

I Know You by Your Heart

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I Know You by Your Heart

by [Ravens_Words](#)

Summary

Five people get a glimpse of Ilya Rozanov and the one person who has seen him all along.

Notes

Hi, hello!

New fandom, new obsession, new nervous breakdowns over “are they in character?” “Would they do this?” “Is this realistic enough?” “DOES HE SOUND RUSSIAN ENOUGH?”

Please proceed and enjoy.

As the cliché goes, english is my second language, so any mistakes are my own and try to look the other way if you find them please.

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

Chapter 1: Hayden

Hayden has an infant screaming bloody murder in his ear and a toddler clinging to his leg when his best friend answers the phone on the second ring. “Shane-“

“Jesus, Hayd, what’s going on?”

“Listen, the twins have a doctor appointment Jackie and I need to take them to and the babysitter canceled last minute.” He grimaces as Amber’s cries somehow turn up a notch, “I hate to do this, man, but can you look after Amber and Arthur? It’ll only be like one hour, two, tops.”

“Uh-“ there’s a rustle, then the line is quiet and Hayden realizes he’s been put on mute. *“Can I bring someone with me?”*

Hayden frowns, then shrugs. “Sure, man, yeah.”

“Oh, *hell* no.”

“Hello to you, too, Pike,” Ilya *fucking* Rozanov says with a too bright grin and a wave. He stands just behind Shane, and Hayden has to admit it’s a smart move because he’s this close to decking him.

“Shane,” Hayden says through gritted teeth, “kitchen. *Now*.”

Rozanov raises an eyebrow, turns to Shane. “You let him talk like that, Captain?”

His best friend just rolls his eyes, ignoring him. The familiarity in this small moment strikes Hayden as off but he lets it go in favor of storming off into the house.

“Ilya Rozanov? Really?”

Shane hovers awkwardly by the door before he comes to lean on the counter. “I told you about the charity, Hayden.”

“Not really,” he counters, “you just said that you and Rozanov are working on it, not that you’re somehow a package deal now?”

Shane turns an interesting shade of red. “We’re not a package deal! We had a meeting set up. Then you called and- look, we thought we’d just move the meeting to your house, that’s all.”

Hayden can’t help it. He laughs.

“What? What’s so funny?”

“You want to have a meeting while babysitting an infant and a toddler? Good luck with that, buddy.”

Shane huffs. “Do you want us to babysit your kids or not?”

He groans. “I can’t believe I’m about to let that heathen babysit my babies.”

When they eventually make it out of the kitchen, said heathen has somehow managed to charm his wife and his two youngest children. In the span of ten minutes.

He hates him.

“I hate him.”

Jackie laughs at him. “He’s not so bad. The kids seem to like him.”

“They don’t know any better.”

She hums, waving out the car window at their babies, their friend, and his-*whatever*.

The last thing he sees is Ilya *fucking* Rozanov bouncing his baby girl in his arms as she giggles, while his best friend holds his son’s hand and watches on fondly.

When they get back, the house is quiet. Jackie beats him to the living room by a few seconds, so when he enters, she’s got a hand on her mouth and her phone in the other. “This is adorable,” his wife murmurs, grinning.

He has to admit she’s kind of right. Rozanov is sitting on one end of the couch, feet on the coffee table. He’s got Amber on his chest and Arthur curled into his side. Hayden’s best friend is curled up beside them.

Hayden walks over and can’t resist kicking at Rozanov’s feet. They hit the floor with a thud just as Jackie hits him with the back of her hand. He rubs at his chest and watches Rozanov jolt awake, eyes flying open and quickly scanning the room. His movement is thankfully minuscule and doesn’t wake the kids.

“Pike.”

“Rozanov.”

“How were they?” Jackie asks, setting her purse down on the coffee table. “Hope they weren’t too much trouble.”

He shakes his head. “Were perfect angels.”

“Thank you for doing this, Ilya,” his wife says softly, sincerely.

Ilya. His wife is on a first name basis with Ilya *fucking* Rozanov.

This is his worst nightmare.

“Was fun.” Rozanov’s lips quirk in a smile that’s different than the ones Hayden’s usually on the receiving end of. He looks down at Amber, then Arthur. His smile disappears when his eyes land on Hayden’s best friend, but there’s something soft in the way he looks at him. It’s gone before Hayden can identify it.

He gets up, deftly maneuvering Arthur so he lays him down on the couch while still holding his sleeping daughter. It looks like he’s done this before. “Her bedroom?”

“I’ll show you,” Jackie volunteers. Rozanov follows her without a word, and Hayden is left with his sleeping son and best friend. He shakes Shane’s shoulder. “Buddy. Hey, Shane.”

Shane grumbles and moves away from his hand. He mumbles something then, “*stop.*”

“Shane,” Hayden snaps, a little too loudly.

Shane’s eyes snap open, then narrow. “The hell?”

“Morning sunshine.”

“Morning?” His eyes widen. “Did we sleep-“

Hayden bursts out laughing. “No, you did not sleep the whole day away, stupid. Come on, get up.”

“Hey, where’s I-Rozanov?”

Hayden looks at his best friend over his shoulder. “Putting Amber down for her nap. Jackie’s with him.”

When Hayden finishes setting up the coffee machine, he turns around to find his best friend’s head turned toward the living room.

“So, what was he like?” At Shane’s confused look, he elaborates, “Rozanov. What was he like with the kids?”

A soft smile. A faint blush. *Oh, god, is this what I think it is?*

“Fun. They loved him.”

Do you?

“Baby, where are you?!”

Shane rolls his eyes at Jackie’s antics. Hayden grins. “In here!”

Rozanov comes in, followed by his wife. Jackie immediately slips into Hayden’s arms, and Rozanov goes to stand stiffly beside Shane. “Ready?”

Shane nods, stifling a yawn. “Yeah.”

“Ruby, Jade, come say bye to Uncle Shane and Ilya,” Jackie calls out, and it only takes a few minutes for them to hear the patter of small feet, long enough for them to say their own goodbyes- Shane gets a hug from both Hayden and Jackie, while Rozanov gets a handshake from him and a hug from his wife that has Hayden side-eyeing her.

His little terrors come tearing down the hall and run straight into Shane’s legs, making him laugh as he bends down to hug them both at the same time. Then it’s Rozanov’s turn.

He crouches down to their level and holds out his hands patiently. He’s not phased by their unblinking stares. “Hello, girls.”

Shane, Jackie and Hayden hold their breath. Hayden doesn’t use the word terrors to describe the twins lightly. His daughters are ruthless, cutthroat-

Ruby giggles.

“You talk funny,” Jade says as she, too, giggles.

He fakes offense. “I do not!”

“Yes, you do!”

“No!”

“Yeah!”

He looks up at Shane. “Tell them I do not talk funny.”

Shane shrugs helplessly. “You kinda do.”

He gasps. “Betrayed by my own-friend,” he stumbles over the word a little, but Hayden doesn’t think much of it until he gets a look at Shane’s face- the terror is only there for a second, but Hayden sees it. He sees it and it breaks him.

Rozanov’s attention is back on Ruby and Jade. He wiggles his hands and they each take one. He shakes them, a little too vigorously, but the girls absolutely love it.

When he gets up, everyone, but most of all Rozanov, is surprised when the twins hug his legs tightly.

“Will you come back?”

It’s an innocent question, and the way Rozanov very pointedly doesn’t look at anyone in the room is telling. “Maybe,” he says honestly, then looks at Hayden, shit eating grin back on full display, “if your daddy asks nicely.”

The twins turn their attention onto him immediately.

Jackie walks his best friend and *his* friend to the door. “Thanks again for doing this, you guys.”

“You’re welcome.”

Just before they leave, he hears Rozanov tell his wife, “you have wonderful children.”

At least they can agree on one thing.

Chapter 2: Rose

Chapter Notes

Thank you to all who have left comments and kudos, you truly made my day!!
Two chapters in a day!! I am on FIRE (fingers crossed this lasts, lol)

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

“Dinner at your place?”

Shane splutters and looks down at her incredulously. “You dragged me to that piece of shit place, and now you want me to cook you dinner?”

“Well, I’m not a very a good cook,” she exclaims, “and your apartment is closer.”

He raises an eyebrow, waiting her out.

“And the only thing I have in my fridge is an expired carton of milk.”

He grins, smug. “Fine, let’s go. Anything you have in mind?”

“I was thinking chicken parmesan?”

He lights up. “I can definitely do that, it’s I-“ he coughs, then continues after a second, “it’s my dad’s favorite. My mom makes it all the time.”

“Yeah?” She interlocks their arms together, “she taught you how to make it?”

He nods. Any other time, he would’ve elaborated, told her a story, talked some more. Instead, he’s quiet the whole walk back to his apartment, obviously somewhere else entirely.

Shane unlocks the door and Rose distractedly follows after him. Which is how she finds herself stumbling back a couple of steps after she literally walks into his back. “Ow,” she mutters, rubbing her forehead, “Shane, what the hell?”

He’s still frozen as she sidesteps him. When she takes a look at the man standing by the coffee table, she understands why Shane reacted the way he did.

“Uh, Shane?” she whispers, but it’s probably a little too loud to be considered that, “is that Ilya Rozanov in your living room or am I hallucinating?”

Shane seems to be malfunctioning. He splutters, keys dangling in his lax fingers and falling to the floor. The clatter seems to jolt him out of his stupor and he bends down to pick them

up. Ilya Rozanov watches him move with an impassive expression that's a little scary, especially when that piercing blue stare is then directed at her. He doesn't linger much though, looking her up and down with disinterest before he turns his attention back to Shane. "Hollander," he greets, moving from behind the coffee table and offering Shane a hand.

Her friend takes it awkwardly, and their touch lingers just a second too long. "Door man let me in," he says gruffly, probably answering the question on both her and Shane's mind. "I brought file," he explains as he grabs his jacket, "for charity."

"Stay," Shane blurts out. Ilya Rozanov- and she should really stop referring to the man by his full name in her head- freezes, arms halfway into his jacket. Something passes between them, the two men sharing a look she can't identify. Blue eyes flicker to her, for just a second, then back to Shane, who nods. "Stay. I'm making chicken parmesan."

The other man takes off his jacket slowly. His eyes don't meet hers once.

Both Rose and Ilya help Shane make dinner. Ilya more so than Rose. In fact, half an hour in, Shane steers her out of the kitchen by the shoulders. She laughs and settles in a dining chair, wine glass in her hand and her eyes tracking the two men. There is something interesting about the way the two of them share the space. It's comfortable, but also- *controlled*? More than once, one of them will reach out a hand only to pull it back abruptly, or pretend to be reaching for a pot or a spoon. They don't look at each other, not even once. At one point, Ilya hands Shane a spoon before he manages to ask him, receiving an absentminded "thanks" for it.

Rose almost drops her glass. There is no file for the charity, and she doubts the doorman let Ilya Rozanov in.

"So, how did this," she points between them, "come to be?"

Shane hesitates, and shares a small brief look with Ilya who shrugs. "After All-Star game Shane would not stop bothering me--"

Shane huffs and rolls his eyes, "now that's a damn lie, Ilya."

Shane.

Ilya.

Do they realize they're doing it, she wonders? All night, they've been restrained, controlled, barely able to look at each other, but now? Now it's like they've only got eyes for each other. The contrast is staggering to see.

Ilya takes a step forward towards Shane, then freezes. Slowly, they retreat back into the shell they broke out of just a few minutes ago. Rose, her heart breaking for her friend, lets them.

Rose offers to do the dishes, since she has been free loading the whole night. Shane, to her surprise, doesn't need much convincing. At some point, both he and Ilya disappear, and she pretends not to notice when they come back with rumpled shirts and messy hair.

"Rose, I'm gonna walk Rozanov out."

She catches a glimpse of Ilya's face, right before they leave- the tightly clenched jaw, the there one second, gone the next longing he manages to hide all too well when anyone is looking. Rose wonders if Shane sees it too, wonders if he knows the effect he has on the other man.

When Shane gets back, he's all nervous energy and unable to sit still. He also seems incapable of looking her in the eye. "Shane."

"Yeah," he answers distractedly, scrubbing furiously at a nonexistent stain on the countertop.

She puts her hand on top of his. "Feel free to tell me to it's none of my business, but-" she takes a deep breath, "how long have you been in love with Ilya Rozanov?"

He lets out a breathy laugh and shakes his head. "How do you *do* that?"

She shrugs. "So?"

"I don't know," he says softly, smiling. It takes her back to that night in the restaurant, when she'd asked him if it was different with a guy, if it'd been better. She wonders if he'd been thinking about Ilya then, too. "There's not just one moment I can pinpoint, you know? I just know that I can't imagine my life without him now."

"Does he make you happy?"

Shane nods. "He does."

"Good. You deserve that, Shane."

He hugs her. "Thank you," he mumbles into her shoulder.

She tightens her arms around him. "Can I ask you one more thing?"

He tenses in her arms but doesn't pull away. "Sure."

"Do you have a plan?"

He pulls away. Sighs. "Keep doing what we're doing until we retire. Then," he takes a breath here, smiles that Ilya smile, complete with tears in his eyes, "probably get married, get a dog, have a couple of kids."

Rose has to work really hard to keep her emotions in check. Her eyes well with tears against her will and she flings her arms around his neck. "You deserve the world, Shane Hollander."

Chapter End Notes

Next Up: Cliff Marlow

I hope I got Rose's voice right. I am a nervous wreck about this chapter.

Comments? Kudos? PLEASE GIVE EM TO ME THEY ARE MY LIFE LINE.

Chapter 3: Marlow

Chapter Notes

Third Chapter, in less than a day, this is all so new for me I don't know who I am anymore lol.

Anyway, this is the Cliff chapter. I gotta admit I do not know remember much abt him from the books except he's Ily's bff and in the show he's just... there. And gave Shane a concussion. So be warned this is just me making up stuff as I go lol (probably why this chapter is so short)

Without further ado, go on and read)

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

“You’re leaving Boston?”

“Hello to you, Marlow,” he says flippantly, recovering from the surprise remarkably well.

“Don’t give me that, Roz. I had to find out from coach? Why the hell didn’t *you* tell me? Why didn’t you tell the team?”

Roz doesn’t say anything, just opens the door further, a silent invite into his home. Cliff shoulders his way in.

“Marlow-“

“You should’ve told me, Rozy.”

“I-“

“I would’ve told you,” he spits out, “the second I decided, you would’ve been the first to know.”

His best friend takes a deep breath, looks away.

“I thought I was your friend, man.”

The words land like a physical blow, Cliff can tell they hurt, but this is Roz he’s talking to. He just brushes it off like it’s nothing, blows out a breath through his nose. “You are.”

“Then why didn’t you tell me?”

“I was going to,” Roz exclaims, hands thrown up in defeat. “Tomorrow, at practice. I told coach I would. He beat me I suppose,” he says bitterly.

Cliff feels his anger deplete slowly. He tries to hold onto it, desperately, but he's unable to. Especially when he looks, really looks, and sees the toll all of this seems to have taken on the other man.

He rubs a hand down his face. "I need a drink," he demands.

It breaks the tension, just a little, and Roz laughs. "Just one?"

Cliff doesn't wait for him to get up to get them their drinks. He heads for the kitchen himself, opens the fridge and peeks in- his eyebrows shoot up in surprise as he slowly takes out a can of coke and a can of beer then closes the fridge with his foot. "Since when do you drink ginger ale, huh?" he asks him as he passes over the can of coke and opens the beer.

"I like it."

"No, you don't."

"Yes, I do."

"No," he counters, looking him in the eye, "you don't. You hate ginger. The last time you drank ginger ale you gagged and nearly threw up."

Roz pulls a disgusted face, but Cliff only shrugs and continues to stare unblinkingly at him. "Just drink your beer, Marlow."

"So, are we gonna talk about it?"

"Talk about what?"

"Rozy, come on, man."

He sighs. "My contract ends next season."

"And you don't want to re-sign with Boston because-?"

"Maybe they don't want me, Marlow, ever think about that?"

He rolls his eyes. "Oh, please. Like anyone would believe that bullshit."

Roz's hand tightens on his coke can. "I cannot stay here, Marlow."

"Thought about where you want to go?"

He nods.

"And?"

"Ottawa Centaurs."

Cliff winces. “That is-“ he tries to choose a word carefully, “certainly a choice.”

His captain huffs out a laugh. “I know.”

They nurse their drinks in silence for a few beats, then- “This is about Jane, isn’t it?”

His captain’s head swivels towards him so sharply Cliff is sure he heard his neck crack. His eyes are dark, shoulders taught with tension. “What did you say?”

“Jane? Your montreal girl?”

He relaxes, just a little, but some of the tension lingers. “Yes. Jane.”

Cliff sits with this information for a couple of minutes, lets the reality of it sink in, then- “I knew you loved her, man! I *so* called it.”

Rozanov isn’t expecting this reaction, if his furrowed brows are an indication. “What?”

“I called you out on it, remember? Told you you were blushing when you were texting her. Man, Roz, who would’ve thought you’d be settling down, huh?” The other man blushes, head ducked down as he shakes it in futile denial. He’s happy, though. Underneath the anxiety and the tiredness and the uncertainty, there’s a contentedness Cliff has never seen in Roz before. Whoever this Jane is, she’s good to his friend.

“Hey, I’m happy for you, man. I’m gonna miss you like hell on the ice, but I’m happy for you.”

Roz’s eyes fill with tears. He won’t let them fall, Cliff knows, but still- seeing his captain’s tears makes him tear up as well. “Aw, fuck, cap.” He lunges across the minimal space between them and crashes into the other man in a tight hug. “Don’t be a stranger, okay?”

“What?” He asks, russian accent heavy and his voice thick with tears and obvious confusion.

Cliff laughs. “I mean- just, don’t forget about me, okay? Keep in touch, cap. And maybe bring her over some time? Introduce me to the girl who made you abandon *me*, your best friend-“

Roz shoves him off with a laugh. “Fuck off.”

“Hey, I’m serious. I want to meet her some day.”

Roz meets his eyes, looks like he wants to say something but then thinks better of it. “Some day.”

“And you better invite me to your wedding.”

An eye roll. “Alright.”

“I call dibs on best man.”

He gets a cushion to the face for his efforts.

They sit in silence for a few minutes, then- “Marlow?”

“Yeah?”

“Thank you.”

Chapter End Notes

Next Up: Mama Hollander (+ Hurt Ilya ++ Worried Shane +++ Angst)

Thank you to everyone who commented and WILL comment. I’m giving you a virtual kiss on the forehead.

Hope you enjoyed this one!!

Chapter 4: Yuna

Chapter Notes

Mama Hollander gets 4k because her relationship with Ilya is 2nd only to his relationship with Shane.

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

Yuna Hollander is already on the phone with the Ottawa Centaurs trainer the second the game play cuts to commercials.

He picks up on the second ring. “*Mrs. Hollander-*” he sighs, and she cuts him off before he begins his usual spiel.

“Anderson, save us both the time and energy and just tell me how the kid is.”

“*He’s fine,*” the man tells her shortly.

“And that’s your medical assessment?” Yuna asks, eyebrows raised skeptically. David hands her her purse and shows her he’s got the keys in his hands already. She smiles at him gratefully and follows. “That was a pretty brutal check.”

“*It was. But this is Rozanov we’re talking about. He can take a hit.*”

“Okay,” she blows out a breath, “thank you.”

Shane calls just as soon David starts the car. “*Mom?*” It’s whispered, cracked in the middle, fearful. “*Mom, he’s not answering.*”

“I talked to Anderson, Shane. Ilya’s fine, okay? We’re going to go see him right now.”

“*You-*” he stops, seems to take a shuddering breath, “*you are?*”

“Yeah, sweetie, dad and I are fifteen minutes away.”

“*Okay. Okay.*” He’s trying to calm himself down, breathing too even and loud, and all she wants to do is hold him in her arms and reassure him that everything will be okay. “*Mom, will you call me when you- I don’t know, when you see him? I know he’ll call me as soon as he gets the chance but- he’s gonna downplay it.*”

“I’ll call,” she promises, “as soon as I can, I’ll call you.”

“*Okay.*”

“We’ll take good care of him for you, Shane.”

There’s silence on the other end, then- “*thanks, mom.*”

When they get to the arena, it’s utter chaos. Many of the players are milling around, either with their families or with fans.

Yuna scans the parking lot for Ilya’s car and is relieved to find it’s still there. She points it out to David and they climb out of their car and walk over to his, waiting there for him. It takes a while, but after maybe fifteen minutes, he finally comes out. He’s walking slowly, beanie low over his forehead, with a few blonde curls sticking out from under it. Eyes on the ground, shoulders hunched awkwardly. His left arm is wrapped protectively around his midsection. He looks young like this.

When he’s only a few feet away, Yuna clears her throat. “Ilya,” she calls out, loud enough to grab his attention, but not enough to startle him- or so she thought.

The young man jumps at the sound of his name, obviously surprised, then winces, the sudden movement most likely causing him immense pain. She and David rush to his side. “Are you okay?” she asks, hands hovering uselessly at her side. “What did Anderson tell you?”

He stares at her for a second, lips parted in surprise, before he answers. “Bruised ribs. Will be fine to play next game.”

Yuna raises a skeptical eyebrow. “Anderson said that?”

He nods. “I asked. He said yes.”

“How are you feeling, Ilya?” David asks, leading the way back to Ilya’s car at a slow pace.

“Okay,” he answers, instinctively. Then at the twin stern looks he receives from her and David he amends, “sore. Anderson gave me meds. Will be better in no time.”

Yuna nods and shares a look with David. Here comes the hard part, she thinks and steels herself. “Would you like to come with us, Ilya?”

He stops walking, and his face does something complicated, blue eyes darting between her and David. He’s guarded, cautious when he smiles next and shakes his head. “I am fine, Mrs. Hollander, Mr. Hollander.”

“Yuna and David,” she corrects gently, with a small, sad smile.

He nods.

“Are you sure you don’t want to come with us?”

He shakes his head. “I will sleep this off. Will be fine.”

“Okay,” she says reluctantly. “We’ll see you at the next game then!”

“You will come?”

She softens, smiles. “Of course we will.”

“Thank you. And thank you both for coming today. You did not have to.”

“Of course we did,” David tells him.

Ilya nods. “Yuna?”

“Yeah?”

“Tell Shane I am fine,” he rolls his eyes, “he worries too much.”

Midway through the second period, Ilya takes a hit to his most likely still sore left side. Yuna is on her feet immediately, holding her breath as she waits for him to get up.

“Come on, Ilya, get up,” her husband mutters from beside her. She reaches down blindly for his hand and he takes it in his, immediately squeezing it in assurance. Ilya thankfully does get up. She sees him wave off his teammates’ concern, his coach’s.

He’s slower for the remaining half of the period. Still playing well- leagues better than most players on the ice with him right now, but Yuna has watched this boy play hockey for as long as she has watched her son. She knows what he’s capable of, and she knows that right now, he’s playing while he’s hurt.

During the first intermission, she tries to pester Anderson for details about Ilya’s condition but he just huffs and puffs and tells her how unprofessional this is and she’s pushing it. She calls Ilya instead.

“*Yuna?*”

“Yeah, hi. You okay?”

“*Yes.*”

She doesn’t know what to say to that. She doesn’t think calling him out on the lie would work out very well in her favor.

“Ilya, number 72, he’s slow on pivots. Force him wide.”

He huffs out a laugh. “*Alright. Thank you.*”

“Be careful. Be smart. And be safe out there, okay?”

“*Okay.*”

Yuna watches Ilya with bated breath. He's still slow but his movements are controlled, he's pushing through the pain. He scores twice, one of those thanks to her advice because she sees him scan the crowd for her seat and he salutes when he spots her.

Yuna can tell that his injury begins to take its toll on him late in the second period, and so can the other team because the hits become targeted. Ilya is resourceful, fast, and resilient, and he manages to outmaneuver some of them, but not all.

Third period is pure hell. The centaurs don't manage to score any more goals, Buffalos are in the lead with a score of 5-2, and they seem to have set their sights on Ilya. Hockey is a violent game, Yuna knows this, she's intimately familiar with this fact.

That knowledge does not keep the fear at bay whenever a player from the other team gets too close to Ilya, or when an elbow or a stick glances off his sore ribs and he has to stop to catch his breath. It definitely doesn't prepare her for the moment one player, in a clearly targeted move, heads straight for Ilya and dives his shoulder into his battered ribs, *hard*. Ilya slams into the boards, then falls to the ground and doesn't get back up.

Yuna jumps up to her feet, heart beating so loudly she can't hear whatever David is trying to tell her. She watches with bated breath.

Get up.

Get up.

Get up, Ilya.

The arena erupts into utter chaos. One of Ilya's teammates is kneeling beside him, while three others have thrown their gloves off and are in the process of beating the shit out of the opposition. Now, Yuna has never found pleasure in watching these fights, but this one is certainly an exception.

David leads her down the stairs, closer to the players' benches. Just in time to see Ilya get up, supported by two of the medical staff. David pulls her into his side and she sags into his embrace, eyes closed and breathing heavily. "Oh, thank god," she murmurs.

He's walking slow, breaths uneven. His face is red from exertion and even from this distance she can tell he's struggling to pull one full breath. She watches him like a hawk, so that's how she notices the stumble, the twist in his expression. "*Ilya?*" She calls out, knocking on the plexiglass, hoping someone will notice.

Ilya coughs. He swallows, and she can tell he's trying to stop a second cough from emerging but he's unable to. He coughs again. And again.

Then- then there's blood. On the ice, on his jersey, on his lips. His eyes, those blue, blue eyes meet hers, seconds before his body gives up on him and he collapses.

Yuna's instinct is to go to him. David's hand on her arm is the only thing holding her back, though. She tries to shake it off, tries to tell him to back off, but then he pulls her back to him

and whispers one word, “Shane.”

Shane.

If she goes to Ilya now, acts like a concerned, frantic mother, people will talk. About Ilya. About her son.

She has to stand by and watch this boy she has come to care about so deeply, the boy who loves her son with everything he has, and who is loved by her son just the same, hurt and not be able to do anything about it. “This isn’t fair,” she tells her husband bitterly.

“No,” he says sadly, “no it isn’t.”

She bullies the hospital information out of Anderson, and David gets them there in record time. Yuna races for the reception, asking the first nurse she sees, “Ilya Rozanov?”

The nurse raises an eyebrow. “Ma’am?”

“Ilya Rozanov? He was brought in maybe a few minutes ago, he was injured during a hockey match? Please I need to know how he is.”

The nurse frowns, checks something on the tablet in her hand. “Yes, there is an Ilya Rozanov in the system, but- I’m sorry, ma’am, are you a relative?”

Yuna swallows thickly. “No. No, I’m not.”

“Well, I can’t share any information regarding his condition with someone who isn’t a family member or listed as his next of kin.”

“Can you tell me who is? Maybe I can contact them?”

The nurse hesitates. Yuna decides to lay it on thick. “Please, he doesn’t have anyone here.”

She purses her lips but nods. A few clicks, then- “no one. There’s no one listed.” Yuna’s shoulders slump in defeat, eyes filling with tears, though she doesn’t let them fall. She turns away from the younger woman and falls into her husband’s waiting arms. “He’s gonna be okay, hon.” She nods into his chest, closing her eyes.

“Can you tell us anything about his condition?” David asks, and Yuna turns her head just enough to see the nurse shake her head, looking apologetic.

An hour passes with no news. She and David sit in the hard chairs of the waiting room, her hand held between both of his in his lap. She fiddles with her phone, anxiously awaiting Shane’s phone call. She knows he turns off his phone before games, knows he probably hasn’t heard what happened, and hopes to god the first time he hears about it is from the voice note she left for him and not from a news reel or from one of his teammates in the locker room.

“Anything from Shane?”

She shakes her head. Then she stands up. “I’m gonna check again.”

“Yuna-“

“I can’t just sit here and do nothing, David! It’s been an hour.”

He closes his eyes, stands up and walks over to her. Her husband places his hands on her upper arms and rubs gently, his touch bringing her a much needed comfort. “He’s all alone in there,” she tells him quietly, “and Shane- god, he’s going to be so devastated.”

“I know.”

“And what if he calls me right now, David? What do I say? I can’t even tell him that Ilya is okay, because I don’t know how he is!”

“He’s being evaluated right now,” the nurse from earlier tells them, interrupting Yuna’s imminent breakdown. They both turn to her eagerly. “I can’t go into details, but he’s in good hands, I promise.”

“Can you tell us when we might be able to know more? “

“It’ll be a few hours, I’m afraid.”

Yuna closes her eyes and turns away, needing the distance. She hears the nurse apologize quietly, hears David’s reassurance and finds herself unable to do anything more than focus on keeping her breathing regular.

Then her phone rings.

“How’s Shane?”

“How do you think?” she shakes her head, “he’s a mess. He’s on his way.”

“When will he be here?”

“Five hours.”

“Good. We’ll have some good news for him by then.”

“He won’t be able to come here, David,” she shudders, eyes closes, “Ilya’s team, the fans, the press. All eyes will be on this hospital. It’s a risk *we’re* here, let alone Shane.”

“Listen, let’s just take it one step at a time, okay? First, we make sure Ilya is okay, we’ll deal with the rest later, yeah?”

She takes a deep breath. “Yeah. Yeah, okay.”

Two hours have passed.

Three hours.

Shane sends her a text. *At the airport.*

Yuna's heart skips a beat. The nurse chooses that moment to come over to them, a soft smile on her lips. "He's stable. Recovering right now."

Yuna lets out a breath she's been holding since the moment she saw him collapse on the ice. "He's going to be okay?"

She purses her lips. "He's stable. We're moving him to a recovery room."

David hugs Yuna, obviously as relieved as she is. "Can we see him?"

"I'm sorry, we can't allow that since you're not--"

"Family," Yuna grumbles, "we get it. But is there any way?"

"As soon as he wakes up, if he's up for visitors, and he would like to see you. Then, you can see him."

"Okay, thank you."

Shane calls her ten minutes later, and Yuna answers after the first ring. "He's gonna be okay. He's gonna be okay, baby."

"Really?" She can hear that he's been crying, and all she wants to do is gather him up in her arms and make all the hurts go away. She settles for assuring him that the man he loves will be okay.

"Really. They won't tell us anything about his condition, but we know he's stable now, and he's in a recovery room. Once he wakes up, they'll ask him if he wants to see us, so we'll probably be in the room with him in about half an hour, an hour tops."

"Mom, I don't think I can come," he tells her shakily. "I'm--"

"It's okay. It's okay. You go home, I'll stay with him."

"Mom--" that's as far as he gets before he starts crying.

"I think one of us should go home," Yuna says softly.

David nods and stands up wordlessly. She looks up at him, a bit guilty, and he smiles. "It's okay. I'll take care of our boy. You take care of our--"

"Ilya-?"

“Yeah,” he says with a laugh, leaning down to kiss her forehead. “Call if you need anything.”

“I will.”

“Mrs. Hollander?”

Her head shoots up. “Yes?!”

“You can see him now.”

Yuna scrambles up off the waiting room chair, barely registering the pain in her back from sitting too long and follows the nurse.

When she enters the room, the first thing she notices is how small Ilya looks in the hospital bed. He’s got an oxygen cannula on, his breathing is still a bit labored and he looks really pale.

Yuna approaches the bed cautiously. “Hi, Ilya.”

“Yuna,” he says, voice rough and tired. He’s got a small smile playing on his lips, though. He looks genuinely happy to see her.

Without conscious thought, her hand finds its way to his cheek and she strokes it gently. “How are you feeling?”

He closes his eyes, brows furrowed. When he opens them, they’re filled with tears. “Ilya?”

The nurse comes closer. “Maybe it’s better if you step out? He should be resting.”

“No,” he snaps, then winces. “No, stay.”

“Okay,” she says soothingly to him, then pointedly drags the chair in the room closer to the bed and sits. “I’m not going anywhere, Ilya. You just rest now, okay?”

Ilya asks to be discharged as soon as the doctor finishes explaining his condition. Everyone in the room stares at him in horrified silence.

“Mr. Rozanov-“

“I do not want to be here-“

“I understand, sir, but your condition is serious. There’s a risk of your lung collapsing again, delayed bleeding, sudden respiratory failure-“

Yuna can tell Ilya is struggling with some of the medical terms, so she inserts herself between Ilya and the doctor. “Hey, what’s going on?”

“I hate hospital. I want to go home.”

She looks into his eyes, sees past the anger and the bravado, and catches a glimpse of a scared, lonely little boy.

“Doctor Shepherd, can I talk to you outside for a minute?”

The doctor seems startled by her sudden request, but nods.

They step outside. “If I convince him to stay the night, will you let me stay with him?”

“It’s not up to me, it’s hospital policy-“

“That young man is all alone in this city. He has no one. I’m the closest he’s got to a familiar face. Pull some strings and let me stay.”

The night is long and restless for both of them. Ilya because he’s still in pain despite the pain medications and Yuna because of her worry for him.

At about 3 am, she startles when she hears a pained whimper. “Ilya?” His eyes are closed, he doesn’t move except for a little jerk of his head. There are beads of sweat on his forehead, his eyebrows scrunched. He looks like he’s in pain. She presses the call button, then gently runs her fingers through his sweat soaked curls. “Ilya, can you wake up for me?”

“Мама,” he whimpers, voice breaking on that one word. He sounds like a little boy, a little boy who’s been on his own for far too long. A little boy who just needs his mother. “пожалуйста, не уходи.”

She doesn’t understand what he says, but he leans into her touch and settles. His heart rate slows, and when the nurse comes in, Yuna waves her off. “He’s just restless.”

She stays like that, stroking his hair, humming a lullaby she used to sing to Shane when he was a little boy, until the morning sun peaks through the halfway opened blinds.

Shane calls as soon as Yuna tells him Ilya is awake.

“Hi, baby.”

“*Hey, mom.*” He swallows, all red rimmed eyes and hoarse voice, “*is he there?*”

“Yeah. One second. The doctor and nurse are in there.”

“*Okay. How is he, really?*”

“He’s doing exceptionally well for someone who punctured a lung, has been demanding they discharge him whenever he sees the doctor.”

“*Would they discharge him?*”

“The doctor doesn’t recommend it, not for another three days at least.”

"I have to leave tomorrow, mom."

She closes her eyes. "We'll figure something out, Shane. Hang in there."

"Okay."

She hears the door open. "Wait, I think they're coming out. Yeah--"

"How is he?"

"He's doing okay," the doctor tells her, "still insistent on being discharged today."

Yuna swallows. "Is it doable?"

"He says he lives alone, so not really. He's gonna need a lot of rest, and a lot of help--"

"We'll do it," she blurts out, "my husband and I, we'll keep an eye on him, don't worry."

"Is he going to agree to that?"

Yuna grins. "He will if he wants to get out of here."

She and Ilya wait for David at the back entrance of the hospital. She makes sure Ilya gets in the backseat and is comfortable before she gets in the passenger seat.

"How are you feeling, kiddo?" David asks, looking back at Ilya briefly before looking forward again.

Ilya opens his eyes and sits up a little, wincing as he does so. "Okay," then, before she can even scold him for lying, he backtracks, "little tired."

"I guess that's to be expected after what you went through."

He nods, looking out the window.

Shane is sitting by the stone steps in the driveway. He all but jumps up when they pull up beside him. Yuna watches as Ilya, too, perks up at the sight of her son. The second the car stops, Shane is opening the back door.

Her son extends a hand, and Ilya takes it, letting Shane pull him out. When they're both standing, Shane doesn't waste any time. His hands frame Ilya's face and he presses two gentle kisses on his lips before he slowly, with so much tenderness and care that it takes her breath away, he pulls Ilya's body into his. He's careful with him, doesn't touch his injured side, but she notices that his touch isn't light, either. It's firm, grounding. Ilya's face is half buried in Shane's chest, but then he pulls away, just a little, to smile at him. He says something too low for her to hear, but it makes Shane laugh.

"You're an asshole."

Ilya shrugs. "But you love me."

"I do."

Tears spring to her eyes at the sheer amount of love that shines through every action and every word. She looks at them, wrapped around each other like there's no other place they'd rather be, and hopes they get to have this love out loud and out in the open, some day.

Shane helps Ilya up the stairs, then takes him to the guest bedroom, where Yuna has in no uncertain terms told him he will be staying if he wants to get out of the hospital.

Once she's sure the boys have settled, she grabs her purse and the car keys. David raises an eyebrow at her. "Going to war?"

She huffs out a laugh. "Something like that."

He presses a quick kiss to her lips. "I'm gonna start on dinner. Don't be late, alright?"

"I won't."

"Anderson."

"Yuna," he says her name as a sigh, "to what do I owe the pleasure?"

"I want an emergency contact form for Ilya."

He raises an eyebrow, crosses his arms against his chest. "We already have his file."

"The file that's missing an emergency contact form? *That* file?"

"He declined to list anyone."

"And you should know in a contact sport as dangerous as hockey how stupid it is to let that go."

"It's not mandatory."

"Neither was letting him play tonight. You still cleared him."

"Mrs. Hollander, this isn't really appropriate--"

"I'm not asking you to fill it yourself. I'm asking you to just offer it. If he says no, I'll drop it."

"You understand this puts me in a difficult position?"

"I do," she says readily, "but I don't care."

Ten minutes later, she's driving home with the form sitting neatly in a brown unlabeled manila folder.

When she gets home, she finds that David has already set the table. He raises a questioning eyebrow at the file she has in her hand but she just shakes her head, "later."

He nods, accepting this easily.

"Can you wake the boys up?" David asks her.

She nods, heading to the guest room. She knocks, twice, then three times for good measure. When no sounds come, she opens the door soundlessly. The sight that greets her radiates warmth and safety and she finds herself reluctant to wake them. Her son is on his side, one arm under Ilya's head, the other wrapped around the other man's shoulder. Ilya's hands are trapped between their bodies, with the fingers of one hand clutching Shane's shirt tightly even in his sleep.

She feels her husband sidle up behind her. "I was wondering what was taking so long."

She leans back against him, smiles to herself. "Let's let them sleep for a little while longer. Dinner can wait."

The next day, Yuna knocks on the boys' bedroom. "Come in," Ilya calls out almost immediately.

She opens the door and steps inside, finds him sitting on the bed his phone in hand. "Good morning."

"Good morning," he answers with a small smile. It's a bit stilted, if not awkward. She gets the feeling that he doesn't always know how to be himself around her and David yet, like he's not sure what role he's supposed to be playing. "Is everything okay?"

"Everything is fine," she answers quickly, "there's just something I need to talk to you about. Can I sit?" she asks, gesturing to the bed.

He nods immediately, moving a little to the side.

Yuna sits, hands tight around the manila folder in her hand, and clears her throat. "Ilya, I want you to sign this," she says, gently handing it over. It's certainly not what she'd had in mind when she'd prepared herself to talk to him, but she feels the direct approach works best with Ilya Rozanov.

"What is this?"

"Open it," she urges him.

She watches his reaction closely. Watches as he reads it, then reads it again. She points down, at where she'd written her name and signed, and something in his expression fractures. His

lips tremble. “I-“

“You don’t have to, Ilya. Not if you don’t want to,” she gently interrupts him, recognizing his inability to formulate a coherent response, “but I need you to know that sitting in that waiting room, not knowing if you were okay or not, waiting for four hours just to know if you were alive- it’s not something I think I can go through again. And- the thought of you alone in that hospital room? It just doesn’t sit right with me. David and I, we want to be there for you, through everything, if you’ll let us.” His eyes fill with tears, his lips tremble, and all Yuna wants is to wrap him in her arms and hold him tight. She doesn’t though. She gives him space. “You don’t have to decide now. Take all the time you need.” With that, Yuna stands up and walks out of the room, gently closing the door behind her, hoping to god she hasn’t messed anything up.

Yuna is on the front porch when she hears the door open. She turns around and sees Ilya walking slowly towards her, manila folder in hand.

Heart in her throat, she turns to face him. Ilya wordlessly hands it over. When she takes out the form, her eyes dart down to the dotted line in the left corner and- *there*. He signed it. Once he hands it over to Anderson, she will officially be Ilya Rozanov’s emergency contact. She smiles at him. “Thank you, Ilya.”

He shakes his head with a laugh. “Thank *you*.” He takes a step forward, hesitates, then takes another. Finally, he leans down and hugs her, gently. She hugs him back, hand stroking the back of his head. “Thank you for being there.”

She tightens her arms around his shoulders. “Always.”

Chapter End Notes

Next Up: PAPA HOLLANDER

THANK YOU to everyone who commented. You seriously made my day. I adore each and every one of you and I hope you all know it means the world to hear from you 🧡

Chapter 5: David

Chapter Notes

Long wait!!

The new year took me out (HAPPY NEW YEAR BY THE WAY) Hope you enjoy this!!

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

The venue hums with the faint sounds of music, conversation, laughter, and clinking glass. As soon as they enter, all eyes are on them. David and Yuna take this in stride, greeting guests, shaking hands, moving through the room with an ease born out of practice.

This comes more naturally to David and Yuna than it does to Shane, who hangs back a little, visibly uncomfortable. His smile is small and tight, and to someone who knows him well, painfully fake.

David leads his wife and son to an empty table. Yuna immediately leans close.

“Did you see Derek McAllister?” she whispers, and David can hear the smile in her voice.

“With wife number four?” he murmurs back. “Do you think it would be too petty to mention we just celebrated our thirtieth anniversary last month?”

She gasps, mockingly. “David Hollander. That’s unbecoming.”

Shane groans quietly, just low enough that no one but them hears it, and makes sure to roll his eyes when he knows he has both their attention. David and Yuna share a grin. Embarrassing their kid has always been a favorite pastime of theirs. David is about to retort when he notices Shane’s attention has shifted elsewhere. His son’s posture is stiff, his hold on the glass of ginger ale in his hand too tight and his eyes are darting around as if looking for something.

David has a feeling he knows exactly what, or *who* to be more specific, his son is looking for. He doesn’t mention it though. He does, however, notice the moment it changes- he notices the exact moment Shane’s shoulders drop, his lips unfurl into a small, helpless smile, his breaths become just a little bit deeper.

David also notices the subtle hush that befalls the entire room. The conversation doesn’t halt entirely, there are too many people for that, but enough people have gone quiet at Ilya Rozanov’s arrival that it’s become a bigger deal than it ought to be.

The young man falters for half a second, the confident mask slipping for a barely noticeable blink in time, but it’s gone in the next. He strides in with a sunny smile plastered on, shaking

hands and greeting people he most likely doesn't know, and he does it with ease.

Ilya's eyes scan the crowd a lot more subtly than his son's, but David still catches on, especially when their eyes meet and the plastered on smile becomes an easy, boyish grin of a young man in love. David hides his smile with a sip of his champagne.

Ilya eventually makes his way to them. He makes a beeline for Yuna, wrapping an arm around her and pressing a kiss to her cheek. "Yuna, you look stunning," Ilya tells her, ever the charmer.

His wife pats his cheek affectionately, smiling. "You look very handsome yourself, Ilya."

He grins. "Thank you. David, how are you?" he asks as he extends a hand, which David shakes readily with a warm smile.

"I'm alright," he answers. "And you?"

"Good, good." The young man answers with a nod as he swiftly snatches a flute of champagne off a haggard looking waiter's tray. He hasn't looked in Shane's direction once, but to David it doesn't seem like this is something they planned. God, is this foreplay? He takes a decidedly big gulp of his drink and tries very hard not to think about that. He already knows too much about his son's sex life, as far as he's concerned. "This champagne is amazing, wouldn't you-"

Finally, it seems his son has had enough and pointedly clears his throat.

Ilya turns to him, feigns surprise. "Hollander! Did not see you there."

Shane rolls his eyes. "God, you're such an asshole."

Ilya puts his hand on Shane's shoulder, shakes him a little. "I joke, I joke." Then, he leans close and whispers something so low that not even David can hear. Though, going by the way it makes Shane blush, David thinks he should be very grateful for that.

From then on, they move as a unit. Ilya and Shane work together the way Yuna and David do- Shane answering the long-winded, boring questions and Ilya handling the overtly chatty attendees. It's seamless teamwork that is only established when you've been with someone for so long that you've memorized their every move and thought.

When the four of them regroup, Shane and Ilya's dynamics change slightly. Shane's eyes tend to glaze over, and he only half listens to the conversations around him- just enough to contribute as little as possible, leaving David and Yuna to do all the work.

Ilya is different, David notices this when Yuna drags Shane off to meet one of the sponsors and he's left alone with the younger man. As time passes, and with every person that comes over to greet them, Ilya seems to withdraw into himself. David is honestly taken aback by it, because it's so unlike him. His concern only grows as time passes and Ilya's responses only become more subdued, reduced to the occasional nod and fleeting smile.

He doesn't get the chance to ask the kid about it because seconds later, Shane and Yuna are back. And they're followed by Margret Caldwell. David groans internally. He doesn't hate the woman, not really, but she's a gossip and she's always found a way to get under their skin.

Case in point.

"Mr. Rozanov!" She thrusts her hand between David and Yuna, completely ignoring them as she shoulders her way between them. "How are you?"

"Very well," he answers politely, though he doesn't smile.

"This foundation is simply a marvelous idea, dear. My husband and I jumped at the chance to be here to congratulate you in person," she rambles on, beckoning her husband who comes over and unlike her, shakes everyone's hands, "I was just telling this young man how admirable it is that he's managed to overcome such adversity and is now using it to help others."

By now, a small crowd has formed around them, no doubt attracted to the conversation because of their curiosity of how this foundation came to be.

Ilya is visibly uncomfortable with the topic of his mother, but he pushes through. "Would love to take credit, but- this idea was not mine," he says earnestly, turning to look at his boyfriend. "All Shane."

"Well," David intercepts, "it may have been Shane's idea, but I do think you're selling yourself short, kid." He looks at the faces around them, and is glad most of the attention is settled on him now. "Ilya here is just as dedicated to this foundation as he is on the ice. Hell, I think he's gone to more meetings than Yuna has at this point." There's a scatter of laughter around the table, and the conversation resumes to much safer topics.

David chances a look at Ilya and is surprised when he sees the young man has already turned his back and is walking away from their table. He shares a look with Shane, who doesn't seem as surprised- his boy just looks heartbroken. But he can't do anything about it, not here in front of all these people. So, David will have to do.

Finding Ilya proves to be harder than David originally thought it might be. He checks all the exits, the back alley, thinking maybe he'd gone out for a smoke, but he's nowhere to be found.

Just as he's about to admit defeat, his phone vibrates in his pocket. It's a text from Yuna.

Check the balcony.

He grins and shakes his head. How she knows is beyond him, but he's not about to question his wife. He puts his phone back in his pocket and heads for the balcony.

He does find Ilya there. Hands braced on the railing, head hung low, the young man is the picture of defeat. David makes his presence known by clearing his throat quietly as he steps closer. He comes to stand by him, shoulder to shoulder, and doesn't speak for a long moment.

"Are you okay, Ilya?"

Ilya stands up straight, hands trembling slightly. The younger man must notice David's attention because the next thing he does is put them in his pockets.

David's question goes unanswered.

"Sorry I left like that," Ilya says abruptly, still not looking at him. David watches him, sees the clenched jaw, the trembling lips, and he wonders what could have set him off. He wracks his brain, replays the last few conversations they had and that's when it clicks- his *mother*.

He curses himself for not thinking of it sooner. "It must not have been easy," he starts, "having your mother's death brought up this much tonight."

To his surprise, Ilya shrugs and shakes his head, laughing a little- it is not a happy laugh. "I have had nearly thirteen years," he tells him, "I am used to her being gone."

It breaks David's heart to hear that, but it also fills him with confusion, because what on earth could have upset Ilya so much if not people bringing up his mother's death. "Then why-"

Ilya turns to him, shakes his head. His lips are pursed, and when he looks away, David thinks he sees a lone tear make its way down his cheek. "Thank you for what you said, Mr. Hollander." At his confused look, Ilya smiles, crooked and disbelieving. He cocks his head to the side. "You said I am dedicated to the foundation."

David can feel his frown deepen. "It's true, kid. You've been working really hard."

"I know is true," he tells him with a nod, "thank you for saying it anyway."

David shrugs helplessly. "Anyone would've."

A shadow falls across his face. Anger, resentment, sorrow- his expression flits through these emotions so fast that David is almost dizzy with it.

"No," Ilya disagrees, pushing away from the railing, "not anyone."

They're some of the last people to leave, and by that time they're all done with the night and are eager to leave. They wait by the door for the valet to bring their car around. "Do you kids want to stay the night at ours?" David blurts out, making sure no one is around to hear, just as Shane is fishing his phone out, presumably to order a car. Ilya is doing the same. They both freeze and exchange a look. The boys seem to have a whole conversation without having to say a word, and it ends with Shane looking at him with a smile and nodding.

"Yeah, dad. That'd be good."

David nods.

They all climb in the car, Yuna in the passenger seat, the boys in the back. David watches them in the rearview mirror, how they start off as far away from each other as possible, then as soon as David starts the car and drives, they gravitate towards the middle of the seat. Ilya lays his head on Shane's chest, his eyes closed. His son immediately presses his lips to Ilya's temple, while his fingers play with the hair at the nape of his neck. They talk, voices a low murmur David can't hear.

He feels himself relax for the first time in a while that evening. Ilya is safe in his son's hands.

David and Yuna make dinner while the boys sit out on the porch. They'd offered to help, but David had been adamant to not let them. Secretly, he'd been hoping to give them the chance to talk, to maybe allow Ilya the chance to open up in a way he hadn't allowed himself to with David.

Dinner is a quiet and comfortable affair. Ilya thankfully isn't distant, he's not sad or distracted. He's present, he jokes with them, he laughs at Shane's expense when Yuna talks about his first time on the ice. It's easy and nice.

When it's time to clean up, David shoos everyone out of the kitchen and does the cleanup himself. By the time he's done and leaves the kitchen, the house is quiet. David thinks everyone has gone to bed but is surprised when he passes through the living room and finds Ilya and Shane on the couch.

The TV is on, but muted, and his son is staring at the screen, eyes unfocused and unseeing. Ilya is beside him, his head resting on his shoulder, face half hidden in the crook of his neck. Shane's arm is wrapped protectively around Ilya's shoulder.

"Hey," David whispers.

Shane's eyes dart over to him. "Hey, dad."

David walks closer, sits on the armchair closest to his son. "How is he?"

Shane sighs. "He's okay."

David leans back, waiting him out. When he doesn't say anything else, he decides to ask himself. "I thought it was about his mom, but--"

Shane shakes his head. "It's not. He doesn't like to talk about his life in Russia after his mother died, but I can read between the lines and- it wasn't good, dad." Shane's hand starts a slow path up and down Ilya's arm, and he looks down at him with so much love, so much

tenderness. “His father wasn’t a good man. And Ilya- he would try so hard, but he never made him feel like anything he did was good enough.”

David’s chest tightens at the thought of Ilya, this young, brilliant, force of a man, made to feel insignificant by someone who’s supposed to make him feel like he’s the person who matters the most.

“But dad?” When he looks at his son, he’s smiling at him, looking at him like he hasn’t in a good while- like he did when he was a little boy and David helped him fly his kite, or when he helped him score his first goal. He’s looking at him like he’s his hero. “You did that tonight. You made him feel like he’s enough.”

That takes what little breath he has in his lungs right out. “Shane-“

“Thank you.”

David scoots to the very edge of the chair, and places his hand on his son’s knee. “Kid, I meant every word. I hope you both know that.”

“I do,” Shane assures him, “he does, too.”

“Good.” David smiles. He stands up. “Goodnight, son.”

“Goodnight, dad.”

Chapter End Notes

Next Up: Shane, Ilya and the ordeal of being known and loved. Also, deals with Alexi because I do not like how the books or the show leave things with Ilya’s family. Lemme know what you think of this chapter?

Chapter 6: Shane

Chapter Notes

Hello all!!

Final Chapter is here!

Now, I have to say, I am not very satisfied with this, but alas it has to be posted because I cannot keep writing and deleting. Hopefully the next two fics are better lol.

I really hope you enjoy this and are not too disappointed with it?

Also, the Russian- I hope it doesn't take you out of the chapter, but my rationale is that I wanted you guys to be fully engaged in the Shane POV and be as clueless as him (unless you're russian, in which case i am so sorry for butchering your language)

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

Shane is carrying two bags of groceries, his backpack, a cooler filled to the brim with everyone's favorite drinks, and regretting his choice to carry everything in one go instead of making the sensible choice and taking several trips to bring everything inside. He's just-*excited*.

Apparently, he's not the only one, because Shane is nearly trampled by the twin terrors that are eight years old Jade and Ruby, who run down the stone walkway while screaming their heads off. "*Uncle Ilya!*"

"He's inside," he calls after them, then frowns. "Hey, what am I? Chopped liver?!" The girls, predictably, ignore him. Hayden claps him on the back, nearly causing him to drop one of the grocery bags, and he curses.

Hayden quickly grabs it from him.

"Thanks, man."

"No problem. This is pretty exciting, huh?"

"Yeah," Shane nods, smiling. He looks out at the row of cabins, at the building where he knows the indoor rink, and his boyfriend, are.

"So, you and Rozanov--"

Shane shifts uncomfortably, eyes darting all around to check if someone is around. "Not now."

“Okay,” Hayden backs off immediately, “I just- I don’t get it, but if it makes you happy then I’m happy for you, man.”

Shane hesitates, then looks at his friend. He nods, belatedly. “He does.”

“Good.”

A lot of kids have signed up for their summer school, more than either of them ever imagined.

His mother hadn’t been surprised when they’d shared their bewilderment. “I don’t know why you would be, honestly,” she’d said casually, “you’re the best players in the league by far. Of course people would jump at the chance to have you teach their kids.”

As the head coaches, they shared a cabin; something that no one seemed to find odd or suspicious and had delighted them both to no end. So, Shane headed to their shared cabin, put his things away, then booked it to the rink.

The school is supposed to officially open its doors on Monday- in three days. Coming here with their friends and families three days before that, to set up and enjoy the weekend had been Ilya’s idea, and Shane is glad he’d listened.

This will do them some good.

Jackie, Hayden and their kids- minus Amber, who was asleep in her car seat where Hayden’s mother is watching her near the benches, are already on the ice when he gets there. Cliff Marlow and a couple of Ilya’s now former Boston Bears teammates, along with their families, are scattered across the ice. Ilya’s surrounded by no less than ten kids, all looking up at him as he explains something in a way too serious manner. He leans down, and they huddle around him. When he yells, “go!” The kids take off as fast as their skating abilities can take them, right at an unsuspecting Hayden. Ilya skates ahead of them, manages to grab Jackie, spinning her away from Hayden, just before ten little bodies crash into him, causing him to lose his balance and flail comically before he falls flat on his face.

Jackie and Ilya cackle like a couple of maniacs. Shane joins everyone on the ice, passes his boyfriend and his best friend’s wife as they try to hold each other up while laughing too hard, and makes his way over to Hayden. “Need a hand?”

“No,” Hayden groans as he sits up. “I hate him.”

“No, you don’t.”

“I really do.”

“You don’t.”

“He’s a menace.”

Shane smiles fondly. “He is.”

Hayden looks up at him, rolls his eyes. “Fuck off with your heart eyes,” he mutters, “I’m getting him back.”

Shane sighs. “I wouldn’t do that, buddy.”

“He’s turned my kids and wife against me, I have to get revenge!”

“Hayd-“ it’s no use. His best friend has already taken off. Shane watches as Ilya, vigilant as ever, sees him coming and, with a kiss to Jackie’s cheek, takes off before Hayden is within a foot of him.

It’s chaotic, and fun, and then somehow Shane is roped in a way too competitive game of two on two between him, Hayden, Ilya and Marlow.

They end the day at the pool, and like that day in 2017, somehow, Ilya ends up roped into entertaining the kids- not that he’s complaining. Shane is content to dip his toes in the water and watch the love of his life make a fool of himself to get the kids to laugh.

His mother comes over and sits beside him. “He’s good with them.”

Shane smiles helplessly. Ilya is in the process of fixing Ruby’s ponytail, unsuccessfully. “Yeah.”

Jackie sits on his other side. “He’s a godsend,” she tells Yuna, joining the conversation without ceremony. “My kids adore him. Hayden hates it,” she adds with a grin.

His mother smiles. “It’s hard to imagine this goofball is the same one who’s made grown men cry on the ice, though, right?”

Shane grins and lets their conversation wash over him, watching Ilya throw the kids around, pretending to be a shark and then pretending to be eaten by a shark.

His phone vibrates in his pocket and he fishes it out. It’s a text from Rose, saying she’s thirty minutes away. Shane texts her a thumbs up and nearly jumps out of his skin when he looks up from his phone and finds Ilya staring right at him. “What?”

“Join me, Hollander.”

He narrows his eyes at him. “No.”

A tug on his leg. “The water is good.”

“Rozanov, no.”

The smile on his face widens. “Yes.”

“I said-“

He doesn't get to finish, because the next thing he knows, he's in the water, and Ilya is swimming away, laughing. Loud, carefree- it's Shane's favorite sound. He catches himself before his lips stretch into a lovesick smile, schools his features and swims after him. "Rozanov, you're a dead man!"

"Get 'em, Hollander!"

"Go, Shane, go!"

Shane gives chase, laughing as the kids cheer them on. Ilya slows down deliberately, makes a show of being caught. Shane rolls his eyes at the dramatics, grabs him by the wrist and yanks him close. They're both breathing heavily, way too close, and there's only a hair of space between them. It would only take a little dip of his head, and they would be kissing like they both obviously want to.

"Incoming!" That's their only warning before Hayden launches himself into the pool right beside them, creating a wave that ends up soaking them both.

"Pike!"

Shane and Ilya walk alone to their cabin. "I missed you," he mutters, nudging Ilya with his shoulder.

Ilya smiles softly at him, "missed you, too, Shane."

"Hey," Shane stops just outside their door, "what's wrong? You've been off for the past couple of weeks, I can tell something's bothering you."

Ilya leans his head on the brick wall. The light shines down at him, casting shadows onto his face in a way that makes him look ethereally beautiful. "I thought I could hide it better."

Shane just shakes his head.

Ilya tilts his head towards the door. "Let us go inside?"

Shane pulls out his key and unlocks the door, opening it for him.

"My brother has been calling me."

Shane sucks in a deep breath, turning slightly in the too small bed to sleep on his side. Ilya mirrors him, and scoots closer, letting his forehead rest on Shane's chest. "Do you know what he wants?"

"No," he shakes his head, "I'm sure it is nothing good."

Shane doesn't say anything. Ilya pulls away.

“What?”

“What do you mean what?”

Ilya huffs. “You have something to say. Say it.”

He bites his lip. “What if he wants to make amends?”

Ilya scoffs. He sits up in bed and, shaking his head, laughs.

Shane follows. He presses a kiss to Ilya’s shoulder then rests his chin there. “You obviously know him better, but speaking as someone who knows what it means to lose you- you tend to leave a pretty big void behind, a void that’s pretty hard to fill. Maybe he misses you?”

When Ilya laughs this time, it’s pained and rough, barely resembling a laugh. “You think he is like you, Hollander? You think he loves me? You think he *cares*?”

Shane’s answer is probably naive, but it’s a yes to all these questions. He finds it very difficult to understand how anyone can know Ilya Rozanov and not love him.

“He probably just wants more money for drugs.”

He says it with such conviction, such certainty, that Shane is hard pressed not to believe him. “Come here.” When it seems like he doesn’t hear him, Shane tugs on his arm until he gives in and lies down beside him. Shane wraps him up in his arms, tight enough to hurt, but Ilya doesn’t complain, just burrows closer. “I love you.”

“Svetlana!”

Shane watches as his boyfriend all but runs into the arms of a gorgeous woman and is not at all jealous. Not one bit. Rose, who has been here for all of thirty minutes, sidles up to him. “They seem close.”

“Yep.”

“You okay?”

“Mhmm.”

“He doesn’t look at her like she hung the moon and the stars in the sky, Shane,” she tells him, “that’s reserved for you.”

He looks down at her, smiles. She hugs him as Svetlana and Ilya make their way over to them. “Shane Hollander,” he says warmly, and *yep*- there’s that soft look, the one just for him, “meet Svetlana Vetrova.”

He goes to shake her hand but she rolls her eyes and drags him into a tight hug. “Nice to meet you, *Jane*.”

He stiffens in her arms and pulls back, eyes on Ilya. He nods reassuringly, and Shane relaxes. “Nice to finally meet you, too, Svetlana.”

Ilya looks between the two of them, smile so happy that Shane has to employ every bit of self control he has not to pull him into his arms right here.

Rose introduces herself to Svetlana, and all of them start heading to the rink. Shane trails after them, scrolling aimlessly on his phone.

He doesn’t know what makes him look up, but when he does, he sees the man watching them, only half hidden behind the small maintenance building. He stops in his tracks and backtracks, heading over to him.

“Can I help you, sir?”

He’s tall, has green eyes that are somewhat familiar, brown hair and a thick beard.

“Shane Hollander,” the man says, his tone mocking, and Russian accent thick.

He stiffens. “Who are you?” Shane asks even though he has a feeling he knows the answer to that.

“Где мой брат? Ilya Rozanov, вы, возможно, его знаете?”

Brother. Ilya. Shane is right. This is Alexei Rozanov.

“Leave.”

The other man’s brows furrow. “Ilya.”

“No,” he shakes his head, taking a step closer in an obvious act that telegraphs his intention of keeping from getting inside. “Leave. *Now*.”

“У меня нет на это времени. Где мой брат? Мне нужно с ним поговорить.”

Shane feels his heart rate spike as the man advances on him, realizing what a disadvantage it is that he doesn’t understand or speak Russian. He stands his ground nevertheless, and when Alexei tries to get past him, he pushes him away not too gently.

Alexei’s face turns red and he lifts his fist up. Shane braces himself for the hit he knows is coming and won’t be able to stop. It never comes.

Ilya grabs his brother’s fist, shoves him away. Alexei stumbles and falls to the ground. Ilya stalks over to him, grabs him by the collar and lifts him up. It’s the wrong time to be drooling over how attractive his boyfriend is, but Shane can’t help it. “Какого чёрта ты творишь, Alexei?”

Again, Shane is completely helpless as he watches the scene unfold.

“Зачем ты здесь? Разве я не сказал тебе не связываться со мной? Зачем ты здесь?”

Shane has no idea what to do. He doesn't want to interfere, doesn't feel like he has the right, but he also can't stand by and watch the man he loves go through this alone.

“Мне нужны деньги,” he spits out. “Ты же знаешь, я бы не был здесь, если бы у меня был выбор, Илья. Они угрожали Vera и Natalia..”

Ilya lets go of his brother, his shoulders dropping as he heaves in a lungful of air. “Деньги? Деньги, Alexei?” He shakes his head. “Что ты сделал со всем, что я тебе отправлял?”

Money. That's a word Shane catches. This is about money? Dread pools in his stomach. Shane sees Alexei avert his gaze for all of two seconds before his eyes harden.

“Это значит, ты не поможешь мне? Ты позволишь им навредить моей жене? Моей маленькой девочке?”

Ilya throws his hands in the air. “Тебе не надоело это, Alexei? Тебе не надоело-“ his voice breaks, but he shakes his head and seems to pull himself together again. “Ты правда используешь свою жену и дочь, чтобы заставить меня дать тебе деньги? Вот кем ты стал?”

Alexei gets in Ilya's face, “Я не использую их!”

Ilya's hands tremble at his sides. Shane longs to grab them in his, hold them until he settles. “Нет, используешь. Ты используешь их сейчас так же, как использовал нашего отца, когда он был жив.”

Alexei scoffs. “Ты думаешь, я использовал тебя тогда? Я просто хотел то, что по праву принадлежало мне! Тебя не было рядом. Тебя не было в самые худшие моменты- а я был. Я заслужил эти деньги.”

“Как я должен был быть рядом и при этом зарабатывать достаточно, чтобы заботиться обо всех, Alexei?” Ilya purses his lips, eyes red and filling with tears he would not let fall. “Ты ненавидишь меня за это, за то, на что я не мог повлиять, но я- всё, что я делал- это помогал тебе, чтобы, возможно, ты бы-“

Alexei laughs, mocking, cruel. “Что бы я что, младший брат?”

“Это не имеет значения. Возвращайся в Россию. Здесь для тебя больше ничего нет.” Ilya turns his back on his brother and begins to walk away.

“Фонд Irina,” Ilya freezes. Shane stiffens in surprise. Irina; their mother's name. Alexei says this as he walks closer to his brother. Ilya turns around to face him once again. Shane feels a presence beside him and turns his face to see Svetlana standing beside him, hands crossed over her chest and glaring daggers at Alexei. Shane turns back to look at the brothers.

“Вся эта твоя маленькая афера, с твоим маленьким дружкой,” he spits out the last word as he looks at Shane, and Ilya does the same. Blue eyes meet his, and Shane tries desperately to understand what is going on. Ilya gives nothing away. His face is unreadable, features made of marble. “Я вижу тебя, Илья. Я знаю, кто ты такой. Mother— Мама— если бы она

увидела тебя сейчас, если бы увидела, что ты делаешь её именем, — ей было бы стыдно за тебя.”

The first crack shows. The indestructible man who has been through so much in the years Shane has known him crumbles right in front of him. Alexei has used their mother against Ilya. Shane doesn't need to know what was said to understand that.

“You fucking asshole,” Svetlana spits at him, only confirming Shane's thoughts. She moves towards the brothers, but Shane's faster. He puts himself between them, pushing Ilya behind him with a hand

“Leave,” he says firmly.

Alexei laughs. Shane wants to punch his teeth in.

“She would be ashamed of you, Ilya.” It takes Shane a few seconds to comprehend the words, the fact that he understands them. Sure, Alexei's accent is thick and the words are butchered and choppy at best. But he said them. Ilya's brother took the time to learn those words in English, just to hurt him, to make sure everyone around him heard and understood. Shane feels Ilya flinch when the words are said and- he's only human, and he can only take so much. He turns, and in a move no one expects, least of all Shane himself, he pulls his arm back and punches Alexi so hard he hears the crunch of bones. He doesn't know if it's the sound of his knuckles breaking or Alexi's nose, and he doesn't care.

Shane shakes off his hand, wincing at the pain that shoots up his arm, then moves back over to where Ilya is still standing, frozen as he stares at his brother. Wrapping an arm around Ilya's shoulder, Shane looks over at Svetlana. “Tell him if I see him anywhere near Ilya again, I'll do more than break his nose?”

Svetlana smirks, nodding. “Gladly.”

“You okay?”

“I am fine.”

Shane doesn't call him out on the obvious lie. He just walks beside him, resisting the urge to wrap him up in his arms right then and there.

“Ilya-“

“Not here, Hollander.”

He puts a hand on Ilya's shoulder, then he takes Ilya's shaking hands in both of his, hoping no one is around to see this display but knowing that offering Ilya comfort right now is more important than his fear.

His boyfriend lets out a shuddering breath at the touch.

“It's not true, Ilya.”

“It does not matter, Hollander.”

“Ilya-“

”Why does he hate me so much?”

Shane can’t take it anymore. He gathers him in his arms, lets him hide his face in the crook of his neck and desperately hopes whatever comfort he can offer is enough. “He’s an idiot,” Shane utters, breathless and pained but with so much conviction he leaves no room for argument. “And he doesn’t deserve you. Do you hear me?”

When he doesn’t receive an answer, he pulls away and grabs Ilya’s face with both his hands. “Do you hear me, Ilya?”

He nods.

“Boys!” He and Ilya almost spring apart before they realize it’s only Yuna and David, and there’s no need to hide this.

“We were worried about you boys when you were late to- Ilya? Honey, what’s wrong?!”

Shane tries to convey with his eyes that this is not the best time, that they should leave, but then he notices the way the tension in Ilya’s shoulders eases the slightest bit at his mother’s presence and swallows back any protests.

His mother looks between them. One hand rests on each of her boys’ shoulders. “What happened?”

Ilya’s lips tremble, but he doesn’t volunteer any information. Shane shares a look with him, asking for permission with his eyes.

Ilya shrugs.

Shane clears his throat. “Ilya’s brother was here. They got into a fight.”

His mother softens immediately. She grabs Ilya by the shoulders and somehow manages to manhandle him into a hug. He goes into it more than willing, hugging her back fiercely.

“He said she would be ashamed of me,” Ilya says the words quietly, but they ring out like a gunshot between them.

Shane wants to find Alexei Rozanov and punch him again, and again and again.

Yuna pushes Ilya away gently, one hand on his shoulder, the other cupping his cheek. “Your mother?”

He just nods, eyes red and filled to the brim with tears. Yuna smiles softly and shakes her head. “I can’t speak for Irina, Ilya, but as a mother, I can tell you that she would have been more than proud of the man that you are now.” Ilya looks away, chest heaving with the effort to keep from crying. “Look at the life you’ve built for yourself. Any mother would be proud

to call you her son.” With those words, she pulls him into her arms again. Ilya shudders, but he doesn’t cry. He just squeezes his eyes shut. David walks over to them and rubs a hand up and down his back. Shane joins them, and the four of them stay like that for a long moment, surrounding Ilya with the family he deserves.

That night, they’re all sitting around the camp fire, making s’mores and talking over each other. Shane is sitting next to Ilya, who’s bouncing Arthur on his knees, the kid’s delighted laughter so infectious it has everyone around them laughing. “Hey, Rozanov,” Hayden calls out, “quit hogging my kids, give ‘em here.”

Ilya rolls his eyes. “Artie, do you want to go to your boring father? Or,” he draws out the word, punctuating it with a tickle to the kid’s ribs, “do you want to stay with fun uncle Ilya?!”

Arthur snuggles into Ilya’s arms, completely ignoring his father, who makes a wounded noise as Jackie tugs on his arm and pulls him back down beside her, patting his back in an attempt to comfort him.

Shane leans forward toward Arthur, holding one chubby hand with his thumb and index finger. “Uncle Ilya is the best, isn’t he?”

Ilya tilts closer, until their shoulders brush. When he smiles, it’s small but genuine.

Shane smiles back, steady and sure. *I love you*, he tells him without speaking the words out loud.

Ilya’s eyes are soft. *I love you, too*, they seem to say.

Shane exhales.

They’re going to be okay.

Chapter End Notes

The Russian Dialogue translated fully in english for anyone interested:

Где мой брат? Илья Розанов, вы, возможно, его знаете?

Where is my brother? Ilya Rozanov. You might know him.

У меня нет на это времени. Где мой брат? Мне нужно с ним поговорить.

I don’t have time for this. Where is my brother? I need to talk to him.

Какого чёрта ты творишь, Alexi?
What the hell are you doing, Alexi?

Зачем ты здесь? Разве я не сказал тебе не связываться со мной? Зачем ты здесь?
Why are you here? Didn't I tell you to stay away from me? Why are you here?

Мне нужны деньги. Ты же знаешь, я бы не был здесь, если бы у меня был выбор.
Они угрожали Vera и Polina.
I need money. You know I wouldn't be here if I had another choice. They threatened
Vera and Polina.

Деньги? Деньги, Alexi?
Money? Money, Alexi?

Что ты сделал со всем, что я тебе отправлял?
What did you do with everything I've already sent you?

Это значит, ты не поможешь мне? Ты позволишь им навредить моей жене? Моей
маленькой девочке?
So that's it? You won't help me? You'll let them hurt my wife? My little girl?

Тебе не надоело это, Alexi? Тебе не надоело—
Aren't you tired of this, Alexi? Aren't you tired—

Ты правда используешь свою жену и дочь, чтобы заставить меня дать тебе деньги?
Вот кем ты стал?
Are you really using your wife and daughter to force me to give you money? Is this who
you've become?

Я не использую их!
I'm not using them!

Нет, используешь. Ты используешь их сейчас так же, как использовал нашего отца,
когда он был жив.

Yes, you are. You're using them now the same way you used our father when he was alive.

Ты думаешь, я использовал тебя тогда?
You think I used you back then?

Я просто хотел то, что по праву принадлежало мне!
I just wanted what was rightfully mine!

Тебя не было рядом. Тебя не было в самые худшие моменты — а я был.
You weren't there. You weren't there for the worst of it — I was

Я заслужил эти деньги.
I earned that money.

Как я должен был быть рядом и при этом зарабатывать достаточно, чтобы заботиться обо всех, Alexi?
How was I supposed to be there and still earn enough to take care of everyone, Alexi?

Ты ненавидишь меня за это, за то, на что я не мог повлиять, но я—
You hate me for it, for something I couldn't control, but I—

Всё, что я делал — это помогал тебе, чтобы, возможно, ты бы—
Everything I ever did was help you, hoping maybe you would—

Что бы я что, младший брат?
Hoping I would what, little brother?

Это не имеет значения. Возвращайся в Россию.
It doesn't matter. Go back to Russia.

Здесь для тебя больше ничего нет.
There's nothing left for you here.

Фонд Igina. Вся эта твоя маленькая афера, с твоим маленьким дружком. Я вижу тебя, Пуа. Я знаю, кто ты такой.
Mother — Мама — если бы она увидела тебя сейчас, если бы увидела, что ты делаешь её именем, ей было бы стыдно за тебя.

The Irina Foundation. This whole little scam of yours, with your little boyfriend.

I see you, Ilya. I know who you are now.

Mother — Mama — if she could see you now, if she saw what you're doing in her name, she would be ashamed of you.

End Notes

If you reached the finish line, THANK YOU FOR READING. Consider leaving a comment?
Unless you hated it- in which case, please don't let me know 😊

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