

it is enough for me, anyway

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by [dykecowgirl](#)

Summary

Ilya's (mis)adventures as he navigates life during his first Christmas being married to Shane.

Notes

for a friend, with whom i've shared much yaoi joy lately!

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

The last thing Ilya wanted to do was answer completely uninspiring questions about his last game before the holidays, and yet.

‘Ilya, thoughts on Hollander’s hat trick? It’s got to feel good to have assisted two of those goals, as well as scoring a goal yourself. How do you feel?’

Really fucking fantastic. ‘Very good, we make great team,’ he said instead, winking to the already flushed interviewer and hoping the corny joke would lay her off his back.

No such luck. ‘That’s certainly true. As we enter the holiday season, do you have any special plans? Looking forward to starting any new traditions as a married couple?’

Any special plans? Not that he could think of, no. New traditions? Was that supposed to be something he had to think about? And if he wasn’t the one thinking about it, surely it couldn’t have crossed Shane’s mind either.

‘Yes, lots of special plans, like drinking eggnog and putting reindeer ears on my dog Anya. I have pictures, do you want to see?’ That seemed to do the trick to get her to move onto Haas who, by what Ilya could make out as he walked away, was going to spend an even less eventful Christmas than him.

It was all a scam anyway, he knew that – or, at least, he knew that that’s what he should know —, and yet he couldn’t help but feel as though it was something he should have been giving at least some thought to. He couldn’t remember the last time Christmas hadn’t felt like a chore more than a genuinely fun holiday to look forward to, but spending it together with your husband for the first time when you’re both out to the world surely meant he had to turn it around, right?

Ilya had some fucking work to do.

‘Any reason why you can’t stop bouncing in your seat? You’re like Anya coming back from her dog hotel.’

‘What can I say Shane? It was a great game!’

His husband tried to quirk an eyebrow at him from the driver’s seat. It was more adorable than inquisitive.

‘It was, but we’ve played many great games so far and mostly you just wanted to jump my bones on the way home, today it just looks like you stole one too many chocolates from Harris’ desk and are about to come down from a sugar rush.’ And fine, maybe there was a bit of that too.

‘Hmm, so you are saying you are annoyed I’m not so horny as you today...’

‘Well!’

‘Don’t worry Hollander, the night is still young, we have a lot of time still. First, we need to make a stop. After, I will make sure you know how sexy you were out there tonight.’

If Shane stepped on the accelerator and broke his boring just-below-the-speed-limit made up rule, Ilya didn’t feel the need to comment on it for once.

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Shane dumped the last of the industrial-sized Christmas lights with as much grace as a baby reindeer before sitting down himself and wiping an actual bead of sweat from his brow. Which, considering the freezing Ottawa night, made Ilya feel only a little bit terrible.

‘Are you fucking serious?’, he asked, sending him a glare that succeeded only in bringing a smile out of Ilya.

‘Aw, you are like freezing little squirrel!’

‘Am not!’

Ilya shrugged. ‘Look, if we win last hockey game before Christmas 5-1, we also have to win best decorated house on the street! Maybe even the whole neighbourhood. Today luck is on our side, is the Christmas spirit.’

Something about his answer made Shane’s eyes melt into something too fond than what he was ready for. ‘Okay, then, you oversized child. Let’s put up these lights. These totally not over-the-top, ginormously huge lights.’

‘And don’t forget the moose!’

‘How could I?’

So they got to work: since it wasn’t snowing, Shane allowed Ilya to get on a ladder and actually decorate the roof as well, while he worked on the front porch and lawn, and soon enough (no thanks to Anya who, in what they were sure was an effort to help out, kept getting tangled up in the cables) they were done.

While Shane was probably thinking about how bad this reflected on their carbon emission footprint, Ilya couldn’t help but think they’d truly outdone themselves: it was messy, only slightly corny, but Shane had done a great job of putting all the twinkly lights on the porch railing and they’d even gotten the big moose a small moose to keep it company.

He put an arm around his husband and Shane leaned into him, burying his face into his neck and taking a deep breath.

‘I can’t believe you’ve tired me out enough that the only thing I’m thinking about right now is getting straight into bed.’

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‘Surprise! I have surprise for you!’

Shane had just emerged from his morning yoga session and Ilya, who usually wouldn't have missed front row seats to some of the bendier exercises, had chosen to spend his first free morning of their short holidays doing some shopping downtown.

Nevermind that the shopping hadn't actually included a present for his husband, the love of his life, who he would give everything to except apparently an actual present for Christmas. But that was totally beside the point.

Shane seemed to think his frozen banana kale probiotic smoothie was much more interesting than what Ilya was planning on surprising him with. He took a few sips, closed his eyes, took a deep sigh, because apparently it was that delicious, and finally looked at Ilya.

'A surprise?'

'Yes! You will love it, is very beautiful,' he said, placing a bag in front of him. 'Open it!'

Try as he might, Ilya could still see the smile pulling at the corners of Shane's lips, and couldn't help but feel smug at the grin that threatened to split his face in two when he opened the bag's contents.

'You got us matching ugly Christmas sweaters?'

'Your stylist couldn't have chosen something more fashionable. Is perfect, now that you don't have a shirt on, try it on, you will look very pretty.'

Shane held up the obnoxiously colorful sweater with a yeti in a Santa hat that lit up thanks to actual batteries that Ilya had to purchase separately: 'Somehow, I doubt that.'

Ilya's wasn't much better, but he thought Shane would get a kick out of the sexy woman Santa Claus with the fuzzy 'trophy wife' overlaid message.

'Are you trying to tell me something with yours? You had to become tired of assisting my goals at some point--,'

'I have more points than you so far,'

'I'll 100% support you in your transition to becoming my WAG.'

'In your dreams, Hollander.' But probably, Ilya wouldn't mind being Shane's WAG. At some point. In the very *very* far future.

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That afternoon, clad in their matching ugly Christmas sweaters, they made their way to Yuna and David's house, who'd promised them hot chocolate, popcorn and the perfect introduction to childhood Christmas movie classics to Ilya, whose depressing childhood riddled with neglect and communism hadn't lent itself to the finer cultural phenomena Hollywood had to offer.

However, once all was said and done, Ilya wasn't entirely sure what was supposed to be happening on screen.

'Why is creepy snowman kidnapping children to take to Arctic?'

'The North Pole, you mean.'

'I don't care.'

He'd hoped the Hollanders would share his concern for the fate of those poor innocent children, but when he turned to them it became obvious that, if it hadn't been for his question, they would have continued happily watching the movie, no care in the world.

Shane seemed to be more concerned about the fact that he'd pointed out the obvious. 'That's not supposed to be the main take away, Ilya. Like, not at all.'

'Well, what am I supposed to learn, then?'

'The power of friendship, compassion, I don't know.'

Look, Ilya loved his husband more than anything in the world, but he didn't see how watching Frosty the Snowman as a child had, in any way, taught him about friendship and compassion.

'Ah, yes, and also works to learn about breaking laws of nature—,'

'It's a children's movie, I think you can suspend reality—,'

'Like why is the snowman talking and smoking pipe?'

Shane threw a popcorn kernel at him. 'Shut up and watch the damn film, Rozanov.'

Ilya listened to him and finished the movie without daring to utter another word against Frosty, lest he ruin it for Shane. He still didn't understand why they couldn't have watched something a little less incriminating— he thought North Americans loved that one about the neglected reindeer.

Later on, after Yuna insisted they stay for dinner, Ilya and David were finishing up a puzzle they'd started a couple weeks before but had been ignoring as the season got more intense. Yuna had whisked Shane away for God-knows-what; probably tape review orto come up with some new psychic-acquired strategy for their next game against the Maple Leafs after their break.

It was nice to simply focus on finishing up their Canadian wilderness landscape and let the excitement of the last 24 hours wash away to do something more low-key.

'I'm missing the end of the fox's tail.'

'Wait, I think I just saw it. Hah!,' Ilya exclaimed, and passed the miniscule piece to David, who fit it into place. He was confident they'd finish it before they had to leave. They worked

quietly until David broke the silence to ask about the topic Ilya had carefully been trying to avoid all dinner.

‘So, what did you get for Shane?’

Ilya blanched. ‘Uh...’

Shane had clearly inherited his lack of social awareness from his dad, because David didn’t seem to notice the cogs in his head whirring at a hundred miles an hour. ‘Do you think he’ll like the smoothie blender we’ve bought him? It’s not very original, but you know how he is...’

Yes, Ilya knew: Shane was a millionaire and also the least materialistic person he’d ever met, which meant he was a nightmare to shop for.

‘Yuna’s easy, I can just take her to a spa, but our son...’

Should Ilya take Shane to a spa? No, no one was as bad at relaxing as Shane Hollander.

‘Uh, actually, I haven’t thought about what to buy him yet. Do you think Yuna will have any ideas?’

Ilya didn’t blame David for his terrible job at trying to hide his surprise at his confession. It was, after all, nine in the evening on Christmas Eve’s Eve.

‘Why don’t you buy it with her yourself? I’m pretty sure she had some last-minute Christmas shopping to do tomorrow morning.’

Highly unlikely, he loved Yuna, but jumping off a cliff was more appealing to him than doing high-stress last-minute shopping with his mother in law.

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Nevertheless, because life never turned out fully the way he wanted to, Ilya found himself, at ten in the morning on December 24th, shopping with his mother-in-law in what seemed to him to be the most chaotic shopping mall in the city. Despite having spent, at this point, almost half of his life living outside of Russia, he was pretty sure he’d never grow used to the sheer absurdity of shopping malls.

Yuna had somehow roped him into going present shopping with her, which in the end, he’d been trying to convince himself, worked just as well for him, since he had no clue what to gift Shane this year and he figured she might provide some sort of insight. She, on the other hand, was only missing the presents for boring sisters-in-law whose names Ilya couldn’t, for the life of him, remember, because each of Shane’s relatives was even more boring than the previous.

‘We could go to Bath & Body Works, no? They’d like that, surely?’

Ilya only knew what Bath & Body Works was thanks to Jackie’s and Hayden’s children’s matching Disney princess cologne kits, so he wasn’t entirely sure if it was the place to go to

when buying gifts meant for middle-aged women.

‘Sure,’ he said instead.

The store was chaotic, a flurry of mothers and girls spritzing cologne from plasticky bottles and making all 6 foot 3 of Ilya dizzy with it. Ilya who, by the looks of it, was the only grown man in the shop.

‘What do you think Carol would like, the forest pine or the toasted marshmallow-scented candle? Oh, and what about this cranberry orange one? Or maybe Deborah would prefer that one? Should I get them the matching body wash with it?’

Ilya had no clue who either of these women were or what any of those words meant.

‘Uh, yes, yes, you should.’

He’d gifted Anya three brand-new best-of-the-line squeaky toys, a day at the dog salon, head massage and nail trim included, and a set of satin pastel-coloured bows that would match perfectly with the collars he’d bought her for her adoption-day anniversary.

‘But maybe Bath & Body Works is a bit cheap, don’t you think?’

‘Yes, I think,’ but Yuna didn’t seem to be listening to him.

‘I should probably make more of an effort, since they’re my husband’s sisters after all, but I’m so busy, and it’s not like shopping for David is that easy after so many years together...’ she kept rambling, but Ilya was only half-paying attention to her as she dragged him into a higher-end clothing store.

Because damn if he didn’t know how difficult it was to shop for your husband, except that he didn’t even have the excuse of all the years of marriage: either Shane was an incredibly difficult person to shop for or Ilya was a terrible husband who didn’t truly know his partner. He fucking hoped it wasn’t that, and yet the nagging voice at the back of his mind...

‘What do you think of this purse? I think Kathy would love it, it matches with this beautiful silk scarf she wears all the time—’

‘Uh, yes, is very beautiful. Look, it’s very hot in here, I’m just going to go outside for ten minutes, okay?’ And he knew he’d feel bad about being so rude to Yuna afterwards, but he also knew he might cause someone bodily harm if he stayed a single minute more under those obnoxiously bright lights and was forced to listen to *Last Christmas* one more time.

He took the back emergency staircase to avoid the crowd and ended up in an alleyway. He let his head rest against the the building wall and cursed the day he decided to quit smoking and actually went through with it.

He really, really, really needed to find Shane a perfect Christmas present.

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Shane must've sensed that Ilya was in a bit of a funk, because the second he implied he was going to take a nap, he disappeared into the garage only to emerge shortly after holding two pairs of the recreational skates they rarely used and were pretty sure had actually been gifted to them.

'Come on, let's go ice skating!,' he said with a smile that was just on the wrong side of manic.

Ilya felt his Shane-hockey senses twitch: 'You want to go ice skating? For fun? No stick to handle? No puck to hit?,' he asked incredulously, 'Who are you and what have you done to my husband?'

He didn't want to imagine exactly how bummed-out he must've looked after arriving from shopping with Yuna for Shane to even come up with this idea.

'Stop teasing, I mean it: we can rediscover our love of skating and, I don't know, drink hot chocolate.'

'You mean I drink hot chocolate and you drink herbal tea.'

'Exactly.'

Ilya took his pair of skates from Shane's hands and wrapped an arm around his shoulder as he led him out the door. 'And here I thought you were generous enough to let me buy a pack of Marlboro Lights.'

The snowball Shane managed to hit him square in the face with served as protest enough.

Skating on the frozen river was one of Ilya's favorite winter activities, albeit one Shane didn't join him in all that often- however, he'd usually have no problem convincing the rest of the Centaurs to join him instead. Still, he was more than glad for some quality time with him.

Particularly, he was happy he got to show him off to unsuspecting Ottawa citizens, especially since Shane had been adamant about keeping PDA at work to a minimum.

'I swear, Rozanov, if you touch my ass once again...'

'You will do what? You can't forbid your depressed husband from touching your ass at Christmas.'

'You can't keep guilt tripping me into letting you grope me in public.'

Ilya couldn't resist: he gave his husband's ass a last squeeze before escaping as fast as he could. Speed had never been Shane's forte anyway.

It didn't last long anyway. One second, Shane's head was a speck in the far distance, the next he was colliding into Ilya's chest and nearly knocking over a small child in his effort to catch

up to him. He probably thought the way he had steadied himself by gripping Ilya's biceps was subtle.

Ilya didn't say anything about it the rest of the way.

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On the way home they stopped by the grocery store for the new festive edition ginger ale Shane had become obsessed with and the closest Ilya could find to real vodka to take to Christmas lunch at the Hollander's the following day. Next to the cash register, at 50% off (which could mean nothing good), was what Ilya could only describe as the epitome, the object of his desires, the christmassy apple of his eye—

‘We have to make gingerbread house on Christmas Eve.’

Shane turned to him, eyes wide in horror as they met the offending item. ‘No, Ilya. It probably expired two weeks ago.’

‘Come on, it can be early present for me.’ It came with white, red and green icing, all sorts of gumdrops, sugar snowflakes, and Ilya needed it immediately.

Shane looked at the ingredients list quizzically: ‘Anya might actually have a dog stroke if she accidentally eats it.’

‘She will not have time to get her paws on it. Don't worry, I will eat it for dessert first.’

‘Absolutely not, I can't risk my husband having a heart attack himself on Christmas Eve. It's the day when hospitals are the most full.’

Ilya took the box and whacked him gently on the head with it. ‘We are taking it.’

Despite what Shane had to say about it in the supermarket, he could barely contain his borderline-cheesy smile when Ilya presented him with the final product.

‘Had to do some damage control,’ he explained, pointing to the caved-in roof, ‘but other than that, it looks very cozy, no? And look, here is you and me— unfortunately, there is no gingerbread version of a dog, so let's hope Anya isn't offended.’ Shane inspected the house closely, and Ilya hoped he could tell that the one holding the mini candy cane was himself.

It suddenly hit him: was thirty-one too old to be this interested in making gingerbread houses? Would Shane grow tired of having an adult husband who bordered more on child than childlike wonder?

Shane plucked gingerbread Ilya's head, gave it a tentative bite, didn't look too convinced and took human Ilya's hand instead. ‘It's getting late, and I was thinking about this early present I wanted to give you...’

Whatever worries Ilya had, they soon melted away: he had more important matter at hand at the moment.

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Ilya woke up early on Christmas Day to Anya licking his face; Shane was, for once, fast asleep beside him. He got up quietly and went to the kitchen to feed her her special treat and fix himself coffee. Maybe Shane wouldn't be opposed to having pancakes for breakfast if he brought them to him in bed as a surprise.

Maybe he wouldn't notice the lack of actual present.

It wasn't like he hadn't thought about it, though he only seemed to remember every time he wasn't with Shane which, thankfully for him, wasn't very often. On the flip side: maybe admitting that his presence was so enveloping he couldn't think of anything else would be more romantic than whatever present he could scrap together at this point.

Who was he kidding?

Instead of staying inside and freaking out silently with Anya, he decided to take her out on her morning walk a little earlier than usual. They took a detour from their typical stroll along the riverside and started for the forest path that ran the opposite way. There was no one else at that time of day, only the sound of the occasional bird chirping or tree branch swishing could be heard over Anya playing fetch with a stray wooden stick he'd found on the ground.

They kept up their walk until they arrived at a clearing not too far along the path, where Ilya left Anya to gnaw at her stick while he sat down on a fallen trunk and tried not to miss having a cigarette too badly.

He deemed ten minutes long enough before starting to head back home until he heard a sound that stopped him in his tracks: clearly not human, too feeble to belong to a wild animal, yet persistent enough to catch his attention.

'Where do you think that comes from, Anya?' he asked her, but it seemed she was too busy chasing a squirrel to notice anything.

He retraced the sound to a bush—honeysuckle? a little off the cleared path and crouched down, brushing some of the snow off it, only to listen to the weakest, most pathetic meow he'd ever heard.

He had no clue how a kitten that small could have survived a night out in the cold, nor how it could have even made it that far into the forest, but none of that mattered at the moment. He lifted it gently, unwrapped his scarf and did his best to start warming it up, holding it close to his chest and hoping that his parka and wooly sweater were enough to keep it safe the rest of the walk home.

Anya immediately sensed his urgency and matched his brisk pace, not without trying to peek at her new friend.

They must've been gone longer than he thought, because as soon as he walked through the front door Shane was in the kitchen, chopping kale like it was another average Thursday morning. Like Ilya wasn't about to change his life.

'Shane! Move! Stop with the fucking vegetables at eight in the morning, I have present that will change your life forever,' he announced, and promptly unzipped his coat to reveal the kitten, who at some point had stopped shivering and whose heart was beating at a less alarming rate.

Shane's eyes were as wide as saucers as he took the scene in.

'You wake up earlier than me one day and suddenly we have a cat? What the hell, Ilya?'

The way he was making grabby hands at the snuggled up kitten said the opposite.

Ilya handed it to him carefully. He would have been jealous of the instant heart eyes Shane gave it if it wasn't so damn adorable. 'You've fallen in love with the cat faster than with me.'

Shane rolled his eyes. 'Be careful, you have some competition now,' he said before booping the kitten's nose.

'Merry Christmas, Shane,' he answered, but his husband was too enraptured with the new addition to their family to say it back.

Ilya wouldn't have it any other way.

End Notes

to me, the true meaning of christmas can only be revealed through shane hollander becoming a cat dad.

title taken from [this](#) illustration. it made me think of ilya in the long game

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