(wild and flourescent) come home (to my heart)

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(wild and flourescent) come home (to my heart)

by devereauxing

Summary

Yuna stares at him, bewildered and half way to offended.

Rozanov groans and drops his head into his hands.

“I am saying this wrong,” he mutters.

No shit.

“You just suggested euthanising my son.”

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

The boys leave to head back to Shane's cottage and Yuna makes it back inside — after waving them off with a kindly, maternal, *normal* smile — before she starts to shake apart at the edges.

"What the fuck," she mumbles into David's shoulder, huddled with him in their home where several bombs just went off. "Since their *rookie season?*"

"Apparently," says David.

And then, because she married who she married, he says: "We need to do the dishes before we head over later."

Yuna closes her eyes and counts three breaths.

"Okay."

"You won't want to do them when we get back," he continues, and she can feel him turning his head to look at them spread out on the dinner table. "And it's a nightmare to get dried cheese off once it's crusted—"

"David," she interrupts, eyes still closed. "I really don't care about the dishes right now."

"Right."

"But," she says with a sigh, because she has learned to verbalise this kind of stuff over the years. "I appreciate that you're thinking about it."

He hums and tightens his arms briefly around her before setting his chin atop her head. He sways her a little and then, after a moment: "He liked my pasta."

"*He* is Ilya fucking Rozanov," Yuna scowls, wriggling back and out of his arms. "Ilya Rozanov!"

David nods at her, infuriatingly calm, "Sure is."

She takes a deep breath and it feels heavy in her chest.

"What the fuck?"

"It's okay," David soothes and sits down in his armchair. "Just let it all out."

She stares at him and feels genuinely insane.

"How are you not freaking out about this?" she asks.

David shrugs, "He's just a kid."

"He's *Ilya Rozanov*," she repeats, just in case he needs to hear it again.

“That too.”

The thing is, there’s something else hovering on the edge of her mind that Yuna doesn’t want to look at too closely. So, Ilya Rozanov it is.

She paces.

“Ilya Rozanov. Ilya Rozanov! Ilya *Rozanov*?”

“*Yuna*.”

And that’s what undoes her.

“Oh, Yuna,” David sighs and moves to sit on the floor with her, cradling her again in his arms as his knees creak. “It’s going to be okay.”

He couldn’t tell us is what she tries to say. *We made him scared* is unintelligible. *What if he hurts him* she can’t even think and she can’t dislodge either.

They rock together on the floor as she works to bring her breathing under control until, finally, her sobs taper into sniffles and hiccups. The heaviness stays in her chest and, even though David’s eyes are dry, she knows he feels it too.

*

It feels… weird, uncomfortable almost, to text Shane before they leave for his cottage.

David, when she tells him this, just says that if she wants to risk walking in unannounced she’s welcome to do so but that he has had quite enough of that today, thanks.

As it is, they don’t get a response from Shane (a simple 👍 that she’s not convinced was actually sent by *Shane*) until, if they’d left when they had sent the message, they’d have already arrived.

When they *do* arrive, Shane is in the shower.

Rozanov opens the door to them and that, too, feels weird.

“Hello!” he greets, bouncing on his toes and in a completely different outfit to the one he’d been wearing earlier. “Thank you for texting, Shane is showering,” Yuna’s left eye twitches. “I can take this for you?”

She passes over the covered dish and hurries through the door. There is the slosh of liquid and then David, behind her, says: “I brought the rest of the bottle.”

“Ah!” Rozanov exclaims happily. “This is second best thing to happen to me today.”

“Uh—”

“Come, come,” Rozanov says, shuffling past Yuna and into the kitchen with the chicken and vodka. “If we let bugs in the house, Shane will murder me.”

David laughs and closes the door behind him.

From the kitchen, clinking noises, as Rozanov deposits the chicken in — she hopes — the warmer.

She huddles into David’s side in the entry way and, when he goes to move into the living room, yanks him back. He raises an eyebrow at her.

Awkwardly, they loiter.

“Hey!”

Shane, thank God, comes down the stairs, towelling off his hair.

“When did you guys get here?”

“Just now, bud,” David says warmly, and moves forward to give him a hug in greeting. “Ilya let us in.”

“Hey, honey,” Yuna greets him, moving forward for her own hug. She forces herself not to cling any harder, or longer, than normal.

When she moves back she sees that Rozanov is leaning in the doorway watching them, smiling. Above her head, Shane is smiling back at him.

“Thanks for letting them in,” Shane directs to Rozanov who shrugs languidly.

“I thought maybe to leave them outside, but they brought good vodka so…”

“Oh, well in *that* case,” Shane rolls his eyes, but his shoulders are loose and relaxed. His whole body, Yuna realises, has orientated towards Rozanov since he entered the room.

Jesus Christ.

“I’m surprised you don’t have a glass already,” Shane teases, and Yuna wonders if he knows. If he even notices the way he’s slowly but surely making his way across the room, his parents left behind.

Rozanov’s nose scrunches, “Ah, I tasted the sauce. Lots of garlic. I need to brush my teeth, this vodka is worth it.”

Next to her David bounces on his toes happily.

“Must be, if you’re willing to brush your teeth again,” Shane says and, what?

Yuna’s confused disgust must show on her face because Rozanov rushes to explain, “No, no, no. I brush my teeth! They are mostly fake, but I brush! *Hollander* has gross toothpaste, but I

brush anyway even though it tastes like feet!"

"It tastes like *cinnamon*," Shane objects, but he's grinning at Rozanov like he hung the sun, the moon and all the stars in the sky. "And you forgot your toothpaste — which," he takes a break from gazing at *Ilya Rozanov* with his heart painted on his sleeve to dart a look across to Yuna and David. "Is ridiculous, who forgets *toothpaste*?"

Yuna has forgotten toothpaste on nearly every trip she has ever taken.

David, wisely, is silent — though he does give her a long side eye.

"I could have forgotten toothbrush," Rozanov tells Shane, sly grin lurking at the corners of his mouth.

"Absolutely not," Shane recoils, genuine disgust colouring his features. "You can use my toothpaste but no. No way."

Rozanov visibly bites back a response before settling on, "I did not forget my toothbrush. Lucky for me." He looks up at David with theatrically wide eyes, "I think I would be left outside."

David snorts and ambles his way over the two of them, "Bud, I think you'd be shipped back to Boston."

Rozanov proceeds to make the most pathetic face at Shane that Yuna has ever seen in her life.

"You shoulda texted," David tells Rozanov, clapping him on the shoulder. "Or, well, had Shane text. We could have brought some over, we use the mint stuff."

Rozanov shrugs, makes no move to displace David's — overly familiar, in Yuna's opinion — hand and says, "Is okay. I have to taste it anyway, but thank you."

David blinks at him.

Next to them, Shane looks like he wants to disappear into the Earth and never return.

"So!" Shane exclaims, slapping his hands on his legs like he can undo that last interaction if he just makes a loud enough noise. "Dad, did you still need that charger?"

"Uh—"

"I think I know where it is," Shane continues, aggressively shuffling David out of the room and out of hearing range from whatever Rozanov might say next.

Hey, what about me? Yuna wants to ask.

In the doorway, Rozanov has straightened considerably and is watching her with wide eyes.

"Would you like a drink?" he asks.

“Yes,” she responds, just over the cusp of too quickly.

He purses his lips, just slightly: “Water?”

This motherfu—

“I will get vodka.” Stay of execution: granted. “We will wait in the living room, yes? I will bring it,” he hurries back into the kitchen.

When he brings her the vodka in the living room, just one glass and the bottle left in the kitchen, she shoots it like she’s nineteen again and trying to impress that Hollander hockey player at a post-game celebration.

It didn’t really work back then and it certainly doesn’t now, Rozanov gazes at the now empty glass mournfully.

“It is really good vodka,” he tells her seriously, and moves to grab her glass again as if she will appreciate a second glass better.

“How are you going to be together?” she asks. It is not a mistake, it’s not something that spills from her lips unbidden. These are things she needs to know. “How *can* you be together? In this environment? Doing what you do. Competing?”

Rozanov leans back and moves away from her, leaves her glass on the coffee table where she slammed it.

Briefly, she regrets that. He used the crystal glassware.

He moves around to the other side of the coffee table and settles on the couch opposite her.

Well, settles is one word for it. He perches, really, right on the edge and *waits*.

“Don’t you hate it when he beats you? When he wins and you lose?”

He continues to wait.

Yuna mulls. No, she’s done for the moment.

She gestures for him to speak.

“I always want,” Rozanov says slowly before pausing, his jaw shifting as if he needs to roll the words around before he can say them. Like he needs to feel them on his tongue to see if they taste true. “To beat him. Always. I need it.”

Yuna cocks her head and tries very hard not to say what she is thinking: *That sounds fucked up*.

The David that lives in her head — the ‘what would David think’ lens that sits so naturally after so many years of sharing a life together, providing their own particular brand of clarity — says, smile colouring his voice: *Your boy’s met his match*.

Yuna waits as the silence sits between them for a long moment. Rozanov's eyes dart around the room.

She clears her throat and, when his eyes meet hers almost immediately, raises a brow.

He sighs, shoulders up around his ears.

"I am… good, yes?" his fists, clenched on his knees, tap once, twice, three times. "At hockey. I am very good."

Yuna's lip curls without her permission and Rozanov, tracking her face, barks out a laugh.

"No, no, no," he guffaws with a cocky grin, and it's the same damn grin she spent years scoffing at when the camera panned to him sitting in the sin bin, decorating his face. "I am! I am!"

His arms spread wide, gesturing to himself.

"You are," she allows, and fights the urge to smile back in the face of his booming laughter.

Ilya Rozanov is a large man but it is only now that he is laughing, shoulders shaking and cheeks curved, that he appears to take up space across from her.

"I will remember this day," he tells her, leaning conspiratorily across the coffee table towards her. "Stanley Cup? Pah, dime a dozen," *dime a dozen* is said as one word, mushed together, and Yuna bites back another smile at the English expression, picked up contextually and slipped into his vocabulary. Very nearly perfectly. "But I am a good hockey player! Said by Yuna Hollander?"

Rozanov falls back into the couch, shaking his head and pointing at her. "This is a true prize."

"You're okay."

"Woosh!" Rozanov mimes an arrow to the heart and slumps further into the couch.

"But you're no Shane," she continues. Then, to make it clear that she has no intention of letting him escape: "That must be hard, if you need to beat him."

Rozanov squints at her, eyes sly.

Yuna smiles at him.

He huffs, muttering something under his breath in Russian — something something *Hollander* something.

"You are right. I am not Shane, I cannot be."

Pride flutters in her chest.

"He is generational talent, yes?" Rozanov says, his eyes darting off to the side once more.

This time Yuna follows his gaze and — oh.

The bookcase Rozanov keeps looking at, his eyes drawn back again and again helplessly, is covered in photos of Shane. Shane himself had protested having them in his new house when he'd moved in, but Yuna had sent David over with two boxes, one filled with photographs and the other frames, and told him not to come home until there were at least ten decorating the cottage.

The bookshelf, she thinks, was David's work.

Shane, four years old and wobbling onto the ice with a determined scowl peers out at them. Shane, nine years old and stood awkwardly next to his first Bell Capital Cup as the blurs of his teammates celebrate in the background. Shane: eleven, fourteen, seventeen; Shane, seventeen and smiling with devastation in his eyes and a silver medal around his neck at the International Prospect Cup.

So are you sits on the tip of her tongue; she then almost swallows it in surprise.

"He knows so much about hockey and it is, to him, it is not a game. It is more. I think, sometimes, he will be playing on the ice until he dies, like Scott Hunter. Old dog that needs to go to sleep — be put to sleep — but it is too hard when they look at you with big eyes, yes?"

Yuna stares at him, bewildered and half way to offended.

Rozanov groans and drops his head into his hands.

"I am saying this wrong," he mutters.

No shit.

"You just suggested euthanising my son."

He looks up at her, brows scrunched, "Euthanising?"

"Put to sleep."

"Ah, euthanising" he nods, jaw shifting again. "Euthanise?"

"Yes," Yuna says and, because this is a new word for him, adds: "Euthanised, in past tense."

"We will euthanise Scott Hunter," Rozanov says firmly. "He should be euthanised. I will be euthanising Scott Hunter's hope for another Cup next season. This is correct?"

"Stop saying euthanise."

Rozanov grins at her, wry, before nodding amiably, "I will save for the ice."

The image of Scott Hunter swinging at Rozanov next season flashes in Yuna's mind, alongside it is the knowledge that when it happens she will know exactly what was said to

prompt it.

Worse, if Hunter has his traditional mid-season fall off, she might agree.

This time she doesn't have to chase him back on topic, he returns by himself.

"He loves it." He nods over at the bookshelf: "Hockey."

"Yes."

It is one of the greatest joys of her life that her son gets to play the game he loves for a career. That they were able to give him everything he needed so that he could go on to be the best in the world. All of the sacrifice: time lost to road trips and airports; the early days when sponsorships were something to be dreamed of and every credit card bill felt like an impossible ask; the broken bones and the horrible, awful, *cruel* taunts that couldn't be stopped and, later, that Shane stopped telling them about.

All of it was worth it for the love Shane has for the game.

"I don't."

What.

"What?"

Rozanov shrugs at her, that wry grin tugging at his lips again. Wobbling his head — *coquettish*, Yuna's mind supplies — he continues: "Not like that. Not like him. I like to be good, to be *great*," he waggles his eyebrows at her.

Yuna is not amused by this. She is not endeared.

Liar, chides the David in her head.

"But I get bored easily. I can be lazy. No discipline."

"Okay," Yuna says but—

Shane comes by his hockey fanaticism honestly, is the thing. When Yuna had found out she was pregnant the first thing she had bought, with no thought to anything necessary, was a Metros jersey size N. She could reliably rattle off the roster for each team in the league every year, and each Metros roster going back to '81.

And there were players who didn't fill their jerseys. Who weren't worth their skates.

Hell, there were other #1 draft picks whose promise evaporated as soon as they made their way up from the juniors. Kids who signed for millions of dollars and ended up riding the pine until they were traded into oblivion, fans spitting their names with a scoff and wistful what-if's for the experienced players that had been sent packing to make space for the next generation.

Ilya Rozanov filled his jersey.

Ilya Rozanov had always filled his damn jersey.

“I will tell you a secret,” Rozanov announces, startling her out of her thoughts. “Not even Shane knows.”

Yuna’s felt her eyes widen, “Uh—”

“Is nothing bad,” Rozanov assures her, his hand waving her concerns down. “I was not going to come to North America. My father wanted me to join the KHL.”

The number of things Yuna knows about Rozanov’s father expands, doubling in length:

1. He is dead.
2. He was an idiot.

“But,” Rozanov continues, eyes drifting back to the bookshelf. “When I was seventeen I played a game against Canada. And it was not boring.”

That said, he slumps back.

Ta da.

“It wasn’t boring,” Yuna repeats incredulously.

“Yes,” Rozanov says, nodding at her as if they are on the same page.

Yuna isn’t sure they’re in the same *book*.

Slumping back herself, she turned his words over in her head. *And it was not boring*.

In the privacy of her own mind she can admit, with the passing of years and — not insignificantly — the soothing balm of Canada’s win in 2009, that there had been a new kind of thrill watching Shane be challenged on the ice by a peer in 2008.

A hockey team was just that, a *team*, and so of course Shane had often been beaten during games. He was good, the best in his age group in fact, but he was still just one player. It had been a struggle, though, towards the end of his junior career to keep him challenged.

But that game in Saskatchewan had been different.

Even more so, watching Shane prepare for that game had felt different. Shane had known that he was going to be facing something *new* on the ice.

And she couldn’t argue, really. It wasn’t boring. It still wasn’t.

There was a reason that the Hollander-Rozanov rivalry had been so popular, right from the very beginning. It was the same reason that it had continued in intensity for nearly a decade: when those two were on the ice together it was never boring.

God, just look at the increasingly transparent attempts by the league to come up with All Star themes that kept them on opposing sides over the years.

But, like David had said, even when they were put on the same team the chemistry was palpable.

It was her turn, now, to study the photographs on the bookshelf. And she found herself thinking, not for the first time, of Shane's career and the rivalry that had defined so much of it.

It was frustrating sometimes to listen to the pundits, the fans, even the other players hone in on it: the great hockey rivalry of Hollander and Rozanov. She often complained to David how unfair it was that Shane's achievements weren't considered on their own merit, how their careers were tied to each other so intrinsically that Rozanov's name appeared on Shane's Wikipedia page nearly as many times as Shane's own.

Now, with Rozanov sitting opposite her with his bare toes curling in the fibres of the rug that she'd spent three hours convincing Shane to buy, the old familiar thought process began reconfiguring itself. One step back, head tilted to the side like Shane, so many years ago, trying to make sense of a pointillist landscape at the National Gallery and — *oh.*

"You need to beat him," she murmurs, mostly to herself but also to Shane, his jubilant grin from the 2009 International Prospect Cup cracking something open in her chest.

The photograph is, she notices for the first time, in a shared frame with its 2008 counterpart.

"I need to *try*," Rozanov tells her, and he, too, is looking at Shane aged just eighteen and shining like he was on top of the whole damn world. Brightly, he adds: "It is not as fun to beat anyone else."

"There are other good players," she points out, but it's half hearted at best.

She blinks away from the bookshelf, and the ink stain spread of new understanding that is recolouring the past eight years faster than she can come to terms with, to Rozanov giving her a sardonic look.

"Yes, there are good players." He hums, shimmying his shoulders until he's practically snaking his way on to the floor. "And then there is," Rozanov's voice takes on a breathy affectation: "*Shane Hollander*."

Yuna laughs, and doesn't fail to notice the smug joy that steals across Rozanov's face when she does.

"Well," she says with a shrug. "Generational talent, what can you say?"

"Pfft," Rozanov scoffs, still nominally sitting on the couch but practically laying half on the floor. "He has weak backhand. A true generational talent would have a strong backhand. Maybe, actually, true generational talent would have a move with backhand shot named for them."

Yuna is about to retort — *a true generational talent wouldn't need to rely on theatrics*, which she would at least somewhat believe — when they are interrupted.

"Not this shit again," Shane huffs, stomping his way over to shove Rozanov fully to the floor and take his spot on the couch. "My backhand isn't weak."

David, leaning in the doorway, shakes his head at her. *Not the time*.

"Of course not, *malysh*," Rozanov coos, shuffling over to lay his head on Shane's knee and blink up at him — all fluttering eyelashes and faux innocence. "You have the strongest backhand in whole league. I am always saying this."

"You're so full of shit," Shane snaps, his hand stroking softly through Rozanov's hair.

At the same time, Yuna finds herself saying: "I wouldn't go that far, Ilya."

"Mom!"

"*Yuna*," David groans.

On the floor, Ilya has become one with the rug as he attempts to contain his mirth.

End Notes

dedicated to caro, girl we are so back

written in one sitting, no i have not edited this feel free to shout out any obvious glaring mistakes. every time i write in present tense i have fun for exactly the amount of time it takes for it to not be worth going through and changing to past tense. when will i learn.

i promise i am an OG em dash user c***G*T wishes it had my swag and great tits

feed me with comments and i'll love you forever

sarinataylor on tumblr

1/1/26 edit: if i'd known what kind of engagement this was gonna get i would have put some actual effort, im both sorry for that and awed by the passion for these characters and this universe. be gay, do crimes, love each and treat one another with kindness etc etc

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