A Perfect Christmas

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A Perfect Christmas

by perachdavida

Summary

Ilya wasn’t planning on being woken up before 6 am on Christmas morning, but it can still be an otherwise perfect day.

Notes

While not strictly necessary, my Shane/Ilya fics are all conceptually linked and are best enjoyed in chronological order, which is as follows:
The Interview
The Offer
Two Are More Than Twice As Much Work As One
A Day In Disney
Date Night
First Day Of School
A Perfect Christmas
The Mouse House
The Hit
Family Hockey Game
The Changeling
Sasha's Story

See the end of the work for more notes

Ilya startled awake when something heavy and screeching landed on top of him. He heard Shane next to him making an “oomph” sound followed by a groan, indicating that a second heavy and screeching something had landed on top of him as well. High pitched little voices came at them like an avalanche, fast and furious.

“Papa!!!”

“Daddy!!!”

“Wake up!!! Wake up, wake up, wake uuuuuuuuup!!!”

“Santa came!!”

“There are so many presents!!”

“WAKE UP!!!”

Ilya pried his eyes open to see the clock read 5:48 am. Dear lord, they hadn’t even made it to 6 this year. And the screeching was already starting to give him a headache.

“OK, OK” he rasped out. “I’m up. We’ll see what Santa brought.” More screeching ensued, followed by thuds and scurrying footsteps. Ilya sat up and turned over to see Shane rubbing his eyes. He looked at Ilya with a sleepy grimace on his face.

“We’re taking a nap this afternoon,” Shane said. “Putting on a movie, locking the bedroom door, and taking a nap.”

Ilya purred. “A nap? That is an excellent idea.”

Shane huffed. “I meant an actual nap, you idiot. It’s not even 6 am.”

“OK. We will see how you feel when this supposed nap time arrives,” he said with a smirk. “Now, let’s go downstairs to the madhouse.”

When they reached the living room, the sight of two manic six year olds greeted them. Eva was shoving through the boxes looking for the one she wanted to open first. Sasha was grabbing and shaking all of his presents, then stacking them to the side.

Every year, Shane tried to make some kind of preemptive pronouncement about how the twins should handle opening their presents. They had to open one at a time, and play with it for a few minutes before opening another. They had to take turns. They had to pause for a picture with each one. Did they notice that the boxes were labeled in a specific number order?

Every year, Ilya would stare at him with eyebrows raised until Shane grumbled and threw up his hands in defeat. The only rule that made sense to Ilya was that he and Shane needed coffee first. He went to the kitchen and made both of them a cup, then handed one to Shane.

Ilya took a few sips of badly needed caffeine, then set down the mug. He clapped his hands loudly. “OK! Let’s find out what Santa thought you deserved this year.”

A cheer went up and the fevered sound of torn wrapping paper filled the air. As each new gift was revealed, varying levels of squealing followed. There was the standard yearly full hockey equipment upgrade for each kid. There were legos, puzzles, dolls, video games, dress up clothes, board games, art supplies, and various other toys. No matter what purchases they had agreed upon, Ilya always threw in a few more.

Once the twins were finished, the living room looked like the remains of a mauled herd of antelopes. Shane got several trash bags and started picking up discarded wrapping paper, ribbons and bows, plastic toy shells, twist ties, torn plastic bags, ripped boxes, and other assorted detritus. Ilya sat down cross-legged in front of Sasha and helped him put together some toys.

They ate their annual Christmas breakfast of Belgian waffles with absolutely anything the kids wanted on them. Choices usually included some combination of ice cream, sprinkles, chocolate chips, hot fudge, maple syrup, powdered sugar, marshmallow fluff, sugary cereals, and, one year, a slice of cake. Ilya would also pile his waffles like a kid, and return Shane’s look of disgust with a gleeful smirk as he took a giant bite of what Shane referred to as “diabetes fodder”. This year, Shane piled his own waffles with mixed fruit and turkey bacon and kept his mouth shut.

After breakfast, the kids jumped up and ran back to the tree. “It’s time for the presents we got you!” Eva declared. They rummaged through the dwindling pile and pulled out two presents each. Every year, Ilya helped the twins pick out or make a present for Shane, and Shane did the same in return. This year, however, they had asked Shane’s mom to help them with the presents instead.

Eva skittered over to them, holding out a red box to Shane and a green one to Ilya. She jumped up and down with excitement and yelled “Open them at the same time!” Ilya and Shane smiled at each other and at the identically sized boxes. Shane got his present open first. He pulled out a copy of his home Centaurs jersey. Across the top front chest, above their logo, “MY DADDY” along with several small hearts was bedazzled in rainbow rhinestones. Ilya was already pulling out his own home jersey, with “MY PAPA” bedazzled in the same spot with the same rainbow rhinestones. “Wow!” they exclaimed in unison, then leaned down to hug Eva.

“Do you love them?!” she chirped.

“They’re amazing,” Shane said.

Ilya held a hand over his heart. “I have always wanted to look like a rainbow unicorn while playing hockey,” he declared solemnly.

Eva clapped her hands with glee. “I wanted to do the rhinestones myself but Grandma said we should bring it to a store and have them make it so it would be perfect.”

Ilya hunched in front of her. “We absolutely love them and we will wear them to practice. Everybody will be so jealous. They will all want a rhinestone jersey.” He booped her on the nose and kissed her cheek. She squealed with delight.

Then Sasha quietly handed them each a flat package that felt like a magazine. He had told them he needed Yuna’s help because he planned to give them both the same thing and wanted it to be a surprise. But he had also asked, of all things, if Luka Haas could help him with their present as well. They mentioned it to Luka, who loved the kids and said he was thrilled to be asked. They weren’t sure what to expect but as the wrapping paper fell away, they both held identical copies of a professional looking comic book titled “Super Hockey Man 1 and Super Hockey Man 2 Save The World”. The front cover was a stunning illustration of Ilya and Shane in hockey uniforms and capes, flying with sticks in their hands. Shane’s jersey had a number 1 on it and Ilya’s had a number 2.

Sasha was quick to explain. “I made up a story about hockey superheroes fighting an evil puck monster that wanted to take over Ottawa, and I told it to Grandma and she wrote it out, and then I gave it to Luka and asked him to draw the pictures to match the story since he’s so good at art, and then we took it to a print shop and they made it like a real comic book.”

Ilya flipped through the comic, amazed and overwhelmed at the creativity it took his kids to think up such presents and then figure out how to make them happen. He felt tears spring to his eyes and slowly spill over. They had put so much thought and love into these gifts. He glanced over at Shane, who was flipping through the comic while looking equally stunned, mouth hanging open.

Sasha looked scared. “Papa, why are you crying? You’re supposed to be happy. Don’t you like it?” he asked in a small voice.

Ilya wiped his eyes, dropped to his knees, and took Sasha in a fierce hug. “I love these presents more than any present I have ever gotten in my whole life. You are both so smart and creative. I’m so proud of you.”

Shane came out of his stupor, his eyes also moist, and sat on the ground holding out his arms. “Come give me a hug, both of you.” They jumped on him and he squeezed them hard. “I love you so much. These really are the best presents ever.”

“Family hug!!” Eva yelled and they all squished together in a huddle. Ilya leaned over and gave Shane a chaste kiss on the lips. Shane smiled into his mouth.

“Did you notice I was Super Hockey Man 1?” he asked smugly.

Ilya rolled his eyes. “Yes. I am certain you are very happy about that. I am also certain Sasha made you Super Hockey Man 1 because he knew you would complain about being number 2.”

“No,” Sasha piped up, shaking his head. “Daddy is Super Hockey Man 1 just because Daddy comes before Papa in the alphabet.”

Ilya looked at him dolefully and then attacked him with tickles. Sasha shrieked, trying to squirm away. “I’ll give you the alphabet,” Ilya said before kissing his golden spirals and letting him go.

Shane and Ilya put on their jerseys, took pictures to upload to social media, and then played with the kids and their new toys for a while.

That afternoon, Shane’s parents came over with gifts for everyone, and they all went through their stockings while the adults drank Yuna’s homemade eggnog and the kids had hot chocolate. Eva adored the party dresses and kitten heels that her grandparents gave her, immediately changing into one after another and strutting around the living room like she was in a fashion show. Sasha was transfixed with his polaroid camera, taking pictures of all of them and excitedly waving the photo paper around to dry like Shane’s dad taught him.

They agreed to frame one of Sasha’s comics on the wall, and to leave the other one out in a plastic collector’s sleeve for people to look at. They read out loud the responses to their post about the jerseys Eva had made for them. She crowed with delight at all the compliments. They listened to Christmas music, and snacked and chatted and dozed on the couch. Nap time was forgotten.

After a nice dinner, they put two extremely tired children to bed early and hugged Yuna and David goodbye. With the house finally quiet, the lights low, and the fireplace going, Ilya and Shane sat down on the rug in front of the fire and cuddled together.

Shane sighed. “This was a perfect Christmas.”

“Yes,” Ilya answered softly. “It was.”

They sat quietly for a while, watching the fire, Ilya stroking Shane’s hair and planting soft kisses on his head, his neck, his shoulders. Finally Shane said, “I guess it’s time to exchange our gifts.”

Ilya tightened his arms around Shane and nuzzled at his ear. “I don’t want to move from this spot. If you can’t teleport them over here, then we can wait.”

Shane huffed out a quiet laugh. “Are you sure? I think you’re going to like what I got you.”

Ilya smirked. “I know you’re going to like what I got you.”

Shane looked intrigued. “OK, let’s exchange presents and then come back to the fireplace to…snuggle some more.”

“Let’s exchange presents and then go to our room to “snuggle” with the door locked because one of these kids will come downstairs when they have a bad dream or are thirsty or need the bathroom or really want to play with one of the presents that they didn’t bring upstairs,” Ilya countered.

“Good point,” Shane agreed. He stood and held out a hand for Ilya. “Come on, lazy bones. We’ve been up since 6 am. Let’s get this show over with and go to bed.”

“5:48 am,” Ilya corrected, accepting Shane’s hand and rising. “I think that’s a new record.”

Shane led him to the tree, reached down for an envelope, and handed it to Ilya. “Merry Christmas, baby.”

Ilya opened the envelope and his eyebrows rose. It was a brochure for a luxury resort on the ocean. The cover showed crystal clear waters and a white sand beach. Behind it was a print out of plane tickets. He looked up questioningly. “Shane?”

“Surprise!” Shane made jazz hands. “We’re going to Fiji in June. For 8 days. It’s a top tier resort with a lot of privacy and, like, everything we could need so we don’t even have to leave if we don’t want to.”

Ilya stared at him. “But you don’t like asking your parents to take the kids in the off season.”

Shane looked sheepish. “Yeah, so the not great part is we’re taking the kids with us. But,” he interrupted before Ilya could get a word out, “they have a great kids’ camp that will occupy them from 9 to 4 every day while we do whatever we want. AND…Natalya is coming with us.”

Natalya was their live-in nanny, a lovely but no-nonsense older Russian woman who was spending Christmas with her own family. She had never agreed to go on vacation with them before. “That is a surprise,” Ilya said.

“I know,” Shane responded, “but she’s always wanted to visit Fiji. When I told her the kids would be in camp all day and she would mostly just need to take care of them in the early mornings and the evenings, she agreed. I did have to give her 2 of the 8 nights off so she could, and I quote, ‘party’.”

Ilya snorted. “I would love to see Natalya’s idea of partying.”

Shane waved that off. “Not our business. Just be happy we can have a mostly kid free vacation with the kids.” He smiled smugly. “You’re welcome.”

Ilya grinned. He pulled Shane into his arms and gave him a hug and a quick kiss. “Thank you for my present.”

Shane hummed and kissed him back more deeply. “Now show me this present you know I’m going to like,” he whispered against Ilya’s mouth.

Ilya leaned over and he too picked up an envelope from under the tree. Handing it to Shane, he took a step back, crossing his arms and smirking. Shane opened the envelope and paused, confusion written on his face. “It’s a business card. Alex Hewitt, yoga instructor.” He looked up. “Okaaaay.”

“You have one year of weekly yoga lessons with him. He will come to the house and work with you in our gym.” Ilya flashed Shane a mischievous grin. “He says I can join if I want.”

Shane eyed him suspiciously. “And why would you want to do that? You hate yoga.”

Ilya nodded at Shane's hand. "Pull out your phone and scan the QR code on the back of the card."

Shane did what he was told, waiting for the page to load. He froze, staring at the screen. "Oh wow."

"Uh huh," Ilya said.

"He's…"

"Uh huh," Ilya said again.

Shane scrolled through the site for a moment, then stopped. Ilya was pretty sure he knew which picture Shane had hit when drool practically ran out of his mouth. "Holy shit!" he exclaimed. "This guy is hot as fuck. If I watch him do downward dog from behind, I might swallow my tongue."

"You're welcome," Ilya drawled, mimicking Shane's earlier words. "Merry Christmas."

It was Shane's turn to hug and kiss Ilya. "Thank you. I love you. But just so we're clear…"

"Yes, yes. No threesomes with the hot as fuck yoga instructor." Ilya leaned over and whispered into Shane's ear. "But admit it. Just for a second, you thought about it."

Shane groaned. "Ok, Christmas is over, what a lovely day, time for bed." He dragged Ilya up the staircase toward their bedroom. Ilya cackled behind him all the way.

End Notes

Thank you to my romance book club peeps - especially Melissa - for helping me figure out what Ilya would get Shane for Christmas.

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