" Hayes asked with a broad grin.

Two of the rookies raised their hands.

"Is lucky. Is privilege to listen, yes?"

"No, Ilya, that's just gross."

They laughed. Ilya loved that the team accepted them as a couple and were chirping them. He knew that this had not been the case in Montreal before. Shane had never said anything, but being ignored was hard.

Next to him, he saw that Shane was looking around the room nervously. When he realised that no one else looked uncomfortable, no one looked away, Shane's shoulders relaxed.

"So it's official. The Captain will disobey the coach's orders?"

Ilya began, "No, coach never said that."

At the same time, Shane said, "No, we're here to play hockey!"

Ilya couldn't help but grin, though he tried to hide it behind his hand. He was pretty sure what would happen once they were in the hotel room. But since Ilya also knew how uncomfortable the conversation must be for Shane, he gave in.

"Is true. Shane is very into hockey. No distractions allowed. Not even from his super sexy husband."

Ilya glanced briefly at Shane to emphasise his point. Then he put his arm around him and pulled him closer. For a split second Shane hesitated before letting himself settle against Ilya's side.

He planted soft kisses on Shane's face until he heard his giggles and noticed Shane gently pushing him away.

That was probably enough of a show for the guys. Half the team had broken out into more wolf whistles. Someone shouted over the teammates: "Get a room!"

Ilya drowned out his teammates, determined to end the conversation once and for all.

"So can we stop talking about it? Makes me sad." He contorted his face until it looked like he was crying while running his fingers over his cheek to imitate tears.

"Shut up," said Shane. He tried to suppress a grin, but only half succeeded.

As soon as the hotel room door closed behind them later that evening, Shane took a step forward. He took Ilya's face in his hands and ran his fingers through his hair. He slowly guided him until he was pressed against the wall and kissed him. Deeply.

Ilya loved it when he was right. And it was no accident that the next day he wore a V-neck shirt that showed off his hickey.

End Notes

Thank you so much for reading!

If you feel like sharing your thoughts, I'd love to read them! Your kudos and comments make my day!

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