pain killer

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pain killer

by ghosttotheparty

Summary

"I'm falling in love with… someone."

"Do you like it?"

"I kinda hate it. But it's nice. When it's nice, it's… nice."

or; Shane comes out to someone. He's high on painkillers, but he doesn't name names (not that he has to) and Dr Frances Yu takes HIPAA seriously.

Notes

i know she had like two lines but she has a whole life in my head and i love lesbians.

Frances's favourite patients are unconscious or high.

She likes not having to chat with them when they're unconscious, likes just being able to do her job, in and out. And she likes when they're too relaxed to be scared of her, when they're giggly and calm, when they say things that don't really make any sense but make sense to them, at least in their addled state. She used to keep notes on the things they would say, back when she worked at a smaller hospital. Massachusetts General is too busy for her to take the time to scribble out things like *Don't tell my mom I did drugs* and *Oh my god, they took my bones.*

She still hangs on to the stories she manages to remember to take home, respective of HIPAA guidelines. She tells her family often that no, she can't tell them that, and no, she can't answer all their questions by nodding or shaking her head. She's good at her job, every part of it.

They already know Shane Hollander is under Frances's care, and she is adamantly ignoring their texts.

He's a sweet kid. A grown man, she fucking knows, but right now, smiley and pain-free and content, he's a kid. And to Frances, he's a kid.

"Hello," he sing-songs to her as she approaches his bed. It makes her smile. The door shuts behind Rozanov.

"Hello," she says lightly, assessing his vitals. His heart rate has gone down since she last checked, which is good— he's been stressed since he arrived (*obviously*) and Frances has been trying to get him to calm down for ages.

"Hi, Ms…" He trails off, staying across the room blankly. "…Doctor. Lady."

"My name is Dr Yu," Frances says, tilting her head as she looks at him.

"That's a good name," Shane says resolutely, nodding like he's made an official decision.

"I'll tell my mother you think so," Frances says, watching the way he nods again. "How are you feeling?" she asks, leaning down to shine a light in his eyes. He squints, but he lets her.

"Feel good," he says, smile growing into a grin, and she pulls the light away, satisfied with his pupillary reations. "Very good."

"Better?"

"Yes-s…" Shane says, head falling back lazily, eyes closing. "Bet-ter."He beams.

"It's nice of Rozanov to stop by and see how you're doing," Frances says as she checks the morphine drip. "Good sportsmanship."

Of course Frances knows about the rivalry. She thinks someone could be randomly picked off the streets of Boston and they'd know about Hollander and Rozanov's beef.

"Yes," Shane says again, nodding once. "He is nice."

"Is he," Frances says. "I always thought he was kind of an ass."

She's seen videos of him, heard him chirping on the ice and making snarky remarks during interviews. He's very confident, and maybe he does have reason to be— he's a fantastic player, and even Frances can see that he's beautiful— but he could tone it down a little.

"Oh, he is," Shane says lightly, his voice up a few octaves. "He is a nice… ass."

He giggles to himself, and Frances watches fondly, unable to hold back her smile.

"People only— they only know him from TV," Shane says when he stops laughing, looking at Frances drowsily. "He's a dick. But. But I've known him for a long time."

"That's true," Frances says. "You've known him, what, since your rookie year?"

"Yes." Another nod. "That was a long time ago."

"Relatively," Frances says. "You're still young."

"Mm. I'm middle-aged by hockey standards."

Frances lets out a laugh.

"I guess that's true. But you've still got time, Shane."

"I've still got time," Shane mutters, soft like he's just saying it to himself, like he's committing it to memory. He's quiet for a moment, and Frances lingers, watching his expression shift from his light contentment into something like confusion.

"You okay?" she asks, glancing at his heart rate. It's a little higher. She kind of wants to run after Rozanov to bring him back.

"Do you like hockey?" Shane asks instead of answering her. He doesn't look like he heard the question.

"You know," Frances says, sighing heavily. "I don't. But my father-in-law really loves it, so I've picked up some hockey knowledge over the years to bond with him."

"That's really nice," Shane says sincerely, looking at her. His eyes are glassy.

"He watched the game yesterday, in fact," Frances says. "He's been asking me how you're doing."

"Wha's h's team?" Shane's voice slurs.

"Well. He's a Boston man through and through—"

"*No-o-o*..." Shane interrupts loudly, throwing his head back, and a laugh bursts out of Frances.

"I *know*, I'm sorry."

Shane lets out a noise of disgust, but there's a crooked smile on his face and his nose is scrunched adorably.

"You need a new husband," Shane says.

"Mm. Wife."

Shane blinks blankly, glazed eyes finding her.

"Wife?" he repeats quietly. Frances nods, humming affirmatively, watching his face carefully as it relaxes into something thoughtful. He's quiet for a moment before his head falls back, eyes closing, and he lets out a bright, "I *love* that."

Frances blinks.

"Do you?"

"I *do*," Shane says emphatically, nodding. "I love that. That's amazing."

"Oh," Frances says lightly. "Well, thank you."

"I love lesbians."

Frances blinks again. She looks at him, and he seems to feel the look without even opening his eyes.

"In a normal, not creepy way," he clarifies. "I think lesbians are. So cool." He hums softly, nodding to himself, and Frances is grinning at him. Her chest feels warm.

"Well, my wife will love to hear that."

"You're married to a lesbian. That's so cool."

Frances laughs, shaking her head a little, watching him fondly. She's never been a fan of sports, but this kid is alright, she thinks. She knows they're not all like this, but she wishes they were.

"Are you a lesbian?" Shane asks brightly, opening his eyes to look at her curiously.

"I'm not," she says just as brightly.

"You like— You like men too?"

"I do, I'm bisexual," she says, tilting her head back and forth. "Haven't really thought about men in a while. My wife is…" She exhales sharply, shaking her head, to make Shane giggle again. It works.

“Wouldn’t it…” Shane hesitates. He looks at his hands while he thinks, picking at one of his nails and rubbing the finger oximeter. “Wouldn’t it have been easier to marry a man?”

He says it shyly, his voice hushed, and Frances looks at him. Sees him.

“Yeah,” she says. He looks up at her, his eyes cutting up to see through his eyelashes. “It would have. For my family, and my career, and Lonnie’s career, but…”

She exhales slowly, glancing at the door like she’s going to see her father looking through it. She sits on the bed next to Shane, who shifts to make more space for her.

“I love my wife,” Frances says. “And she loves me. And that’s worth any… hardships. Or obstacles or whatever you wanna call it.”

“…Wasn’t it hard?”

“Oh, yeah. Still is.”

“Then…” He trails off, shrugging, shaking his head, gesturing vaguely. “Why?”

“Well…” Frances pauses, taking a breath. She tucks her hands into her lap in a way that mirrors Shane. “Did you go into hockey because it was easy?”

”No,” Shane mumbles, looking at his hands again.

“No,” Frances repeats. “It was hard, right? Still is.” She gestures to Shane laying in the hospital bed, and Shane lets out a soft laugh. “You had to work really hard for it, and you’ll have to keep working hard for it if you wanna keep it up, right?”

Shane nods.

“Why do you still do it?” Frances asks, watching his face. He has freckles scattered across his cheeks and the bridge of his nose, blending a little with the lingering bruises. “Why do you still do hockey?”

“‘Cause I love it,” he says, his head falling back again.

Frances gestures to him.

“That’s why,” she says lightly. “Isn’t that why anybody does anything?”

Shane is quiet for a moment, eyes flicking across Frances’s face.

“It should be,” he says, the crooked smile returning. He’s quiet again, looking down at his hands, tangling his fingers, twisting and tightening. Frances hears his knuckles crack.

“It’s hard,” she says softly. “But every time I come home to my wife, it’s… It’s like, uh… Winning the Stanley Cup, or something.”

Shane giggles brightly, his face lighting up.

“Love is like hockey,” he says sagely, nodding slowly.

“Sure,” Frances says.

He’s quiet again, and then he’s leaning forward, reaching for Frances’s arm, and she lets him, looking at him with wide eyes, mirroring his expression. She sets her hand atop his.

“I, uhm…” He pauses, blinking like he’s trying to sober himself. “I’m falling in love with… someone.”

Frances nods. She doesn’t even try to fight her smile.

“Do you like it?”

Shane blinks.

“I kinda hate it,” he says. It catches Frances off guard, and she lets out a startled laugh. It makes Shane smile. “But it’s nice. When it’s nice, it’s… nice.”

“I get it.”

“It’s complicated,” Shane says forlornly. “I wish it was simple. I just… wanna make him happy.”

He looks pitiful, his eyes suddenly glistening, and Frances has never really wanted kids— she and Lonnie talked about it, but it’s never been a priority for either of them, especially with both their jobs on top of looking after Lonnie’s dad— but she suddenly feels maternal, looking at Shane Hollander crying. She clicks her tongue, tilting her head and rubbing the back of his hand.

“Honey,” she says softly, looking into his eyes. “I’m sure you make him very happy.”

She can see Shane holding it back, swallowing back the details of this love affair of his, keeping his lover’s name out of his mouth, and of course she would never ask, would never push him for anything he feels he shouldn’t say. But she doesn’t think she really has to ask.

She wouldn’t have guessed, because who the fuck would, but when she walked into Shane’s room earlier, she immediately regretted it, because it was quiet.

And she caught just a glimpse of their hands, fingers locked between them before they separated quickly, and she heard Shane’s tiny *Bye-bye* and Rozanov’s *Goodbye* that was painfully soft.

And, of course, Shane literally told Frances that Rozanov was “a nice ass,” before giggling like a thirteen-year-old boy who’s heard the word “puberty.”

“It’s okay,” Frances says gently, nodding, when Shane looks at her pitifully, his lip quivering. “It’s okay.”

He falls forward a little, and she nods again, opening her arms for him to fall into. He does, sniffling, and she can feel him crying, his shoulders shaking, and Frances's eyes sting as she holds him, rocks him back and forth, cradles the back of his head.

"'M sorry," Shane mumbles, his voice muffled by Frances's shoulder, and she shakes his head even though he's not looking at her.

"Don't be sorry, honey," she says softly, running her hand over his hair. "It's hard, I know."

"You won't tell anyone, right?" Shane says weakly, his voice breaking as he lifts his head and looks at her. She touches his face, wipes a tear from his cheek as gently as she can. He lets her.

"Not a word," she says. "Not a soul."

"…Promise?"

Frances smiles, cupping his cheek.

"I follow HIPAA guidelines to a T," she says firmly. "I don't talk about my patients, and I don't discuss them to anybody that isn't legally entitled to their information."

Shane stares at her blankly, eyes blinking. She waits patiently for him to process it, to respond.

"…Hippo… guidelines…"

Frances bites back a smile, tilting her head at him.

"HIPAA," she repeats. "Patient confidentiality."

Understanding dawns on his face, and he nods slowly.

"Confi—dentiality," he says clumsily. "I know what that means."

"There you go," she says lightly. "I'm not gonna be telling anyone anything unless it's detrimental to your health or safety, or it's life-threatening. And being in love isn't life-threatening."

"…Fuckin' feels like it is."

Frances smiles.

"I know."

His eyes flutter, and Frances looks at him, watches him look down at his lap, twisting his fingers together again. He rubs the oximeter on his finger like he wants to take it off, but he doesn't.

“You should get some rest,” Frances says softly. Shane nods, letting her rub his un-slinged arm gently. “Okay?”

”Am I allowed to use my phone?” he asks.

“…I won’t suggest it,” Frances says. “I don’t recommend using any kind of device. But. You are a grown man and you have free will, and there’s no law against a concussed person using their phone.”

Shane smiles a little. His cheeks turn pink.

“I just wanna tell him I miss him.”

Frances smiles fondly, hesitating before she nods at him like they’re sharing a secret. He beams, even with tear-wet eyelashes, and she finally pushes herself to stand up.

“Dr Yu,” Shane says, leaning back against his pillows.

“Mhmm?”

“…You’re the best doctor I’ve ever had in my life.”

Frances laughs.

“That’s nice, Shane.”

“You’re so cool.”

“I appreciate it.”

“Can you… tell,” Shane starts slowly, taking a long moment to blink and squint across the room absently. “Your wife’s dad. That I’m okay, and I appreciate him caring, even if he… has terrible taste in teams.”

Frances lets out a laugh that’s a little too loud, and Shane grins, squeezing his eyes shut.

“I’ll be sure to let him know.”

Shane nods resolutely, humming as he relaxes into his bed.

“Thank you, Dr Yu,” he says lightly, almost singing it.

“I’ll be back later, Shane.”

“Bye-bye.”

She shuts the door as quietly as she can, turning to wave back when she sees Shane’s hand lifted, his fingers wiggling even though his eyes are still closed. She texts her father-in-law, and then she checks her watch to see if she has time to call her wife to discuss the possibility of them adopting an adult Canadian man who has two living parents.

And she decides that her favourite patients are all unconscious, high, and/or gay.

Works inspired by this one

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