

One Bite for Luck

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One Bite for Luck

by [PrincessOfTheDesert](#)

Summary

The Ottawa Centaurs don't believe in superstitions. They believe in routines, rituals, and whatever Shane Hollander eats before a game.

OR a glimpse into the lives of Ilya and Shane as married NHL stars playing for the Ottawa centaurs.

A lot of domestic bliss, married life, teasing, locker-room chaos and ridiculous superstitions.

Notes

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

“What is this disgusting bird food?” he heard Ilya ask from the stall next to his.

“Fuck off! You know exactly what it is. You bought me the bars.” He scowled out of principle, but his heart warmed at how easily Ilya could make him smile.

“Okay.” Ilya was already wearing some of his gear, while Shane was still sitting in front of his stall eating the protein bar that Ilya had brought him from the expensive organic supermarket.

Ilya shrugged.

“Oh, is that Hayden?”

“What?” Shane turned and scanned the room, then realised that, of course, Hayden wasn't there. He faced Ilya with a disapproving look. Ilya stifled a laugh, chewed and swallowed. “Eh, disgusting bird food.”

Of course, Shane should have realised that Ilya was just messing with him.

“Hey, that's my bar!” Ilya didn't care, though, and kissed Shane on the cheek before continuing to put on his gear.

Shane saw Bood almost double over with laughter, Haas covering his mouth with his hand to hide his broad grin, and Hayes chuckling.

When they returned to the locker room after the game, Troy slapped Ilya on the back. “You were on fire today! What's the secret?”

“Was Shane's disgusting bird food.”

At the next away game, Shane opened his bag and found a protein bar at the top. Strange, he hadn't packed it. Shane looked at Ilya in bewilderment. “Did you put a protein bar in my bag?”

“You like them, no?”

Shane's heart warmed. He nodded, opened the wrapper and took a big bite.

Suddenly, Ilya was standing next to him, gave him a half-hug and leaned in as if he wanted to kiss him.

Shane's first thought was to pull away. When he first joined the Ottawa Centaurs, he had insisted on an absolutely no PDA rule. This was partly because he couldn't imagine the team

not reacting weirdly to them being a couple and partly because he didn't want to be known as Ilya's husband, but rather as Shane Hollander, the ice hockey player.

However, after several teammates had expressed concern about their marriage, they had relaxed the rule a little. And yet Shane always felt a little uncomfortable about showing affection in public.

But he also knew that it was important to Ilya, so he relaxed a little. But now he hadn't needed to worry. At the last moment, Ilya turned his head away, took a bite of his protein bar. After eating, Ilya pulled him closer again and kissed him on the cheek. Before he could react, Ilya was back at his stall.

“Hey!” Shane protested weakly.

To no one's surprise, the Centaurs won this game easily with a hat trick from Ilya.

Back in the dressing room, Bood asked Ilya what had made him play so well, and Ilya's answer was the same as before: “Was Shane's disgusting bird food.”

The team thus became convinced that Ilya had to take a bite of Shane's protein bar to win the game. Although he thought it was ridiculous, Shane still made a mental note to buy more of them.

Luca Haas entered the locker room, red-faced and panting. “Express delivery for Hollander-Rozanov,” he said, grinning broadly. He then looked straight at the floor, unsure if the joke would land.

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

Shane looked back and forth between Ilya and Haas, puzzled. Then at Haas' outstretched hand. In it was a protein bar, his now beloved protein bar. “Okay?”

“Ilya asked me to stop by this organic supermarket that sells these bars. You know I pass it on the way here.” Shane still didn't understand, looking questioningly at Ilya, who just shrugged.

That's when Bood chimed in. “What? You ride your bike to the stadium?” Haas looked at him as if he didn't quite understand the question. “Yes, why not?”

“Because the cycle paths here are rubbish?” replied Bood, sounding slightly incredulous. “How long would it take you to get here by car?”

“No idea... Ten minutes, maybe?”

“And by bike?” “About thirty minutes, if I don't have to make any last-minute express deliveries.” Haas looked pointedly at Ilya, who remained unimpressed.

“But you see my point, right?” Bood wanted to know. But Luca just shook his head. “When I was still playing in Zurich or earlier in the junior league, I always rode my bike to the stadium. So I do the same here. That way, I’m already warmed up and can mentally prepare for the game.”

“But you have to be careful not to get run over,” snickered Bood.

Shane found the argument Luca made quite reasonable and wanted to tell Ilya as much. When he turned his head towards him, Ilya already said, “No.”

“I didn’t say you had to join me.”

“No, I won’t let you ride your bike on these roads. Is too dangerous.” He added a little more quietly, “I don’t want to visit you in hospital again.”

“The way you drive, I’m safer on my bike.” Shane pretended to be annoyed, but he actually thought it was quite sweet how Ilya cared about him. Even if it was completely unnecessary.

“If you drove, we’d always be late.”

"Asshole." He tried to hide his smile, but his voice was soft.

“Yes, but you like it.” After a short pause Ilya added. “Don’t you want to eat your protein bar?”

Shane took it and tore open the wrapper. Then something occurred to him.

“Wait, are you superstitious?”

“No, of course not. Is stupid.”

“Then you don’t mind if I eat this after the game, right?” Shane held up the protein bar in front of Ilya’s face.

His eyes widened. The locker room was going noticeably quiet. “No. Is your decision.” He scratched his nose. Shane was pretty sure that Ilya did care whether he ate the bar after the game or now.

And he didn’t want to tempt fate, so he took a bite and then another. Then he held it out to Ilya. “You take the rest. I’ve had enough.”

Ilya beamed at him, took a bite, and then kissed Shane on the cheek.

Sure enough, it seemed to bring good luck. He and Ilya were on fire. They won this game, too.

“It must be here somewhere. I know I packed the bar.” Shane had completely unpacked his rucksack. The contents were neatly sorted into piles scattered around Shane's stall. Only his protein bar was nowhere to be found.

“Have you eaten it already?” asked Dykstra.

“No, of course not!” “He would never,” insisted Ilya outrageously, glaring at Dykstra.

He continued searching while Ilya, becoming increasingly desperate, urged their teammates to help him find a replacement.

“Haas, you eat disgusting bird food, too. Do you have one?”

“I have some nuts if that helps.” Ilya looked at him irritated. “We all have and Shane really knows how to handle them, but now is definitely not the time.” He flashed his crooked smile.

Shane felt himself blushing. “Ilya!”

“Is true,” he said without a hint of shame.

Shane was fairly certain that it was true. However, he would have preferred it if Ilya hadn't told the whole team.

Haas cleared his throat, his face also appearing to be quite red.

“No, I mean, I have almonds with me.” And he held up the bag.

“Not the same,” Ilya pointed out. “Dykstra, what about you?” He just shook his head.

Shane was confused about where the bar was. He knew he had packed it. It certainly didn't help that everyone around him was getting more and more nervous. He looked into some restless, almost panicked faces. Boon was pacing around the room.

Things hadn't gone so well at the beginning of the season, with a few losses along the way. However, towards the end of the season, they had developed a winning streak, and if they won today's game, they would qualify for the play-offs.

He and Ilya would play together in the play-offs. He and his husband. Shane had never dared to think about that in his wildest dreams. Did they really have a chance at a... No, don't go there, his mind warned him. Don't jinx it.

The mission to find the protein bar is our top priority.

“Ha,” Barrett exclaimed. “I have one. The same brand Shane always eats, just a different flavour.” Triumphant, he held it up. The colours on the packaging were faded, slightly chipped. And it looked as if it had been through a lot.

Shane swallowed, looked at the faces of his teammates, who were all looking at him hopefully.

“Okay, okay! Give it here,” he groaned.

He must have grimaced, because Hayes added: “Come on, Hollzy! For the team.” Shane nodded, opened the packaging and took a big bite. It also tasted like it had been through a lot. This was not his beloved protein bar. And he didn’t like that the whole team was watching him chew.

Ilya put his arm around him, took a bite too, and then kissed Shane on the cheek. The whole locker room erupted in cheers.

When they returned later, the cheering was even louder. They had done it — they would be playing in the play-offs. As Shane hugged Ilya to celebrate the good game, he brushed a few tears of joy from his cheek.

“Nooo!” Hayes jumped towards him, grabbed his arm and pulled it away from his face. “What are you doing, Hollzy?!” Shane looked at Wyatt in bewilderment. “What?”

“You ate practically the whole bar by yourself.”

“So?”

Bood, Dykstra, Hayes and Barrett all looked at him in shock. “You’re not serious, are you?” demanded Bood.

“Where’s Roz?” Barrett sounded slightly panicked. “We have to find Roz!”

“Go on, Haas. Go and find Roz,” Bood now chimed in. Haas sprinted out of the locker room, Dykstra following behind. “I think he and Coach Wiebe had something to discuss.”

Hayes was still holding Shane’s arm, preventing him from eating the last bite of the bar.

They just stood there until Dykstra and Haas pulled Ilya into the dressing room by his arm. “What is problem?” Ilya wanted to know.

“Hollzy almost ate the whole bar, but you have to take one bite and kiss him on the cheek,” Wyatt Hayes shouted, gesturing wildly with his hands.

He let go of Shane’s arm at that moment, and Shane seized his chance to shove the last bite of the bar into his mouth.

The locker room burst into loud noise. “Noo!” “Are you crazy, Hollander?” and “What are you doing, Shane?” were thrown around the room.

Ilya’s eyes widened, too and he stared at Shane in shock, but he didn’t say anything.

“Haas. Do you still have time to ride your bike to the organic supermarket? Before the game?” Bood wanted to know desperately.

Haas frantically shook his head. “No, that's never enough time.”

Shane briefly enjoyed the chaos; he never would have thought that such a thought could cross his mind. He looked into the faces of his teammates with as neutral an expression as possible. Then he rummaged through his bag and pulled out a second bar. He had, of course, checked his backpack repeatedly to ensure he had packed several bars. After all, he was a little superstitious. And he didn't want to risk a prank costing the team a place in the Stanley Cup final.

He held it up triumphantly and watched as his teammates fell into each other's arms. Laughing. And then dancing around Shane, hugging him.

He also heard Ilya laughing loudly and calling to him in Russian. “My husband. I love you!”

If Shane wasn't mistaken, Ilya was looking at him proudly. “Come here!” Shane called to him over the others.

Ilya made his way through his teammates, hugged Shane and grabbed him, spinning him around once. Then he carefully put him back down.

Shane took the protein bar, opened the wrapper and took a big bite. Then he held it out to Ilya, who also took a bite and then kissed him on the cheek. And then took his face into his hands and kissed him on the mouth. For once, Shane didn't mind who saw.

The locker room was filled with wolf whistles and laughter.

When they returned after the game, they were still in high spirits. The whole team had played their best game yet, knocking Chicago out of the tournament. Shane would be playing alongside Ilya for the Stanley Cup.

A dream come true!

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!

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