

heart in your hands

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by [CherryBlossoms](#)

Summary

A clearing of the throat, and Ilya looked away from the doorway, meeting David's gaze. He tried a smile that sat awkwardly on his lips, more grimace than not, and David did the same. "Rozanov," he started, and Ilya's grimace deepened.

"Ilya."

"Right, sorry," David said uncomfortably.

What Ilya and David talked about while Shane and Yuna were outside.

Notes

So...heated rivalry has infected my brain. I read the books a couple years ago, and honestly forgot about them until the show and then the obsession kicked in. Fuck exams, fuck studying, I'm back writing and crying over edits:)

Any and all feedback is greatly appreciated. Enjoy!

Ilya watched Shane grab a cardigan for his mother as he stumbled towards the front door, shoulders curled towards his ears, head lowered, bracing himself for rejection. Ilya wanted to follow after him, to squeeze his hand or brush gentle fingers across his cheek, to give him the reassurance and care he so desperately needed, but one look from Shane as he stood had him staying put.

He needed to have a moment with his mother alone. Ilya understood, even if all he wanted to do was stand at Shane's side and conquer the fucking world with him, consequences be damned. Because it didn't matter how uncomfortable, or how scared Ilya himself was- he wanted to be brave for Shane, wanted to shield him from all the bullshit and cruelty he'd have to face.

Ilya knew cruelty, had been intimately familiar with it for as long as he could remember. Cruelty was woven into his skin, latching onto flesh and bone to become one with his being. He'd accepted the harshness, the suffocating weight of it pressing down on his chest, bleeding through the cracks of his rib cage.

From his mother, who had left an open, gaping wound behind no matter how much time passed or how much he grieved her. From his father, who had forced the weight of the world on his shoulders, who could never be satisfied no matter how much Ilya offered him. From his brother, who had despised Ilya almost as long as he could remember, who demanded Ilya give him everything as if he had earned it himself. From his people, his country, their expectations and judgement sitting heavy in his gut, a constant burn no amount of trophies or victories could extinguish.

Everyone expected something from him, wanted to bury their fingernails beneath his skin and leave a mark. And yet, Shane had managed that unbidden. Had left his mark, carved out a home for himself somewhere in his rib cage, and no matter how hard Ilya tried to be rid of him, tried to run from the overwhelming presence that was Shane Hollander, he could never escape. And he didn't want to, not anymore.

Because Ilya loved him. Loved him more than anything.

A clearing of the throat, and Ilya looked away from the doorway, meeting David's gaze. He tried a smile that sat awkwardly on his lips, more grimace than not, and David did the same. "Rozanov," he started, and Ilya's grimace deepened.

"Ilya."

"Right, sorry," David said uncomfortably. He leaned backwards in his chair, fingers too-tight around his glass as he brought it to his lips, wincing as he gulped it down. He sat the glass on the table as he cleared his throat again. "Ilya. How long have you been in Canada?"

"Couple days," Ilya replied, shooting a quick glance at the empty doorway, as if wishing for Shane would make him appear, his knight in shining armour coming to save him from this awkwardness. Ilya knew he wasn't the type of person someone would take home to meet the parents; he was too loud, too abrasive, his reputation preceding him. Even if they'd met under

different circumstances, met when Ilya was actually Shane's boyfriend and not just some man he had been sleeping with in secret for so many years, Ilya didn't know what he was supposed to say.

"Ah. And how long are you staying?"

"Another week. Maybe two, if Shane will have me."

David nodded as he poured himself another generous amount of vodka, tipping the bottle towards Ilya. When Ilya slid his glass a little closer, David smiled, a little more genuine, now.

"Are you flying back to Russia, after?" Ilya simply shook his head, sipping at his vodka just to keep busy as David continued to watch him. "Does your family know? That you're...gay? I'm sorry, Shane said you like both but I'm not sure what the term is."

"Bisexual," Ilya informed, a word he himself hadn't been sure of not too long ago. "And no. No family to tell. Parents dead, brother..." Ilya waved a hand through the air as he tried to find the right words. "Cut off. There's no one else."

"Oh." David's eyes were a little wide, a little guilty. He seemingly didn't know what to say after that, and the silence that settled between them was heavy, suffocating, made Ilya want to grab the half-empty bottle of vodka off the table and down it in one go. Instead he tightened his grip on his glass, thoughts running wild as he tried and failed to find something to say, to fill the empty space. David opened his mouth before any words could settle on Ilya's tongue long enough to stick. "I'm sorry, about your family."

"Is okay," Ilya said, shrugging, trying to ignore the way his chest tightened. He set his glass down, clasped his hands on the table, forced himself to meet David's gaze as he said, "I am sorry. For earlier." Ilya didn't really know why he was apologising, why he felt it his responsibility when all he was doing was loving Shane as he wanted, but the words escaped him without much thought. "Is not how you should have found out."

David's gaze softened as he leaned forward, as if he was going to reach out but thought better of it. "Oh no, you don't have to apologise. It's my fault, really. I should've knocked, or waited for him to answer his phone or, I don't know. I shouldn't have just barged in."

"You weren't expecting anyone else there. I understand." Ilya shrugged again. "And I'm still sorry."

David watched him for a long moment, before blowing out a breath, his lips twitching. "I'm going to tell you something, son. I'm glad I found out. Not how," he quickly added, smile growing when Ilya huffed out an almost laugh. "There are some things I don't need to see. But I care about Shane. If this is important to him, if this makes him happy, then I want to know about it." David sobered up, his gaze searching. "You said you love my son."

It wasn't a question, but Ilya said, "Yes." Didn't hesitate, didn't lie, because he was sick of having to pretend otherwise, of having to pretend the weight of his emotions weren't so heavy he thought he may burst every damn time he looked at Shane, every time he was allowed close enough to touch. "I love him more than anything."

"Those are some strong words."

"Is the truth," Ilya told him. He swallowed around the sudden lump in his throat. "I am not very good with words. Too many concussions, maybe. Too many emotions to explain. But is easy to tell you I love Shane. I have for a long time, now. He is it, for me. Nobody else would ever do."

"And you are willing to spend the foreseeable future in secret?" David asked after a beat.

"We have gotten very good at secrets," Ilya said quietly, half fond, half saddened at the admission. "It doesn't matter. I just want Shane."

David stared at him, expression unreadable. And then he nodded, once. "Okay," he said, just as the front door opened, Shane and Yuna near silent as they shuffled inside. He smiled, and Ilya couldn't help but smile back at him. "Welcome to the family then, Ilya."

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