

Mockingbird

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Mockingbird

by [Felxia](#)

Summary

"And if you ask me to, Daddy's gonna buy you a mockingbird
I'ma give you the world."

Misha and Ilya's quiet morning

Notes

Welcome to another one-shot, which will probably be the last one for the next two weeks, because I have final exams. As many have already noticed, the inspiration for this one-shot was an Eminem song. This is very close to me, so I had to write something about it ^^

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

The warmth of the living room enveloped Ilya like a soft blanket. Mornings at Shane's summerhouse were always different from those in the city, quieter, slower, as if time had deliberately slowed between the wooden walls. The fireplace still crackled softly from the night's fire, and the smell of coffee mingled with the resinous note of the wood and the fresh air streaming in through the half-open window.

The Russian stood barefoot on the wooden floor, dressed only in loose sweatpants. One hand gripped his coffee mug, the other leaned against the frame of the large window overlooking the forest. Outside, snow danced slowly, lazily, falling in soft flakes onto the tree branches. The world was white, silent, and still, as if someone had turned the volume down to a minimum.

Rozanov took a sip of coffee and closed his eyes for a moment. The warmth of the drink spread pleasantly, calmingly within him. He enjoyed these moments. No cameras, no ice rink, no crowds. Just him, the silence, and the thought that a few meters away, in the same house, two people were sleeping, people who were now his entire world.

His gaze returned to the snow. The flakes fell unevenly, swirling in the air, colliding with each other, only to disappear a moment later onto the ground. Ilya smiled to himself. There was something soothing about it, watching something that expected nothing from him.

He took another sip of coffee and sighed softly.

He thought of Shane. Of how this house had become his refuge as well. Of Misha, who had suddenly changed everything, even his own fears, made him more afraid, yet at the same time gave him a courage he hadn't known before.

Behind him, the house remained silent. No crying, no footsteps. Just the peaceful morning and the snow dancing outside the window.

Ilya stood there for a moment, absorbing the silence before the day had even begun.

After a moment, the quiet, irregular sound of tiny feet pattering against the wooden floor broke the silence. Ilya lifted his head slightly, and the corner of his mouth twitched in a familiar gesture. He smiled to himself and turned toward the source of the sound.

Misha stood in the entrance to the living room.

Little Misha, still a little lost in the world after waking up, his blond curls disheveled from sleep, sticking out in all directions. With one small fist, he rubbed his eyes, hazel-blue, still hazy, but already searching for a familiar silhouette.

In his other hand, he clutched a brown, stuffed bear, slightly worn, but clearly beloved. A gift from Svetlana, brought from Russia with a fond comment about "nephew," which had since become an inseparable part of his mornings and bedtimes.

The blanket was still wrapped around Misha's shoulders, the same one he'd slept under, too big, slipping, almost dragging on the floor. The little one clutched it tightly, as if it were a

part of him.

Ilya placed his coffee mug on the table, his gaze never leaving his son.

"Доброе утро, солнышко. (Good morning, sunshine.)" he said quietly, his voice even softer than usual.

Misha blinked a few times, as if needing a moment to make sure he wasn't dreaming. Then his face slowly cleared. He let go of the end of the blanket just long enough to adjust his grip on the bear, and moved toward Ilya with small, still hesitant steps, pulling the comforting material over himself again.

Ilya knelt, opening his arms.

The blanket slipped from the child's shoulders just as Misha fell into his embrace. Small hands wrapped around his neck, the bear was pressed between them, and the boy's cheek nestled against his father's warm chest.

"Did you miss me?" Ilya asked softly, stroking his hair.

Misha didn't respond with words. Instead, he sighed deeply, that characteristic childish sigh that spoke louder than any sentence.

The snow continued to dance outside the window. And in the living room, in the warm morning light, the world briefly shrunk back into a single embrace.

Ilya let him stay in that embrace as long as Misha needed. He didn't rush him, didn't try to push him away, didn't try to distract him. He simply stood there, with his son nestled against him, feeling his calm breathing and the warmth of his small body, as if the whole world could wait a moment.

Even after three years, he was still learning this.

Parenthood didn't come naturally to him, it wasn't something he'd known from his own childhood. He'd grown up in Russia, in a home where emotions were considered weakness, and tears were a reason for punishment, not for comfort. "Don't cry, or I'll give you something to cry about," words he'd heard too often, had seared themselves deeper into him than he'd ever like to admit. There was no room for tenderness, for questions about feelings, for safe arms.

There was only discipline. And fear.

Irina passed away when he was twelve. Her death came suddenly, brutally, leaving a silence in its wake that no one tried to fill with conversation. His brother sank deeper and deeper into drugs, gambling, constant disappearances and returns, and his condition worsened.

Father...father was like a shadow that never left. Critical, cold, always dissatisfied. Ilya was never enough. Never good enough. Never a source of pride.

And now, standing in this warm living room, with the three-year-old boy hugging him as if he were the safest place in the world, Ilya was doing something no one had taught him.

He was breaking this cycle.

He rested his cheek against Misha's soft hair and closed his eyes for a moment. His hand stroked the child's back slowly, rhythmically, as if the very gesture were a lesson that closeness didn't hurt, that crying wasn't a threat, that love didn't have to be conditional.

"I'm here," he whispered softly, more to himself than to his son. "Always."

Misha stirred slightly, muttered something incomprehensible, and snuggled even closer into his arms.

Ilya felt something old and hard inside him crack. Quietly. Without pain. Memories from the past few years began to return to his mind, but one memory was more bittersweet than the others.

That memory clung to him, clear and sharp, as if only a few hours had passed, not three years.

The first time he held Misha in his arms.

He had been so small then, incredibly fragile, a few hours of life, tangled in tiny fingers and quiet, uneven breathing. Dressed in a blue onesie and a cap that seemed too big even for him.

Ilya remembered how afraid he was to move, as if one wrong move would make this miracle disappear. He remembered the weight of the child on his chest and how his heart beat faster than during any match.

He made a promise to himself then. A silent, trembling one, but absolutely unbreakable.

That he would never let his son grow up in a home where feelings were suppressed by silence. Where crying was met with averted gazes, and fear with coldness instead of arms. He swore to himself that Misha would never have to guess whether he was allowed to feel. That he would never learn to bury his emotions deep within himself just to survive.

He promised that in their home there would be room for tears, both those of sadness and those of happiness. For anger, for questions, for weakness. That love wouldn't be a reward for good behavior, but a constant, unquestionable presence.

He wanted to be the father he never had.

Imperfect, learning every day, sometimes lost, but present. Tender. Listening.

And now, as he stood in the living room, with three-year-old Misha nestled in his arms, he knew one thing.

It wouldn't always be easy. The past doesn't disappear just because you want it to. Sometimes he'll be afraid, sometimes he'll make mistakes, sometimes the echo of old words will return at

the most inopportune moment.

But that circle... That circle had already broken.

And Misha, with her cheek against his chest and a stuffed bear hanging limply from his hand, was living proof that love truly can change everything.

The Russian didn't know how long they'd been standing there, but judging by the pain in his knees, a good ten minutes must have passed. Misha was always cuddlier in the morning, only to transform into a little ball of energy later.

Finally, Ilya moved slowly, carefully lifting Misha into his arms, as if he were still that few-hour-old newborn, not a three-year-old boy with his own mind and boundless energy. The child immediately wrapped her arms around his neck, her cheek finding its place on his shoulder again.

"Okay, малыш (little one)" he said softly, smiling, running his hand down his back. "What do we want for breakfast, hmm?"

Misha lifted his head, his eyes lighting up immediately, as if the question were an invitation to the most important debate of the day.

"Pancakes!" he blurted out without hesitation, then wrinkled his nose as if suddenly remembering something important. "And... kasha! Sladkaya! With bananas!"

Ilya laughed softly, a deep, warm laugh that filled the living room.

"Pancakes and kasha," he repeated, as if considering the proposition very seriously. "And what to drink?"

"Apple juice...no!" Misha nodded vigorously, then added proudly, "И чай, как у папы. (And tea, like dad's.)"

The Russian felt something tighten in his chest. This charming linguistic chaos, English intertwined with Russian, words sometimes not quite correct but spoken with absolute conviction, was exactly what he and Shane wanted.

It was one of the first rules they'd established even before Misha was born. There would be two languages in their home. Two cultures. Two histories, intertwined, not competing.

Misha was to know English, the language of the country he grew up in, but he wasn't to forget Russian. He wasn't to forget where part of his family came from, who his father was before he became a father. It was Shane who insisted on this the most, with his quiet but unwavering determination.

"Roots are important," he said then. "I don't want him to ever feel like he has to choose."

Ilya kissed his son's hair, hugging him closer.

“Okay, мое солнышко (my sunshine),” he murmured. “Pancakes and porridge. Daddy Shane will be proud of this menu.”

Misha chuckled softly, then snuggled back into his arm, as if the breakfast matter were officially settled.

Ilya headed toward the kitchen, his heart filled with warmth and the thought that if this was what building a new world looked like, word by word, gesture by gesture, then he was ready to do it every day.

He entered the kitchen and carefully set Misha on the counter, on the soft mat they always placed there for mornings like this. The little boy sat upright, his legs dangling freely, and the brown stuffed bear was immediately clutched to his chest, as if he were acting as guardian of the entire kitchen ceremony.

Misha watched his father's every move with absolute concentration, as if cooking were a magic show and Ilya the wizard. His head tilted slightly from side to side, his blond curls falling over his forehead as he took in the sounds, smells, and familiar rhythm of the morning.

Ilya reached into the cupboard, glanced around dramatically, then pulled out a small honey-filled lollipop. He leaned closer to his son and slipped it into his hand.

"Just shh," he murmured in a conspiratorial whisper, winking knowingly. "We're not telling Daddy about this."

Misha froze for a second, then a wide, utterly disarming smile lit up his face. He laughed softly, as if he'd just become part of the world's greatest secret, and immediately popped the lollipop into his mouth.

"A secret," he announced proudly, lisping slightly, and hugged the teddy bear even tighter.

Ilya let out a soft laugh, his heart swelled with tenderness. He leaned his hip against the counter for a brief moment, observing his son, his concentration, his small hands, the way he carelessly sucked on a lollipop as if nothing bad could touch him.

Then he got to work.

He took out a bowl, poured in the flour, and cracked the eggs in one confident movement, one he'd practiced for years, more for precision than culinary talent. He turned on the frying pan, and the soft hiss of melting butter filled the kitchen. Every now and then, he glanced at Misha, making sure everything was alright, that the boy wasn't wobbling, that he was still sitting still.

Misha watched him silently, only occasionally uttering a quiet "ooh" or "Papa" when something particularly intrigued him.

Ilya smiled to himself as he cooked pancakes and stirred the groats.

It was one of those moments no one writes about in athletes' biographies. No cameras, no crowds, no pressure. Just father, son, and the warmth of the morning, exactly what Ilya wanted to give his child.

As Ilya poured another spoonful of batter into the pan, and the golden edges of the pancake began to bubble slowly, his thoughts veered back to a path he knew all too well.

Will Misha inherit THIS from him?

That question kept coming back, especially in moments like these, quiet, ordinary ones, when there were no training sessions, no cameras, no adrenaline, just him, the kitchen, and his child sitting a few feet away. Depression was a shadow in his family, passed down from generation to generation. His mother... Irina. Her quiet smile, her tired eyes, and how one day she simply vanished.

Ilya swallowed and carefully flipped the pancake, as if focusing on that simple movement would keep his thoughts in check.

He hoped not.

That Misha wouldn't inherit that darkness. That his mind wouldn't become a battlefield where every day was a fight for survival. That he would never wake up with a feeling of heaviness on his chest, without a reason, without a name, without a way out.

He wasn't particularly religious. He never had been. He'd seen prayers go unanswered, good things end tragically despite the best intentions. And yet, standing by the stove, he was doing exactly that.

He prayed.

He didn't whisper the words aloud, didn't fold his hands. It was more like an internal plea, desperate and sincere.

Please. If anyone can hear me.

Take this from me. Everything from me, but not from him.

He glanced at Misha. The little boy was licking his honey candy with complete concentration, his legs swinging carelessly, and his teddy bear rested on his lap. He was laughing quietly at something he saw outside the window, completely unaware of the storm of thoughts in his father's mind.

Ilya felt his eyes sting slightly.

"You deserve a world without this burden," he thought. "For lightness. For joy."

He flipped another pancake and allowed himself a quiet exhale. He had no control over his genes, over the past, over what fate would inscribe in his son's future.

But he did have control over the home they were building.

Over the love they shared.

Over the fact that Misha would never be alone with his emotions.

Ilya decided that even if darkness ever knocked on their son's door, he wouldn't find silence or indifference there.

He would find light.

Rozanov set the spatula on the edge of the pan for a moment and turned off the heat under one burner, as if suddenly nothing else mattered. He walked to the counter and stood right next to Misha.

He lifted his hand and tenderly brushed his golden curls behind his ear, the same gesture he'd been making since the day he'd first noticed his son's hair always falling into his eyes.

"Hey..." he murmured softly.

Misha looked up at him, the lollipop lingering in midair for a moment. His eyes were calm, trusting, completely absorbed in the moment.

Ilya leaned in and began humming softly, almost to himself, his voice low and slightly raspy from lack of sleep and morning coffee. A song he'd once heard on the radio of one of his sports cars.

"And if you ask me to, Daddy's gonna buy you a mockingbird.
I'm going to give you the world.
I'm going to buy a diamond ring for you, I'm going to sing for you.
I'll do anything for you to see you smile..."

His voice wasn't perfect, sometimes breaking slightly, but it was full of something much more important, a promise. Ilya leaned closer, rested his forehead against his son's head, and let the words flow, almost a whisper:

"And if that mockingbird doesn't sing and that ring doesn't shine.
I'm going to break that birdie's neck.
I'll go back to the jeweler who sold it to me.
And make him eat every carat..."

He buried his face in Misha's hair, inhaling that familiar, childish scent of milk, soap, and something that was only his. He placed a gentle kiss on the top of his head, then another.

Misha chuckled softly, the lollipop slipping from his mouth, and his small hand instinctively tightened on Ilya's skin.

"Papa..." he murmured sleepily, drawing it out.

Ilya felt a lump in his throat. He hugged his son for a moment, embracing him with one arm, the other still stroking his hair.

"Always," he replied quietly, more of a promise than a word. "I'll always be here, my sunshine."

He only let go after a moment, once again smoothing his curls and making sure he was sitting firmly. When he returned to the pan, his heart was heavy with thoughts, yet filled with a love so intense it almost hurt.

If the world ever tried to break his son,
it would have to go through him first.

End Notes

That's it for now, I probably won't publish anything new for the next week, the chapters I wrote in advance will be published. I have 3 months of college left and two rounds of final exams, I can do it.

I know that many people say that the Hollanovs are the girl's dads, and maybe there is something to it, but somehow I see them with their son. I don't know why, never mind, let me know how you liked it!

Btw Misha's full name is Mikhail (Michael). → Mikhail Ilyich Rozanov.

Ilyich → Ilya.

Thanks again for reading and see you next time!

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