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'Heated Rivalry' Author Rachel Reid Provides Status Update On New Book: "I Hope I'm Giving People What They Want Out Of This"

By Natalia Ojeveonson
April 16, 2026 10:47am

2 COMMENTS

L-R): Connor Storrie, Hudson Williams
Sabrina Lantos / HBO Max

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She continued, "I feel like more than any other book I've written, this one needs to be really good. I hope I'm giving people what they want out of this. I hope what I want is what other people want. I still am making decisions about the plot with some things. I rewrite a lot. There's parts of the book I've rewritten and changed so many times. But hopefully I've made the right decisions and, generally, it's going well."

Unrivaled is a direct sequel to The Long Game, the sixth book in the series, which serves as the source material for the currently in progress Season 2 of the Crave Canada show adaptation. The new book will pick up following Shane and Ilya's wedding and their progress on the same hockey team. Public with their relationship for the first time after a decade-long trumpeted rivalry, they must contend with both adoration and animosity.

"[Unrivaled] is really where the world's gonna judge them, right? 'Cause now they're on the same team, it's in people's faces, they have to decide how they feel about this. And they're gonna be loud about it. I think it's two sides. There's gonna be people that are extremely excited and supportive of it — some of it is maybe a paranoid way, which isn't at all based on reality. And there will also be the other side: just blatantly homophobic and bigoted and terrible," Reid said.

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Reid added that the book will also trace the realities of a relationship entwined with work.

"Even though they had their happy ending, it's a complicated happy ending, and there's still a lot of things that they're gonna have to deal with. That's why I decided to write the book — because I felt like there's still more story to tell," she concluded.

As for the show, which is projected to return to HBO Max sometime in April 2027 and will trace the couple's early evolution in a committed relationship, creator Jacob Tierney recently teased at ReelGist that the upcoming season will draw from "much more serious territory. There's still lots of flirting, and there's lots of sex, but it's this kind of danger. This kind of 'hotel room, adjoinment sex' stuff is largely gone."

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