

Mother & Sons

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Mother & Sons

by [Mack_Oliver](#)

Summary

Shane and Yuna have a longer conversation outside. This takes place right after Shane accepts his mother's apology for making him feel that he couldn't come out to her.

Notes

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

Shane wiped the tears from his eyes and decided to lighten the mood.

"Remember that time you tried to set me up with the Swedish princess at Wimbledon?"

"Oh my gosh, I'm sorry for that," Yuna said, putting her hand in front of her eyes, embarrassed by the memory of her awkward attempt to find a girlfriend for her gay son. Her son whom she had learned was gay just a few hours before.

"It's okay, Mom, you didn't know. You were just looking out for me, like you've always done. Princess Madeleine was funny. We had a good talk at the match, even if there was no spark either way for, um, well, obvious reasons. I think she clocked me as not interested... in women."

"I have to confess," Shane continued, "I went down a rabbit hole researching the Swedish royal family before we went to London that time."

"That's so you, always prepared," Yuna said.

"She's beautiful, but her brother Carl Philip is hot. Why didn't you connect me with a Swedish prince?"

Yuna let out a small laugh, remembering that Shane had a sense of humor sitting just below the surface of his earnest exterior. She wished he would let it out more often.

"But you found your Russian prince."

"Yeah, I did," Shane said softly. "It was hit or miss with Ilya for a long time. I was never sure if it would amount to anything more." Shane left out the rest of that thought, whether his relationship with Ilya would have amounted to anything more than secret hookups in hotels or at Ilya's house in Boston or his home in Montreal.

Yuna knew well enough not to pry into the details or the mechanics of how Shane and Ilya got to know each other. She had to respect the privacy of her son, and well, there were certain details that a parent didn't need or want to know about their child's intimate life. But she wanted to know one thing.

"When did you realize that Ilya was the one?"

Shane paused for a moment and looked out in the distance, collecting his thoughts. His gaze returned to Yuna, and he started to recount the events of the past year that led to this moment.

"There was one time, when the team was in Boston to play the Raiders, I, um, went to Ilya's house. I didn't realize then, but Ilya was trying to open up to me, which was hard for him because of the pressures he faces. He doesn't have a good relationship with his family, his father was dying, Russia isn't great for gay people. But I freaked out and fled the scene and didn't talk to him for a while. I didn't know how to love a man while still being a pro athlete. I, um, guess that's called gay panic. The hockey world hasn't exactly been a great space for

gay people. Then I met Rose, and tried so hard to be the straight guy that I thought the hockey world, and Dad and you, expected me to be."

"Oh, Shane," Yuna said remorsefully. "I'm so, *so* sorry."

"Mom, we're good, I think. We're coming out the other side," Shane replied kindly. "But there's more to the story that I think you should know. I was at a club one night with Rose in Montreal. By coincidence, Ilya was also there with some of his teammates. This was after I had run away from his house that time in Boston and was hiding while dating Rose."

Yuna winced when Shane said he was hiding in his relationship with Rose.

"And we just looked at each other, not for long, but I was like really upset that I wasn't with him. Turns out he was upset too."

"How did you know that he was upset?"

"That goes back to Rose, actually. A few weeks later, Rose and I were having dinner. She brought up what we both knew, that it wasn't working between us. She asked me if I had ever been with a guy before. I nodded yes."

"And that man was Ilya?" Yuna asked.

"Yes," Shane looked down wistfully for a moment, and then looked back up at his Mom.

"That was the first time I told anyone that I was gay."

"How did Rose take it?"

"Really supportive and understanding. More than I deserve. She's a great friend. We text a lot."

"I'm happy that you had someone to talk to," Yuna said, trying to hide her regret that her son didn't feel like he could talk to David and her.

"So, anyway, fast forward, at the All Star Weekend in Tampa, I saw Ilya for the first time since I ran out of his house in Boston, or well, since I saw him at the club in Montreal. On the first day, I ran into Ilya sitting in the hotel bar. Not to sound like a love-sick teenager or anything, but my heart just about jumped out of my chest when I saw him. I told him that Rose and I weren't compatible, yeah, that was the word I used. He all but said that he was happy that Rose and I broke up. That opened us up to talk, I mean, really talk. We had a few intense conversations that weekend. Really intense."

"I told him that I thought we were more than just f...", Shane caught himself before he could say f*** buddies, remembering that he was talking to his mom, "...friends, but there was something there, and that he knew it too. This hasn't been easy on Ilya either, with his family, Russia, hockey, and the rest. He didn't know if we could be a couple while also being professional athletes, rivals, in a sport that isn't welcoming to gay people. But I wanted to give it a try."

"A few weeks later, his father died and he went back to Russia for the funeral. He had a big argument with his brother. His brother is a leech and just takes money from Ilya and insults him. We spoke on the phone that night, and I let him unload all his thoughts to me. He talked in Russian, because he was having trouble with English. He was spinning. I didn't understand what he said, but I know that he said he loved me."

Yuna felt the waterworks in her eyes again and quickly wiped her eyes.

"He visited me at the hospital after I was hurt. I asked him to come to the cottage this summer. I don't really remember much since I was pretty high on painkillers at the time, but he didn't say yes then. I know now that he still wasn't sure we could be open about our relationship. Then Scott Hunter changed it all."

"I remember now. When Hunter kissed his boyfriend on center ice, you got a phone call. Was that Ilya?" Yuna asked.

"Yes. He told me that he was coming to the cottage. That's when I knew, Mom."

Yuna wanted to tell Shane again how proud she was of him, to make sure that he knew that, and to apologize again for the missteps that she and David took, or the cues about their son's real life that they missed or overlooked.

"Your father and I had trouble having children. I had a miscarriage before you were born."

"Mom," Shane said in a quiet voice, "you don't have to get into that."

"I want to, it's important. Then you came along, our miracle. We knew we couldn't have more children. So we decided to put all our efforts into you, to make it so you could become the best person you could be, who you wanted to be. Hockey became your passion, and we did all we could so you could pursue it."

"And you did that. Really well as it turns out!"

"But again, we didn't realize, I didn't realize, what pressure you were under with youth leagues, the draft, the Olympics, Stanley Cups, the sponsorships, being a role model for Asian kids, Swedish princesses for goodness' sakes, Rose Landry, all of that. And all the while, I didn't allow you to be yourself with us, and I let you down if you were unhappy or lonely."

Shane pulled Yuna in for another hug.

"Ilya and I, we're in a good place. I'm in a good place. You and Dad made all this possible, whether you knew it, whether I knew that," Shane said calmly, sensing that he needed to reassure his mother that it was all going to be okay. He knew, perhaps instinctually, that he would inevitably have panic attacks over the course ahead. He was never more sure, however, that there would be a future with Ilya as part of his family.

"OK. OK. OK. Enough," she said, stepping back after a few moments, composing herself and wiping the tears that had started to fall from her eyes again. She reverted to Hockey

Mom-Manager role.

"For the record, I do want grandchildren."

"Mom! Pressure! It's way too early to talk about that. I just came out to you!" Shane exclaimed with a touch of exasperation.

"I know, I know," Yuna replied with her hands up. "I just know you'd be a great dad."

"For the record, Ilya is *great* with kids," Shane said with a calmer but upbeat tone in his voice. "One day at the All-Star Weekend in Tampa, I was sitting on a lounge chair by the pool at the hotel, while Ilya was in the pool with a bunch of the other players' kids, having swim races with them. He intentionally lost all of those races and pretended he was attacked by a shark. The kids ate it up and couldn't stop laughing with him. Or at him. It was funny. Yeah, I think we both want to have a family, someday, but not today!"

"You and Ilya will be fantastic fathers. You will be the best dads, like you both are with everything you both do."

The smile on Shane's face started to grow, and his countenance became brighter. Yuna loved this version of Shane.

And then she added, "We have to talk about the plan."

Shane's smile froze, and Yuna instantly regretted what she had just said.

"The *plan*? Mom, really? Can we just take a breather for like a minute, maybe?"

"Of course, of course, I'm sorry. Let's go see what your father and Ilya are up to. I can't even imagine what they're talking about."

"He's a charmer," Shane responded, the smile returning to his face. "I'm sure Dad and Ilya are doing just fine. They might be making supper. Ilya makes a great tuna melt."

"Tuna melt, eh? That's good to know." Yuna said to her son with a fond smile, filing that fact away for future use.

They walked back into the house after Shane took her arm in his. Yuna realized for the first time that afternoon that she had seen in Shane's face and heard in his voice how deeply he loved Ilya and that he was happy. She knew without doubt that she and David were the luckiest parents in the world with a son like Shane. No, she thought, that wasn't quite right. They were the luckiest parents in the world with two sons like Shane and Ilya.

End Notes

The Shane-Yuna scene in Episode 6 was heartfelt and very well acted. I loved it, but wanted to give it a bit more upbeat ending after Shane accepts Yuna's apology.

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