

A Very Hollander Christmas

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A Very Hollander Christmas

by [Masterless](#)

Summary

Shane's extended family stays with him and Ilya for Christmas. Shit ensues.

Chapter 1

Shane found out he'd be hosting the family for Christmas while he was in Tampa for an away game.

"What?" Shane asked, hoping he'd heard his mom wrong over the phone.

"You're uncle Gavin found out that you guys have a week off this year," Yuna sighed. "I tried to get someone else to host, but you know how your dad's side of the family gets."

Shane sighed, pinching the bridge of his nose, brows furrowed slightly. "But we don't have a week off this year. We have three days, like every year."

"Technically, yes," Yuna agreed. "But you don't have any games on the Monday before Christmas or the Friday after Christmas, so your grandma thinks that you have enough time."

"At the cabin?"

"Yeah."

"Great." Shane sat down on the hotel bed and stared at the carpet. It was a very grey green colour, unpatterned and plain. Even Shane thought it was boring. "So, what, we're having everyone over at my house? I don't have enough guest rooms."

"We can put people in your guest rooms and maybe one in that little office room you have, and then everyone else can stay with me and David." Yuna sighed. "I'm sorry, Shane, I know it isn't ideal."

"It's... it's okay, mom," Shane said. "As long as Grandma doesn't stay at my house. Please put her in your guest room."

Yuna chuckled. "I'll keep her in my house, don't you worry."

Ilya frowned at the recipe book in front of him.

"Why is it called a pudding if it is not a pudding?"

Shane looked over his shoulder and shrugged. "I don't know. Uncle Gavin's from England and always insists we have these, so we make Yorkshire puddings. They're not bad, kind of like popovers."

"I do like popovers," Ilya said.

"So," Shane said, looking over the list in front of him that his mom had written out for him. He and Ilya had managed to get up to the cabin on the Saturday before Christmas, somehow. Shane was a little unclear on what had been said when Ilya and their coach talked, but they

had two whole days before the rest of his family showed up to prepare for the onslaught of people. “We’re making lamb for the main meat, but my little cousins won’t eat lamb so we also have sausages. We’ve got mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, green bean casserole made without mushroom soup, carrots, brussel sprouts, green beans, peas, and stuffing as sides. We’ve got uncle Gavin’s Yorkshire puddings. Cranberry sauce is in the freezer. We’ll be making enough gravy to drown a small child, so... that should be okay.” He checked the list again. “And a bunch of cheese and bread and crackers for Christmas Eve. And a vegan spinach and artichoke dip because Dana’s lactose intolerant. Everything that can be made with milk alternatives will be made with soy milk.” He glanced towards the fridge. “We have so much soy milk.”

“We have to cook all that?” Ilya asked, looking down at the list as he wrapped an arm around Shane’s shoulders. “That will take hours.”

Shane shook his head. “No, my aunts usually do most of the cooking. I help where I can, but I’m usually too overwhelmed to be of any use.”

“So who will be here?” Ilya hopped up to sit on the counter, pulling Shane between his legs and wrapping his arms around his husband’s shoulders again. “Go over the list with me again, I want to get it right.”

A small smile on his face, Shane rested his hands on Ilya’s hips, looking up at him. He knew that Ilya knew his family members by now. Ilya was just asking him to go over it again because going over the details, rehearsing the events he could, helped Shane to calm down.

“My dad’s family is coming over, so we’ll have lots of people in the house.” Shane slipped his hands under Ilya’s shirt. He didn’t want to start anything, he just wanted to feel his skin. “Grandma Hollander’s first name is Mildred, but everyone calls her...”

“Gamma,” Ilya supplied.

Shane nodded. “Gamma has five kids, two girls and three boys. The boys are my dad, David, my uncle Roger, and my uncle Kevin. Uncle Roger is married to...”

“Tina,” Ilya said. “The soccer mom from Florida. She has four kids of her own.”

“Yep. My cousins Thomas, Linda, Blake, and Dana.”

“Dana is married to a man called Robert, but everyone calls him Bob, even though he hates being called Bob. They have one kid named Albert.”

“Uncle Kevin married a woman named Cindy, and they had three kids, my cousins Jake, John, and Jessica.” Shane smiled a little again. “None of them are married because Jessica, the oldest, is 17, so we don’t need to worry about that.”

“Now your aunts.”

“Aunt Sarah and aunt Amanda. Sarah’s married to Gavin and they have...”

"Two kids, Mark and Anthony. Mark is married to a woman named Monica, but they have no kids."

"My cousin Anthony was married but they had a nasty divorce after his ex-wife found out he was cheating on her with her best friend. She has custody of their kids, so he won't be bringing them."

"Amanda is married to Jonas, from the Netherlands, and they have fifteen chickens and five guinea pigs, none of which are coming to Christmas dinner."

"Yep."

"So," Ilya said, taking in a deep breath. "That is Gamma Mildred, uncle Roger and aunt Tina with cousins Thomas, Linda, Blake, and Dana, who is also bringing Robert-Bob and their son Albert. Uncle Kevin and aunt Cindy with cousins Jake, John, and Jessica. Aunt Sarah with uncle Gavin and Anthony and Mark, who is bringing Monica. Aunt Amanda and uncle Jonas, who are unfortunately not bringing guinea pigs."

"Do you know how much they poop?" Shane asked, leaning his forehead against Ilya's collar. "I'm glad they're not bringing the guinea pigs."

Ilya chuckled. "Okay. We will have Mildred, Roger, Tina, Thomas, Linda, Black, Dana, Robert-Bob, Albert, Kevin, Cindy, Jake, John, Jessica, Sarah, Gavin, Anthony, Mark, Monica, Amanda and Jonas." He shook his head. "How are we going to fit them all?"

"Well," Shane said, head still resting on Ilya's chest. "Amanda and Jonas are staying here, and so are Dana and Robert with little Albert. Jessica, John, and Jake are all staying in the office space upstairs, which is going to be a squeeze, but it's doable. Everyone else is staying with my parents."

"They don't have enough guest rooms, either."

"They've got two guest rooms, a home office, and they can stay in the living room. They can't stay in our living room because that's where we'll all meet to unwrap gifts and all that shit. And I'd probably kill someone if they did."

Ilya chuckled. "I will help you bury the body."

Shane lifted his head and pressed a kiss to Ilya's smirk.

Monday came with a tension in the air and a foot of fresh snow. Ilya woke up to an empty bed and the smell of coffee, drawing him to the kitchen with a blanket wrapped around himself.

"You need to put on a shirt," Shane said in lieu of a greeting.

Ilya stared at him blearily for a moment. "What?"

"You need to put a shirt on," Shane repeated.

Ilya noticed that Shane's cheeks and the tip of his nose were very pink, the way his hair was pressed down from being under a hat. Anya sat at his feet, licking her paws. She still had snow in her fur. "You went outside?"

"Yeah, I just cleared the driveway." He sipped his coffee. "Put on a shirt, it's freezing and my relatives will be here soon."

"The driveway is a half mile long."

"Well, we do have a snow blower for a reason."

"We have two, you should have woken me up to help." Ilya poured himself a cup of coffee and sat next to Shane at the kitchen island. "I would have helped."

Shane pressed a kiss to Ilya's cheek. "I wanted to let you sleep."

"You smell like outside." Ilya wrapped his arms around Shane, surrounding them both with the blanket. "And you are cold."

"I know." Shane pressed the back of his hand to Ilya's stomach, chuckling when he flinched at the cold. "I told you that you should put on a shirt."

Ilya grumbled and went back to their room to do just that, joining Shane on the sofa in the alcove next to the kitchen. He always felt slightly sentimental about that sofa; it was where he and Shane promised to do their best to be honest with each other during that first summer they spent at the cottage. He laid down and rested his head in Shane's lap, sighing contentedly when Shane started running his fingers through Ilya's curls. Ilya patted the couch near his stomach and Anya jumped up, curling into him. She was warm and soft, her winter coat thick, like when he'd first met her.

"You didn't brush your hair this morning," Shane commented. There was no inflection in his voice, no judgement, just a statement of a fact.

"Is too hard," Ilya mumbled.

The timing of Ilya's latest depressive episode could have been better, but he knew that Shane didn't hold it against him.

"Do you want me to brush it for you?"

Ilya shook his head. "No. I just want to stay here with you."

Shane chuckled. "Okay. Until someone shows up, we can just stay here."

"Okay," Ilya whispered.

As Ilya drifted back to sleep, Shane watched the snow fall from the tree branches near the houses. The lake was frozen, but probably not thick enough to skate on just yet, though he

thought that might be by the next day. He liked skating on the lake. It made him think of his childhood, when things were simpler. He loved his life as it was, he loved Ilya and Anya and his parents, loved that they no longer had to hide their relationship from the world, but he did miss being a kid. Sometimes, he still felt like he was a kid, or at least a teenager, but he was learning that it was a pretty normal thing for people to feel. Being an adult didn't mean he no longer liked fun things, it just meant that those fun things changed. He still liked video games and playing hockey (hell, it was his job), but he also enjoyed reading far more than he had when he was a kid.

Shane found himself going down a strange and winding thought path, and while it didn't make him feel sad, it definitely made him feel contemplative. He didn't often get time to just sit and think, what with his usually packed schedule, but he found that he enjoyed the quiet surrounding him, broken only by Ilya's soft snores and Anya's breathing. It was peaceful.

And then the doorbell rang.

Ilya flinched, waking himself and Anya up. He scrubbed a hand over his face, looking up at Shane, who gave him a small, tight smile.

"And so it begins."

By dinner time on that Monday, Shane wanted to pull his hair out.

"How could we have forgotten about the day before Christmas Eve?" he whispered to himself, looking in his fridge, waiting for inspiration to hit.

It didn't.

Ilya walked up behind him. Shane only knew that Ilya's smile was fake because he knew the Russian so well; the corners of his mouth were too tight and that sparkle that Shane loved wasn't in his eyes.

"What's up?" Shane asked.

"If your uncle Gavin asks me one more question about the USSR," he said, "I'm going to throw a chair at his head." He rested his forehead against the back of Shane's shoulder and sighed. "I've been getting out of it by pretending that my English isn't that good. He told me that he doesn't watch hockey, so he never sees any interviews with me. He doesn't know that I'm practically fluent."

Shane huffed a small laugh through his nose. "Yeah, I should have told you that he's a history professor, shouldn't I? Must have slipped my mind."

"No, you told me," Ilya corrected. "Just not that his specialty was Russian history."

"I didn't know that."

“Yes, well, he didn’t know that you now play for the Centaurs, so I think not knowing his chosen region of history is fine.”

Shane closed the fridge door and turned around, wrapping his arms around Ilya’s shoulders and pulling him close. “You weren’t even alive when the USSR collapsed.”

”Well, technically no.” Ilya pressed a kiss between Shane’s eyebrows. “I was born in 1991, and the Soviet Union’s official end didn’t happen until Christmas that year.”

Shane rolled his eyes. “Okay, so you were what, six months old? Do you remember that?”

Ilya chuckled, tucking his head into Shane’s neck. “Obviously. I have an incredible memory.”

They stood in the quiet dark of the kitchen, listening to Shane’s family babbling on in the other room. They knew that the family could probably see them, but they didn’t care all that much.

”Are we getting pizza?”

Shane and Ilya pulled apart slightly and looked down at Jake, Shane’s youngest cousin at 10.

“Pizza?” Shane repeated.

”Gamma said that we could get pizza if you guys don’t know what to make,” Jake said. “Well, she said if you guys can’t figure out what to make, but it kind of means the same thing.”

Ilya sighed. “There aren’t any pizza places near enough to deliver.”

”There’s one,” Shane said. “But putting in an order for all of us wouldn’t be possible anyway. We would have had to put it in like, a week ago.”

Jake shrugged. “How many pizzas would we have to get?”

”There are 26 of us, so a lot,” Shane said.

”But Dana doesn’t eat cheese and Albert’s a baby.”

”Okay, that’s still 24 people. We’d need like...”

”At least five,” Ilya said. “Would we be able to put in an order for five large pizzas?”

It was Shane’s turn to sigh. “We can check, I guess.” He stepped out of the comforting ring of Ilya’s arms and pulled open a drawer next to the sink, taking out a pad of paper and a pen. “Let’s go see what people want.”

”All I’m saying,” Shane’s grandma was saying, “is that a well organized host would have had something planned for the first night.”

Ilya could feel Shane grow tense next to him. Their legs were pressed together where they sat on the sofa, paper plates of pizza in their laps, and Shane was slightly hunched over. It was all a lot for him, Ilya knew, the amount of people and noise in their house, in their place to come and relax and be alone. Ilya was really starting to dislike his grandmother.

It must have shown on his face because she turned her sickly sweet smile at him. “What’s wrong, Ilya?” She pronounced his name “Ill-eee-ah”.

”Ilya,” he corrected. “Il-ya.”

”You look confused,” she said, ignoring him.

”Is just...” He looked at Shane, and his husband must have seen something on his face, too, because the corners of his mouth twitched up just slightly. “We have different custom in Russia.”

”I see,” she said. “Well, I don’t know what goes on in Russia, but here in Canada, we prepare for having guests.”

”No, no, we do as well.” He sent her a fake apologetic smile. “My English is not great, so please forgive me if I say... wrong thing. In Russia, when host is asked to...” He looked at Shane, a look of confusion on his face, one that Shane saw right through. “Well, host, the guest are not so-“

”Is,” she corrected.

”What?”

”You said ‘the guest are’. When it’s one person, one guest, it’s ‘is’. The guest is.”

”Ah, I see.” Another apologetic smile. “When host is asked to host, the guest is not normally so rude.”

Her face went bright red, and her assembled kids and in-laws looked down at their plates, avoiding her eyes. Shane was staring at his slice of pizza, biting his bottom lip to stop himself from laughing. Ilya could see Yuna doing the same thing out of the corner of his eye, while David was covering his mouth completely, his shoulders heaving with barely contained laughter.

”Is just,” Ilya started again, “this is Shane’s house. This is our home. We... make things good in house, so that... what is word?” He turned to Shane. “How you say ‘neblagodarnaya suka’ in English?”

He could hear the laughter in Shane’s voice when he said, “Honoured grandmother.”

Ilya smiled. “So that honoured grandmother and family can spend holiday together. So, I think that one mistake should be...” He shrugged and waved a hand through the air.

”Brushed aside,” Shane supplied.

"Yes, brush side."

She didn't say anything to him or Shane for the rest of the night.

Later, Yuna found him in the kitchen as he refilled his glass of water. She leaned in conspiratorially, waving for him to do the same.

"What did you actually call her earlier?" she asked.

Ilya smirked. "Ungrateful bitch."

Overhearing conversations was a given when people were in such close proximity. What Ilya didn't realise, however, is just how many conversations he would overhear between Shane's cousins Thomas and Blake that were about Shane. Specifically, about how they were better at hockey than Shane.

"I mean, if it wasn't for my stupid knee being broken in college, I could have been drafted, too," Thomas said.

"Yeah," Blake agreed. "And if you'd've been drafted, you would have definitely done better than he's doing. If I'd wanted to pursue a career in hockey, I could have, too. We're both way better players than he is."

"He only got in because he's half Korean or some shit. Diversity draft, you know."

It made Ilya's blood boil. The blatant racism and malice pointed towards his husband made him want to commit acts of violence, but what could he do?

Well, on Christmas Eve, Ilya could ask Shane's cousins if they wanted to play a little two on two hockey with him and Shane.

"Keep us on toes," he said.

They agreed, smirking at each other.

"We'll definitely beat them," Blake muttered.

"Pair of limp wrists, course we will."

Ilya was really loving the fact that they all thought his English was terrible. They said more around him than he figured they usually would. He got Shane alone in their bedroom while they were getting ready.

"Don't go easy on them, okay?" Ilya said.

"What?" Shane asked. "They're not good players, if we don't go easy on them, we'll thrash them."

"They think you're not a good player and that they could beat us because we are a pair of, and I quote, 'limp wrists', so. I think we should kill them."

Shane's eyes darkened with anger, but she shook his head. "No, it's still not fair."

"Shane," Ilya said, taking his husband's face in his hands. He pressed a quick kiss to Shane's mouth. "They called you a diversity draft, because you're, and again I'm quoting, 'Korean or some shit'. They don't deserve fairness."

"Let's fucking annihilate them."

They skated out on the ice, setting up goals and marking out boundaries using cones. Shane and Ilya took the net that was further out, just in case the ice was too thin for them to skate on. They wanted to thrash Shane's cousins, not kill them from hypothermia. The game started with Shane in the middle with Thomas, who smirked at him with self assured glee. David stood next to them, holding the puck.

"Ready to lose, Shane?" Thomas asked.

"You fucking wish," Shane replied.

David dropped the puck. Shane acted quicker and won the face-off, skating the puck down the small area they'd agreed on and scoring a point in less than a minute. The day went on like that; Shane and Ilya absolutely thrashed Thomas and Blake, the two of them working together like a well oiled machine. As the sun grew lower and lower in the sky, Thomas and Blake found themselves panting in the snow near the edge of the lake.

"You good?" Shane asked.

"Yeah, you good?" Ilya repeated. "Not too tired after being beaten by some limp wrists, are you?"

Blake looked at them with wide eyes. "What?"

"I may be gay, but I can still kick your ass at hockey," Shane said. "I could kick your ass with my eyes closed. And for the record, I'm half Japanese, dipshit."

Shane smirked slightly at the shocked and kind of scared look on his cousin's faces. He backed up on the ice, skating away to clean up the nets and cones. Ilya stared down at the two on the ground.

"What?" Thomas snapped.

"Why do you think you're better than him?" Ilya asked.

Thomas snorted derisively, shaking his head. He stood and stepped close to Ilya, brows drawn together in anger. He thought he was being intimidating, but Ilya stood just over half a foot taller than him on his skates.

"Why the fuck are you eavesdropping on us?"

"I wasn't. You talk loud enough for the whole house to hear you." Ilya tilted his head slightly. "Shane earned his place on every team he's ever played on. He's worked his ass off to get where he is. Why do you think that you're better than him when you've done none of that?"

"Go fuck yourself, Rozanov."

"You're not giving me an answer."

"Ilya." Shane glided over and stopped next to his husband. "Just let it go."

Christmas morning came with another foot of snow.

Shane woke up to kisses being peppered down his neck and chest, a hot tongue flicking across his nipples, the right and then the left and then down.

"Mmm," Shane mumbled "Morning."

"Morning," Ilya whispered, licking his way down Shane's stomach. "Merry Christmas."

"I like waking up like this." Shane moaned as Ilya mouthed over his dick in his briefs, burying his fingers in Ilya's hair. "Is this my gift?"

Ilya chuckled, slowly sliding Shane's underwear down. He took Shane in his mouth, moaning when Shane's fingers tightened in his curls. It didn't take long for Shane to unravel beneath him, pulsing warm against his tongue and the back of his throat. Shane moaned again when he saw Ilya swallow. Ilya kissed his way back up his husband's stomach, sucked one of his nipples into his mouth, and then latched onto his neck.

"You're gonna leave a mark," Shane sighed.

"They already know we're married." Ilya licked over the bite he'd left. "They know we fuck."

"They probably don't want to be reminded of it on Christmas morning."

"I would fuck you on the sofa if it meant your grandmother would never talk to me again."

Shane laughed, holding Ilya close and stroking a hand through his hair. He could feel Ilya's hard cock against his leg and shifted slightly, drawing a low moan from his husband.

"You can fuck me now," Shane offered in a murmur.

"Just your thighs."

Ilya pressed another kiss to the mark he'd left. After grabbing the lube from the bedside drawer, he slicked himself up as Shane watched him, the pink flush on his cheeks making his freckles stand out. Ilya lifted Shane's legs and propped them against his chest, lining himself up. He pressed into the tight space between Shane's thighs, fucking into it as if he was

fucking Shane's ass. Shane pressed his thighs closer together, a hand squeezing Ilya's pec, urging him on. It didn't take him long to come, and he managed to keep himself quiet. When he was done, he laid back down next to Shane, resting his head on his husband's shoulder and panting.

"I love how hot that makes you," Shane said.

Ilya chuckled.

"It feels weird, but it also feels nice." Shane pressed a kiss to Ilya's forehead. "We should clean up and make breakfast. Everyone's going to be here soon."

"Wait, you don't celebrate Christmas in Russia?" Jake asked.

"No, we do," Ilya said, munching on some chocolate. "Is just, we celebrate later. Our Santa, Grandfather Frost, and his granddaughter bring gifts in the New Year, not the 25th of December. Or, if Orthodox Christian, they celebrate on the 7th of January. I don't really know why."

They had spent hours opening presents. It was kind of funny at times, watching Shane pretend to be thankful for the gifts he got from his family. They obviously didn't know him very well, so they were all very generic. His grandmother had even bought him something with his own face on it.

"Thank you, Gamma," he said, his voice flat.

"Oh, you're welcome," she said, smiling at him, not realising that his flatness wasn't his usual affectation, but that it was him trying to not laugh. "I saw it and immediately thought of you."

"Can't imagine why," Ilya heard Yuna say under her breath.

One of the great things about the past few days was that Ilya learned just how much Yuna disliked her mother-in-law. The night before, after being forced to play board games, Ilya had excused himself for a smoke, standing on the patio in the freezing cold December air. He heard footsteps crunching through the snow towards him and expected Shane's arms to wrap around him, but when he looked, it was Yuna.

"Hi," she said. "Mind if I take a drag?"

He offered her the cigarette, but she shook her head.

"I was joking." She smiled at him. "I don't smoke. Can't really stand the smell of it."

Ilya blew a stream of smoke away from her, tapping the ash off his cigarette. "Is a bad habit, I know. Shane tells me this every time I smoke."

"But it's soothing, right?"

He nodded.

She sighed. "Honestly, I'm a little jealous. I don't have anything to make everything feel better right now."

He raised an eyebrow at her, confused. "You don't like your family?"

"Oh, I like *my* family, but my parents moved back to Japan a few years after Shane was born. We don't get to see them much, so we usually see David's family for the holidays, and no, I don't really like them. I almost didn't marry him because of them."

Ilya put out his cigarette on the bottom of his shoe and put the stub in his pocket. "Really?"

She nodded. "Mildred was always..." Yuna sighed again. "Well, whenever someone asks, she says that she was surprised when David brought me home, but rushes to reassure them that she was always supportive of our relationship. It was a surprise when David brought Yuna home, but we always loved her, always." She snorted. "And when Shane was born, she was so quick to point out all the ways he was so much like his dad, so much like her side of the family. You know, he gets those freckles from the Hollander side of the family. He gets his love for hockey from the Hollander's. He's such a Hollander, that little one, just like his dad."

"She's a bitch."

"Amen." Yuna turned to look back inside, to find her husband and son. "But I couldn't leave him just because of her. He got into so many fights with her because of me, but he also let me fight my own fights. He defended me when I wasn't there and gave me backup when I was. From the very beginning, we were a team." She smiled. "We still are."

Ilya nodded. "I've noticed that she's more affectionate with her other grandchildren. I thought maybe it was because he's gay, I didn't think it would be because he is half Japanese."

Yuna hummed in agreement, turning back to look at him. "She almost didn't come this year, which I honestly think would have been better."

"Why not?"

"Because she doesn't like the fact that Shane's married to a man. It's not just that he's half Japanese, it is that he's gay, too. She's a racist, homophobic bitch, and the only reason that she came is because David threatened to cut all ties with her if she didn't."

"Christ."

They stood in silence for a moment before Ilya wrapped his arm around Yuna's shoulders. "Let's go back inside, it's freezing out here."

So, that Christmas morning, Ilya had a new respect for Yuna and David, one that he didn't even know he didn't have. They were the closest thing he had to his own parents, so the fact that he was still finding ways to love them more surprised him. It also made him more protective of all of them.

"You know," Shane's grandmother said as the Shane's aunts were getting up to start cooking the Christmas meal, "I think it's wonderful that we have so many women here to help with the cooking." She was looking directly at Yuna, who hadn't gotten up.

"You always tell me that you don't like my cooking," Yuna said, sipping her coffee.

"Well, we're making normal food today," Mildred countered. "So, you could help. It might teach you something."

"What is normal food?" Ilya asked from his seat on the floor, his back pressed to Shane's legs. Shane's hand in his hair stilled.

"Oh, well," Mildred said, turning a slightly surprised look to him. "You know. Food that everyone eats."

"I have never had Yorkshire puddings before," Ilya said. "That's not normal."

"Well, it's normal in England."

"So, is normal somewhere else?" Ilya chuckled slightly. "I've never had green bean casserole, either, and I didn't grow up eating turkey. That became more popular when I was teenager."

"People have different normals, Ilya."

He stared at her. "Il-ya. So Yuna's food is normal."

Mildred sputtered.

"What you mean is Canadian food? Or white people food, yes?"

"I-"

"Because if you want white people food, I can make you some borscht or solyanka. Is very normal and made by white people all over Russia."

"Well, then, traditional Christmas foods."

"Is tradition in Tokyo to get KFC on Christmas. We don't have ingredients for kulebyaka, which is tradition in Russia. Atidria is tradition in Ghana. You want these?"

"No!" Mildred was glaring at him now. "Traditional Canadian Christmas food! Yuna could learn to cook traditional Canadian Christmas food."

"But she does know?" Ilya looked at Yuna, who was trying not to laugh. "You know how to make mashed potatoes and carrots, yes?"

"I was just saying it would be nice if Yuna helped with the cooking." Mildred's lips were pursed tightly together. "I didn't need all the cultural foods, Ilya."

"Il-ya," he corrected again. "Then why not just say you think it would be nice if she helps? Why say that it is nice to have so many cooking and look at her with..." He turned to Shane. "How you say 'prezreniye'?"

"Disdain," Shane said. "Or scorn."

"Yes, with scorn."

Mildred stared at him for another moment before getting up and storming away into the kitchen.

Yuna leaned over Shane and ruffled Ilya's hair. "I love you, Ilya."

"Ya tebya lyublyu, Yuna."

Shane sighed, pressing a kiss into Ilya's hair. "Dinner's gonna be fun."

It was very fun.

Mildred did her best to sit everyone where she wanted them to sit; she sat at the head of the table, with her kids and their spouses next, then her grandchildren at another table altogether. Except, Ilya noticed, he wasn't sitting next to Shane, he was between Jake and Jessica. And Shane was with his parents at the table with Mildred.

"So that everyone is with their loved ones," Mildred said.

"Sorry," Ilya started.

"What?" she snapped.

"Is just, I'm not?" He looked between Shane's cousins, smiling slightly. "I do enjoy your company, but," he looked over to his husband, "my husband is over there. And I would like to sit with him."

"But that'll mess up the seating arrangement." Mildred sat down and smiled at her kids. "Let's start."

"Why does Shane get to sit with Gamma?" Blake asked.

"Yeah, why isn't he here with us?" Thomas asked.

Ilya looked between them. For two guys who were assholes the day before, they did seem genuinely annoyed that Shane wasn't with them.

"I wanna sit with Gamma!" Jake said, standing up in his seat.

"Jacob, sit down," Mildred snapped.

"Shane, switch with me!" Jake whined.

Shane started to stand up.

"Shane, sit," Mildred shouted. "We are all staying where we are! The couples are together, the grandkids are together. That's final."

"But I'm not with my husband," Shane said, still standing. "So the couples aren't all together."

"All the real couples are together."

The whole room went silent. Ilya's stomach clenched as he watched Shane, who was looking at his grandmother with a blank expression. He could see the gears grinding to a halt in Shane's brain, could almost hear the record scratch that would have played if their lives were a movie.

"Get out," Shane said, his voice quiet.

"What?" Mildred asked, her cheeks stained a blotchy red. "Speak up, Shane, we can't hear you."

"Get out," he repeated, louder this time. "Get out of my house."

"Now, Shane," Mildred said, a laugh in her voice, as if this were all some big misunderstanding. "Really, is this necessary?"

"Get out," he said one more time.

She sighed, folding her napkin onto her empty plate. "Shane, I think it might be time for you to take a moment alone. You know how you can get when there's a lot going on. We don't need another meltdown, do we?"

"Fuck you," he spat. "I was fucking eight years old. Get the fuck out of my house!"

"Shane, really, language! There are children here!"

"Get out of my house!" Shane's chair tipped back as he stormed out of the room, crashing to the tile floor as the room went silent again. He was only gone a moment before returning with Mildred's shoes. He shoved them into her hands and put a hand under her armpit, hauling her to her feet. "Get the fuck out of my house. I am tired of your homophobic, racist bullshit, so get the fuck out of my house and out of my life."

Ilya followed as Shane marched his grandmother to the front door. The whole family seemed to be following, actually, but none of them said anything. Mildred stood in front of the door, her shoes in her hands, and she looked from person to person around her.

"David, please," she started.

"You heard him," David said. "Get out."

She turned to her other kids. "Come on, this is ridiculous."

"Mom," uncle Roger said. "You said he wasn't in a real relationship. I'd kick you out, too."

Sniffing defensively, she shoved her feet into her shoes and opened the door, going out to stand near David's car.

Uncle Kevin sighed. "I'll drive her back to your house, Dave."

"Oh, no," David said. "You can get her stuff out of my guest room and then put her in a hotel. I'm sick and tired of her being awful to my family. I should have done that years ago."

"Absolutely," uncle Gavin said.

Later that night, Ilya turned over in bed to look at Shane, who was reading, or at least was attempting to. His glasses were perched on the tip of his nose and his eyes were closed, chin resting on his chest. His book was still open in his lap, but his hand was relaxed and his grip was failing quickly. Ilya reached over and took it from him, putting Shane's book mark into his place and putting it on his own bedside table.

The movements had jostled Shane awake. "I can do that."

Ilya smiled and pressed a kiss to his cheek. They laid in a peaceful quiet for a while, Shane's head resting on Ilya's shoulder, Ilya's hand in Shane's hair.

"I'm sorry," Ilya said suddenly.

"For what?" Shane mumbled.

"Starting shit with your grandmother."

Shane chuckled. "She deserved it. And Christmas dinner was really nice without her, so don't apologise. "

Ilya sighed and kissed Shane's forehead. "I love you, Shane."

Shane kissed Ilya's chest. "Ya tebya lyublyu, Ilya."

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

The conversation between Coach Wiebe and Ilya.

“We need to leave on Saturday,” Ilya said. “I know we have practice, but we have to leave earlier than we thought.”

”I’m not saying no,” Wiebe said, “but why?”

”Shane is being forced to host family Christmas. If we don’t go early, if he doesn’t have at least one day without the family being around, he will murder someone.”

”Seriously?” Wiebe laughed.

Ilya looked at him dead in the eye, no hint of laughter on his face. “He will murder someone, and I will help him hide the body. We will be on the run from the police and won’t be able to play again. We will be gay Bonnie and Clyde. He is Clyde, I am Bonnie.”

Wiebe nodded. “Okay, understood.”

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