my person

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by cchaostude

Summary

Shane needs to have his wisdom tooth extracted and Ilya is there to hold his hand.

Notes

this is my first Hollanov fic. they have invaded my brain these past few weeks. i hope you like the story!

The house was quiet in the way that only came from two people who knew each other well enough not to fill every silence, the kind of quiet that wasn't empty so much as settled, weighted with familiarity, with shared routines that no longer needed announcing. Morning light came in through the wide kitchen windows, pale and winter-thin, catching on the edge of the countertop and the stainless-steel sink, glinting faintly off the kettle Shane had already forgotten he'd put on because it had become second nature to do things like that before his brain fully came online.

Shane stood barefoot on the cool tile, still in an old Centaurs hoodie that had lost most of its structure after too many washes, sleeves shoved up to his forearms, hair damp from a rushed shower. He was scrolling through something on his phone without really reading it, the screen more a prop than a focus, his attention half-attuned to the familiar sounds behind him: the scrape of a chair, the low hum of Ilya moving through the living room with the loose-limbed confidence of someone who felt unarguably at home in his own space.

Ilya padded into the kitchen wearing sleep pants and nothing else, the fabric sitting low on his hips, his hair still wild in the way that suggested he hadn't even attempted to tame it yet. The morning had left faint creases on his skin where sheets had pressed too long, and Shane noticed them automatically, the way he always did, his brain cataloging small, intimate details without ceremony or surprise. There had been a time when noticing things like that would have sent him spiraling, when proximity had felt dangerous, charged with consequences, but now it simply registered as part of the landscape of his life, like knowing which floorboard creaked near the hallway or which cupboard door needed an extra shove to stay closed.

"You're doing that thing again," Ilya said, voice rough with sleep and edged with amusement, as he leaned one hip against the counter and reached past Shane for a mug, his arm brushing Shane's side with casual intent.

Shane didn't look up. "What thing?"

"The staring-into-your-phone-but-thinking-about-something-else thing," Ilya said, setting the mug down and filling it with coffee from the pot Shane had already made, because of course he had. "It's very dramatic. Very captain."

Shane snorted despite himself, finally locking his phone and setting it aside. "I was just checking the schedule."

"Mhm," Ilya said, entirely unconvinced, taking a sip and making a pleased sound under his breath. He watched Shane over the rim of the mug, eyes sharp even this early, as if sleep had never really dulled them. "You're thinking about practice."

"I am literally always thinking about practice."

"Yes, but this is different," Ilya said. "This is thinking-about-practice-like-it's-a-problem thinking."

Shane turned then, leaning back against the counter, arms folding loosely over his chest. Up close, Ilya smelled like soap and coffee and the faintest trace of Shane's own deodorant, the overlapping evidence of shared space that still, occasionally, made something warm and tight settle in Shane's chest when he thought too hard about it. "We haven't really talked about the line changes yet."

Ilya's mouth twitched. "We live together. We play on the same team. We sleep in the same bed. I feel like we've talked about the line changes."

"Not officially," Shane said, because that distinction still mattered to him, even now. Especially now.

Ilya set his mug down and stepped closer, close enough that Shane had to tilt his head back slightly to maintain eye contact, close enough that the faint humor in Ilya's expression softened into something more attentive. "You're worried people think it's a conflict," he said, not asking.

Shane exhaled slowly, because there it was, laid bare with irritating accuracy. "I'm not worried," he said automatically, and then, because lying to Ilya had long since become exhausting and mostly pointless, he corrected himself. "Okay, I'm a little worried. It's still new. Us being on the same team like this. Together-together."

The public part of it had been loud at first, overwhelming in the way everything always was when it involved hockey and expectations and other people's opinions, but that noise had faded into a steady background hum over time. What lingered were the quieter questions, the ones that lived in Shane's head and poked at him during moments like this, when things were calm enough for doubt to sneak in.

Ilya reached out and hooked a finger into the cuff of Shane's sleeve, tugging gently. "Hey," he said, softer now. "They already know. About us. And we're not trying to murder each other on the ice anymore, which everyone seems to think is character growth."

Shane huffed a laugh. "That's a low bar."

"Yes, but you cleared it beautifully," Ilya said, smiling fully now. He leaned in, pressing a quick, unselfconscious kiss to the corner of Shane's mouth, the kind that felt almost aggressively normal, devoid of spectacle or tension. "Besides, you're allowed to care. It's one of your charms."

Shane rolled his eyes, but his hand came up automatically, fingers resting at Ilya's waist, thumb brushing warm skin without him having to think about it. The ease of it still surprised him sometimes, the way his body no longer hesitated, no longer waited for permission from his brain. "You say that like it doesn't drive you insane."

"Oh, it absolutely does," Ilya said cheerfully. "But I like it. Keeps things interesting."

The kettle whistled then, sharp and insistent, cutting through the moment. Shane reached to turn it off, moving on instinct, and Ilya stepped back to give him room, already reaching for another mug because he knew Shane would forget otherwise. They moved around each other

with practiced choreography, a quiet dance learned over months of shared mornings and late nights, of figuring out how to coexist in a space that belonged to both of them now.

As Shane poured the water and took the mug from Ilya's hand, he felt the familiar, grounding weight of this life settle around him, not dramatic or overwhelming, just solid. Whatever rivalry they'd once burned through had cooled into something steadier, something that left room for this: for coffee and schedules and arguments about line changes that ended with kisses instead of slammed doors.

Ilya watched him over his own mug, eyes warm and knowing, and Shane let himself stand there for a moment longer than necessary, letting the quiet stretch, letting it be enough.

Shane had been on the couch for nearly an hour without realizing it, laptop balanced on his thighs, jaw set in that particular way Ilya recognized immediately, the one that meant Shane wasn't just reading something but *absorbing* it, cross-referencing it against six other tabs, mentally filing contradictions for later evaluation. The television was on mute, forgotten, some sports panel gesturing wildly in silence, while Shane's attention tunneled inward, narrowing to the glow of the screen and the dull, pulsing awareness along the left side of his mouth that he kept trying, unsuccessfully, to ignore.

Ilya watched him from the kitchen, where he was leaning against the counter and eating yogurt straight from the container, spoon paused halfway to his mouth as he took in the scene with fond resignation. Shane's brow was furrowed, freckles standing out more sharply when he concentrated like this, his lower lip caught briefly between his teeth before he stopped himself with a small, annoyed huff, as if even that motion felt like tempting fate. Every few seconds, he scrolled, stopped, scrolled back up, highlighted a line, then opened another link, the quiet click of the trackpad repeating like a metronome.

"You know," Ilya said eventually, voice mild, conversational, "if you keep reading those, your tooth will not get better out of spite."

Shane didn't look up. "That's not how inflammation works."

"I'm just saying," Ilya went on, padding closer and sitting on the arm of the couch, close enough that Shane's knee brushed his thigh, "Google has already told you you're dying at least three times this week. Maybe let it rest."

Shane finally exhaled and leaned his head back against the cushion, eyes closing for a second as if physically bracing himself. "It's not dying," he said, opening his eyes again and turning the laptop slightly so Ilya could see the screen, though Ilya didn't need to read it to know exactly what was there. "It's… progressing. There's a difference."

Ilya glanced anyway, catching words like *pulp necrosis*, *abscess formation*, *delayed treatment risks*, and felt his mouth twitch. "Ah," he said. "Progressing toward death."

Shane shot him a look, but there was no real heat in it, just tiredness and the low-grade stress that had been riding him for days now. "I shouldn't have waited," he said, more to himself than to Ilya, fingers tightening briefly on the edge of the laptop. "I knew it was sensitive. I

knew it. And then we went to dinner with my parents and my dad made that stupid roast and I didn't want to be weird about it, so I just… kept chewing on that side."

"You chose politeness over self-preservation," Ilya said solemnly. "Very on brand."

Shane huffed a laugh despite himself, then winced slightly and pressed his tongue carefully against the sore tooth, immediately regretting it. His shoulders slumped. "It was fine at the time. Mostly. And now it's not. And now I need a root canal, which is—" He gestured vaguely with one hand. "A whole thing."

"A very routine thing," Ilya said, setting the yogurt aside and reaching out to rest his hand lightly on Shane's knee, grounding without crowding. "Millions of people get them."

"Yes, and millions of people also have horror stories," Shane said, already spiraling, the words coming faster now. "Failed anesthesia, lingering pain, infections, nerve damage—did you know the roots can be curved? Like, dramatically curved. Dentists sometimes miss entire canals."

Ilya blinked. "I did not know this, and I did not need to know this."

"I didn't either," Shane said weakly, flicking back to another tab as if compelled. "But now I do."

Ilya watched him for a moment longer, taking in the familiar pattern: the way Shane sought control through information, the way fear transformed into research, into lists and probabilities and contingency plans, as if knowing every possible outcome might somehow blunt their impact. It was one of the first things Ilya had noticed about him years ago, back when everything between them had still been sharp-edged and volatile, and it had been one of the things that had surprised him into staying, into looking closer instead of pulling away.

He reached out and gently but firmly lowered the laptop lid, ignoring Shane's small noise of protest. "Hey," he said, softer now. "*Shanya*."

The endearment landed exactly where Ilya intended it to, familiar and warm, cutting through the static in Shane's head. Shane's gaze flicked up, startled despite himself, tension easing just a fraction at the sound of it. "You can't just—"

"I can," Ilya said, smiling faintly. "And you will survive this. You will go to the dentist. They will numb you. They will fix the stupid tooth that betrayed you at your parents' table."

Shane swallowed. "What if they don't numb it enough?"

"Then you will squeeze my hand very hard and glare at them," Ilya said. "You are very good at glaring. Very intimidating, when you're not reading medical journals at midnight."

Shane snorted, leaning forward until his forehead rested briefly against Ilya's shoulder, the weight of him familiar, unguarded. "I hate that I'm like this," he admitted quietly. "I know it's irrational. I know putting it off made it worse."

Ilya's arm came around him easily, hand rubbing slow circles between his shoulder blades. "I don't," he said. "I love that you care enough to know everything. Even about teeth. Especially about teeth."

Shane laughed softly into the fabric of Ilya's shirt, tension easing another notch. "You're ridiculous."

"Yes," Ilya agreed, pressing a kiss to Shane's hair. "But I am also correct. Now close the laptop before you diagnose yourself with something dental from the nineteenth century."

Shane hesitated, then sighed and let his hands fall away, allowing the screen to stay dark for once. He stayed where he was, leaning into Ilya, jaw aching, anxiety still there but quieter now, held at bay by familiarity, by the steady presence of someone who knew his spirals and loved him through them anyway.

The waiting room smelled faintly of disinfectant and mint, a clean, overly bright space that Shane had sat in dozens of times without incident, usually flipping through outdated magazines or scrolling on his phone with only mild impatience while Ilya finished whatever routine repair hockey had demanded of his mouth that season. Today, though, Shane's leg bounced relentlessly, heel tapping against the floor in a tight, anxious rhythm as he stared at the closed door to the exam rooms like it might personally betray him.

"It's the same dentist," Ilya said for what had to be the tenth time, standing between Shane's knees and resting his hands lightly on Shane's shoulders. "The same chair. The same scary light. The same man who once pulled half my mouth apart while telling me about his boat."

"That was a crown," Shane said, jaw tight. "This is different."

"Because Google said so," Ilya replied, deadpan.

Shane shot him a look. "Because *anatomy* said so."

Ilya leaned down and pressed his forehead briefly to Shane's, a familiar grounding gesture that bypassed logic entirely. "*Solnyshko*," he murmured, voice low and warm. "You get hit by men who weigh two hundred pounds for a living. You bleed on the ice. This is a chair and some medicine."

"That's not—" Shane stopped himself, exhaling slowly. "I know. I know. I'm being ridiculous."

"You are being Shane," Ilya corrected gently. "Which is fine."

The dental assistant called Shane's name, cheerful and oblivious, and Shane stood like he was walking to his own execution, shoulders squared, expression grim. He squeezed Ilya's hand once, hard.

"You'll be right there when I wake up?" he asked.

Ilya smiled, thumb brushing over Shane's knuckles. "I will be right there when you wake up. And if you say something embarrassing, I will remember it forever."

"That's not reassuring."

"It should be."

They separated at the door to the procedure room, Ilya giving Shane one last exaggeratedly solemn nod before stepping back, hands in his pockets as the door closed between them. Shane caught one final glimpse of the familiar equipment, the chair already reclined slightly, before he was ushered inside and Ilya was left alone with the muted hum of the office and the distant sound of a drill starting somewhere down the hall.

Waiting was easier than Ilya had expected. He scrolled through his phone, replied to a text from a teammate, and read an article he didn't finish. He had lost count of how many times he'd sat through dental visits over the years, mouth swollen and numb afterward, teeth chipped or cracked from pucks and elbows and the occasional well-placed stick. Teeth were replaceable. Pain was temporary. This was all very manageable.

Time stretched, though. Longer than usual.

When the dentist finally emerged and called his name, Ilya stood immediately, heart giving a small, unwelcome lurch. "Everything okay?"

"Yes, yes," the dentist said quickly, smiling. "All fine. We ended up extracting the tooth."

Ilya blinked. "Extracting."

"It was a wisdom tooth, impacted and compromised," the dentist explained. "Given the condition, removal was the best option. He did great."

Ilya nodded slowly. "Of course he did."

He followed the dentist into the recovery area and stopped short in the doorway, the sight hitting him all at once.

Shane was reclined on the bed, head tilted slightly to one side, eyes half-lidded and unfocused, mouth slack in a way Ilya had literally never seen before. There was gauze tucked carefully along his jaw, his cheeks faintly flushed, hair mussed from fingers that had clearly tried and failed to fix it. The intimidating, overthinking captain of the Ottawa Centaurs looked… small. Soft. Completely unguarded.

"Oh," Shane said as soon as he noticed Ilya, his face lighting up with unfiltered delight. "You're *huge*."

Ilya barked out a laugh before he could stop himself. "That's new."

Shane squinted at him, brows knitting together in intense concentration. "Did you know," he said slowly, carefully, "that wisdom teeth are actually evolutionary nonsense? Like, our jaws got smaller but the teeth didn't get the memo."

“Yes,” Ilya said, stepping closer, unable to help the grin pulling at his mouth. “You have mentioned this.”

“I told them,” Shane continued earnestly, eyes drifting toward the ceiling as if replaying the conversation. “But they already knew. Everyone here is very smart. You would like them. The dentist has nice shoes.”

“I’m thrilled,” Ilya said, reaching out to rest a hand gently on Shane’s arm. Shane immediately clasped onto it with surprising strength.

“They stole my tooth,” Shane whispered conspiratorially, eyes wide. “Just took it. Didn’t even ask if I was attached to it emotionally.”

Ilya lost it then, laughter bubbling out of him as he leaned down closer, pressing his forehead to Shane’s temple. “You are unbelievable.”

Shane smiled lazily, the tension that usually lived between his brows completely gone. “You stayed,” he said, as if this were a revelation of cosmic importance. “I knew you would.”

“Always,” Ilya said, softer now, brushing his thumb along Shane’s wrist. “Come on, *Shanya*. Let’s get you home.”

Shane nodded solemnly, then paused. “Do I still have to practice tomorrow?”

Ilya laughed again, already waving down the nurse, already planning soup and painkillers and a very quiet evening. “Absolutely not.”

They moved Shane to a small recovery bay separated by thin curtains, the kind of semi-private space that offered the illusion of dignity while absolutely guaranteeing an audience for anything stupid a patient might say while coming down from anesthesia. Ilya was guided into a chair beside the bed with the gentle but firm warning that he was to wait, that Shane was still very much under the influence, that it would take time.

Ilya nodded, fully confident he could handle that.

He underestimated Shane.

At first, it was harmless. Shane stared at the ceiling tiles like they held the secrets of the universe, lips moving silently as if he were counting them. His fingers twitched occasionally, fisting and unfisting the edge of the blanket, his expression slack but strangely peaceful.

Then he turned his head and found Ilya again.

“Oh,” Shane said, voice thick and slow, like every word had to wade through syrup to escape. “There you are.”

“I’ve been here the whole time,” Ilya said, reaching out automatically to squeeze Shane’s forearm.

Shane smiled at him with devastating sincerity. “You’re very good at waiting. Did you know that? You wait for me all the time. Like when I take forever to get out of the shower because I’m thinking.”

“I am aware,” Ilya said cautiously.

A nurse passed by and glanced in, smiling fondly. “How’s he doing?”

Shane’s eyes lit up like he’d just been invited to give a keynote speech. “I love him,” he announced, gesturing broadly at Ilya, nearly smacking the IV line in the process. “That’s my boyfriend. He’s very strong. He once lost three teeth and still finished the game.”

The nurse laughed. “Is that so?”

“Yes,” Shane said solemnly. “He bleeds very efficiently.”

Ilya cleared his throat. “Okay, that’s enough—”

“And,” Shane continued, completely unstoppable now, “he’s very gentle. Which surprises people. Because he’s big. But he’s very gentle. Especially at night.”

Ilya froze.

The nurse’s grin widened. “Sounds like a keeper.”

Shane nodded emphatically. “Oh, absolutely. He holds me when I can’t sleep. And sometimes when I *can* sleep, but I pretend I can’t.”

“Shane,” Ilya hissed under his breath, leaning closer. “*Milyy*. Stop talking.”

Shane turned his head slowly, eyes unfocused but intent. “Why? They’re nice.”

“Yes,” Ilya said through a tight smile, aware of at least one other nurse now hovering within earshot. “But they do not need to know about how I tuck you in.”

“I tuck *you* in,” Shane corrected, indignant. “You steal the blankets.”

“That is a lie.”

“You run hot,” Shane insisted, pointing a shaky finger at him. “Like a furnace. A very handsome furnace.”

The nurses were openly laughing now, one of them pretending very badly to check Shane’s chart while absolutely listening to every word.

“And sometimes,” Shane went on dreamily, “he says my name like it’s important. Like it means something special. In Russian.”

Ilya dropped his head into his hand.

“Say it,” Shane whispered urgently. “Say it again. The one you say when you think I’m asleep.”

“I am not doing that,” Ilya said, mortified.

“*Solnyshko*,” Shane supplied himself, beaming. “That’s me. I’m the sun.”

One of the nurses actually snorted.

Ilya looked up helplessly. “How long does this last?”

“Depends,” she said cheerfully. “He’s having a great time, though.”

Shane squeezed Ilya’s hand again, surprisingly strong, his expression suddenly soft, almost lucid. “You waited,” he said quietly, the words slower but clearer. “I knew you would.”

The laughter faded into something gentler, and Ilya felt his chest tighten despite himself. He leaned in, lowering his voice. “Always, *Shanya*.”

Shane smiled, eyes fluttering closed again. “Good,” he murmured. “Because I can’t feel my face.”

Ilya snorted despite everything, brushing his thumb over Shane’s knuckles as the nurse adjusted the blanket and the room settled back into its easy, amused calm, the waiting game far more revealing than either of them had expected.

The drive home was quiet in the way that came after something big had already happened, the city blurring past the windows in soft gray streaks while the heater hummed low and steady. Shane sat slumped in the passenger seat, seatbelt crooked where he’d fumbled with it, jaw visibly swollen and wrapped in that faint stiffness that came after numbing started to fade. He stared out the window with profound seriousness, then down at his hands, then back up at the rearview mirror like it had personally offended him.

“I think,” Shane said slowly, carefully, “that traffic lights are very brave.”

Ilya glanced over, lips twitching. “They are doing important work.”

“They stand there,” Shane continued, nodding, “and everyone just… listens to them. No one questions it.”

“That is authority,” Ilya said solemnly. “You could learn from them.”

Shane hummed, apparently considering this, then fell quiet again, eyelids heavy. Ilya drove with one hand on the wheel, the other resting loosely on the console between them, content to let the nonsense run its course. He could feel the shift happening, though, subtle but unmistakable, the drugged looseness giving way to something rawer, less floaty.

At a red light, Shane turned his head.

He stared at Ilya like he was seeing him for the first time.

Ilya felt it immediately, that weight of attention, heavier than all the babbling before it. “What?” he asked gently.

Shane didn’t answer right away. His brows pulled together, his mouth trembled slightly around the gauze, and his eyes filled, fast and helpless. “I love you,” he said thickly, the words clumsy around the swelling but unmistakable. “I love you so much and I don’t know why my face is broken and I hate dentists and you waited and you’re right there and—”

His voice cracked completely.

Before Ilya could react, Shane was crying in earnest, shoulders hitching, tears spilling down his cheeks without restraint or pride or embarrassment, all the usual filters simply gone. He lifted his arms, awkward and pleading, hands opening and closing in the air between them like he couldn’t quite figure out the distance.

“Come here,” Shane sobbed, utterly undone. “Please.”

Ilya pulled the car over without thinking, hazards clicking on, the city briefly forgotten. He unbuckled his seatbelt and leaned across the console, gathering Shane carefully into his arms, mindful of the sore jaw, one hand cradling the back of his head while the other wrapped solidly around his shoulders. Shane collapsed into him with a broken sound, clutching at Ilya’s jacket like it was the only thing holding him together.

“I love you,” Shane repeated, muffled now against Ilya’s chest. “I don’t say it enough. I think about it all the time. I think about it constantly. You’re… you’re my person.”

Ilya closed his eyes, pressing his cheek to Shane’s hair, breathing him in. He felt the tears soak into his jacket and didn’t care at all. He rubbed slow, steady circles into Shane’s back, grounding, present, exactly where he’d chosen to be.

“I know,” Ilya said quietly, voice steady even as his chest tightened. “I love you too, *Shanya*. Always.”

Shane cried a little longer, softer now, like a storm burning itself out, his grip loosening as exhaustion took over. When his breathing finally evened, he stayed curled against Ilya, boneless and warm, trusting without question that Ilya would hold him up.

And as Ilya sat there on the side of the road, Shane in his arms, the city moving on around them, it struck him with startling clarity that this—this quiet, ridiculous, devastatingly human moment—was it. Not the ice, not the noise, not the rivalry or the spectacle.

Exactly here. Exactly this.

He tightened his arms just a little and stayed.

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