

So, you like New Yorker?

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So, you like New Yorker?

by [oxfordcommachameleon](#)

Summary

“So,” Ilya cleared his throat, the word sounding too loud in the stillness. “Shane tells me you like New Yorker.”

Shane’s dad looked at him from where he was rinsing out a glass in the sink, visibly surprised that Ilya had spoken first.

“Oh. Yes,” he said after a beat. “I like to read in the mornings. I love the crossword. Do you read The New Yorker too?”

“No.”

“Oh.”

or

While Shane is outside with his mother, Ilya finds unexpected understanding and warmth in a quiet kitchen conversation with the man who helped raised the boy he loves.

Notes

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

Shane had just left to go outside with his mom, cardigan in hand and heart on his sleeve. And that meant that he left Ilya.

Alone.

With Shane's dad.

Who had walked in on them making out less than an hour ago.

The cottage, once loud and warm and full of Shane, felt unbearably quiet now. The kind of silence that pressed in on Ilya's ears until he was acutely aware of every sound--of the hum of the refrigerator, the ticking clock on the wall, the faint wind rattling against the windows.

Ilya shifted in his seat, suddenly unsure what to do with his hands. Normally they would be tangled in Shane's hair, or resting comfortably on his knee, or around a cold glass of vodka. Now they just sat uselessly in his lap.

"So," Ilya cleared his throat, the word sounding too loud in the stillness. "Shane tells me you like New Yorker."

Shane's dad looked at him from where he was rinsing out a glass in the sink, visibly surprised that Ilya had spoken first.

"Oh. Yes," he said after a beat. "I like to read in the mornings. I love the crossword. Do you read The New Yorker too?"

"No."

"Oh."

And there it was again, that suffocating silence.

Ilya winced internally. Smooth, Rozanov. Very charming.

"The pasta was very good, Mr. Hollander," Ilya started, grasping at the first safe thing he could think of. "Very good." And it's not like he was lying, the pasta really was *very* good.

David brightened. "Thank you! I actually got the recipe from The New Yorker," he added with a small laugh.

"Ah," Ilya nodded. "You will have to send me recipe, da? Shane only knows to cook... gross healthy food."

David laughed, real and warm this time. "Yeah, he gets that whole 'macrodiet' thing from his mother. Professional sports and all that." He paused, lowering his voice conspiratorially.

"But, and don't tell Yuna this, I think I'd rather eat pasta than play hockey."

Ilya smiled despite himself. “Yes. Pasta always wins.” Both men chuckled at that, the awkward tension that was in the air before slowly dissipating.

“Shane tells me you play hockey for some town--McGrill?”

David chuckled, “McGill, actually. And yeah, but that was a long time ago, and I was nowhere near as good as Shane. Or you.”

“Ah,” Ilya said, genuinely flustered. “Thank you Mr. Hollander--”

“Please, Ilya,” he gently interrupted. “Call me David.”

Ilya hesitated.

“After everything you’ve done for Shane,” David continued, turning fully toward him now, “the fact that you’ve been with him for all these years, that he wasn’t alone, that he had *you*. I think we’re past the point of formalities.”

Something tight loosened in Ilya’s chest.

“Thank you, Mr- David. And... do not thank me for being with Shane. If anything *I* should be thanking him.” He swallowed. “Otherwise I would have been the alone one. Shane has both of you. He has friends. Even if one of them is idiot and worst hockey player in MHL.”

David smiled knowingly. “I’m guessing that would be Hayden.”

“Yes,” Ilya said immediately. “Terrible.”

David hesitated before asking, “What about your parents?”

“Dead,” Ilya said simply. “Both of them.”

David’s face fell. “I’m so sorry, Ilya. I knew about your father, but I didn’t realize that your mother--”

“Is okay,” Ilya said softly. “Is all in past now.”

It wasn’t, really. But he didn’t need to say that.

“Did either of them know that you’re... y’know?”

“Bisexual?” Ilya supplied. “No. My dad was police. Old-fashion. He would not approve.” His voice faltered slightly. “But my mother, I think she would love Shane.”

He blinked rapidly, tears threatening like they always did when he spoke about her.

“Sometimes,” Ilya continued quietly, “I... I believe my mother sent Shane to me. Because he is like... perfect angel in my life. He knows me better than anyone ever will. And he protects me from all the bad.” His voice dropped to almost nothing. “Protects me from myself.”

They both sat in silence, but this time it wasn't heavy and awkward. It was comforting, understanding.

David broke it gently. "Did you mean what you said? About moving to Ottawa for Shane? You would really give up everything for him?"

"I am not giving up everything," Ilya replied without hesitation. "Shane *is* everything. I would retire from hockey if he ask me to."

David studied him closely. "You love him more than hockey?"

"I love him more than anything."

The words hung in the air, fragile and unguarded. Ilya realized, distantly, that he didn't even hesitate before saying them. That alone felt like a small miracle.

David Hollander did not look shocked. If anything, he looked... relieved. He leaned back slightly in his chair, hands folded over his stomach, considering Ilya with a careful kind of warmth that made Ilya's chest tighten.

"That's good," David said finally. "That's exactly what I was hoping you'd say."

Ilya blinked. "You were?"

David nodded. "I've watched Shane love hockey his entire life. I've watched him choose it over parties, over sleep, over vacations. I've also watched it chew him up when things went wrong. When he got injured. When he doubted himself." He smiled faintly. "I was always worried he'd end up loving it more than anything else in the world."

"And now?" Ilya asked, quietly.

"And now," David said, "he loves you."

Ilya's throat closed unexpectedly. He reached for his water glass just to give his hands something to do, even though he didn't drink.

"He is very... big-hearted," Ilya said instead, voice rougher than he meant it to be. "Sometimes too much. He worries about everyone. About me. About team. About you and Yuna. About stupid things like if I ate enough vegetables."

David laughed. "Oh, he absolutely got that from his mother."

"He pretends to be annoying," Ilya continued, a small smile tugging at his mouth. "But he is very brave. He makes hard choices. He stays even when it hurts."

David's gaze softened further. "He's always been like that. Even as a kid. He once broke his wrist trying to help a neighbor's dog get unstuck from a fence."

Ilya snorted despite himself. "Yes. That sounds like Shane."

They shared a quiet, fond moment, both thinking about the boy they loved at different ages.

David cleared his throat. "You know, when I walked in earlier--"

Ilya stiffened instinctively. He had been waiting for this. Bracing for it, really.

"—and saw you two," David continued, "I wasn't angry. Or upset. Mostly I was just startled. I mean, it's not every day you find out that your son is gay *and* in love with his rival who you thought he hated. But then I was... grateful."

"Grateful?" Ilya echoed.

"That my son has someone who looks at him the way you do," David said simply. "Someone who makes him feel safe enough to be himself. Shane's always been sensitive about how people see him. Hockey doesn't exactly encourage that."

Ilya nodded. He knew that better than anyone.

"I worry, though," David admitted, "about how the world will treat him. About how the league will treat him. About how you'll both survive that pressure."

"We are... stubborn," Ilya offered. "It helps."

David smiled. "I can see that."

Another pause. Comfortable again. Warm.

"May I ask you something, Ilya?" David said.

"Yes."

"What happens when hockey ends?"

Ilya didn't need to think about it. He never had.

"Then Shane and I wake up together," he said simply. "We eat breakfast. He complains about snow and icy road. I complain about stupid Canadian wolf birds. He pretends he does not like my coffee but drinks it anyway. We argue about what movie to watch but I let him choose always because I can never win argument against him. We visit here and pretend Shane does not still sleep in when he is home."

David laughed quietly. "He absolutely still does."

"Hockey is important," Ilya added. "But it is not life. Shane is life."

David nodded slowly, eyes a little shiny now. "I think my wife would like you very much."

"I hope so," Ilya said earnestly. "I want her to like me. I want whole family."

"You already have one," David said gently. "You're sitting in it."

Shane's voice floated in from the porch, bright and familiar. "It is *not* cold enough for you to steal my cardigan, Mom--"

They stopped short when they stepped inside, eyes flicking between the two of them.

Ilya straightened automatically, posture stiffening like he'd been caught doing something suspicious instead of emotionally bonding with Shane's father.

Yuna squinted. "Why do you both look like you just cried?"

"We didn't," David said immediately.

"We did not," Ilya echoed, just as quickly.

Shane's eyes narrowed further. "That was the least convincing thing either of you have ever said."

Ilya stood and crossed the room in three steps, hands sliding around Shane's waist as he leaned in close. "We were just... talking."

"About what?"

"Important man things," Ilya said solemnly, then pressed a quick kiss to Shane's temple. "Like pasta."

Shane laughed, tension easing from his shoulders as he leaned into him. "You're both weird."

"He's right, you know. It was very important," David stood as well, clapping a hand on Ilya's shoulder as he passed. "And manly."

Ilya smiled, warm and unguarded, and for the first time since his mother died, he felt completely at home.

End Notes

I CAN'T BELIEVE THE SEASON IS OVER I MISS THEM ALREADY 😭
anyways i couldn't stop thinking about what ilya and david were doing while shane was
talking to yuna so here's the fic that's been infecting my brain for the past day
love u all and pls comment and leave kudos it means more than u think!!!!
and follow me on tumblr where i post a lot more now!! you can find me
@lovedheronthecoast see u there!!!
and make sure to check out my other fics bc i have a lot more hollanov content for u :P
BYEEEE

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