

falling into place

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falling into place

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Summary

Somehow, Yuna ends up washing dishes side-by-side with Ilya Rozanov. Shane had resisted her help—telling her to sit back down—it was his cottage, he'd wash the dishes, but Yuna needed her hands to be busy.

Needed to be alone, really.

But that last piece didn't work out. Rozanov—Ilya. He asked them to call him Ilya—slipped into the kitchen easily, and took up the task of drying and putting the dishes away without a word.

Yuna talks to Ilya after their dinner at the cottage. Set after episode 6.

Notes

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

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Yuna knows she should say *something* to Rozanov, but her mouth has never felt more useless. She'd been quiet for all of dinner too, more focused on chewing all of her bites fifty times each rather than engaging in the conversation. And she's pretty sure that anything she says would make it worse.

It's hard enough *watching* her son interact with Boston's star center—nearly as cocky off the ice as on it, if that Raider's t-shirt tells her anything. She's afraid that if she talks to him he'll prove her right.

Rozanov speaks first—or attempts too.

"Er," he tries, and Yuna knows she's not the only one finding this *horrendously* awkward. "Shane told me that you predicted the Admirals win this year."

He winces after he says it, like he's decided it was a stupid thing to say right as soon as it left his mouth. But Yuna appreciates the effort. The common ground between them. If nothing else, Yuna knows how to talk about hockey.

"It was Scott Hunter's year this year." Yuna passes him another plate. "In more ways than one."

"*Da*." Rozanov dries and puts the plate away. He moves with ease. Not only does he know where everything goes, he even keeps the cups in Shane's particular order—something that Yuna has never quite been able to figure out."

Rozanov manages Shane's kitchen with the same familiarity he used with Shane earlier. He talked him away from a freakout with a calm touch and a chaste kiss. Meanwhile Yuna made him cry.

She swallows hard. Shane's words run on repeat in her head.

I tried really hard, he said. *But I just can't help it*.

The worst part is she isn't even fully sure what he's talking about. Did he try not to be gay? Or not to be in love with Rozanov?

Either way, her stomach twists when she remembers. The fear on Shane's face when he walked in that door. The way his eyes filled with tears in the garden.

She's the one who put them there.

"This is good, yes?" Rozanov says, pulling Yuna out of her thoughts.

"Sorry, what?"

"Is good... that we're all here." He shoots her a look accompanied with a small smile. "I know I was probably a shock. More than Shane was."

Yuna nods, still not trusting herself to talk. *God*, talking was all she did for the last twenty-five years and what did that get her? Telling Shane he's supposed to be a role model and thinking he can't be *gay*. That he had to try not to be.

Or that he couldn't fall in love. That he didn't deserve it.

Rozanov speaks instead. Because he knows what to say. Knows her own son more than her.

Has for the past decade.

"I know that this is... difficult and probably confusing. But Shane..." Rozanov tilts his head, like he's considering what to say next. "Shane was very scared to be telling you. Not only about me, but about... being gay."

"I know," Yuna says, a little stiffly. She knows her son was nervous. She knows Shane.

She *does*.

"Right." Rozanov accepts another cup from Yuna and lets a silent beat pass as he dries it. "This is good for Shane. Is all I'm saying. Good that we're *all* here."

Yuna nods as her throat tightens. For a moment she thinks she might cry again, but then a small shocked laugh forces itself out.

"God," she says, leaning forward slightly as she laughs. "I can't believe I'm talking to *Ilya Rozanov* about my son. I mean... like *this*. I'm sorry—I just... *God*."

He smiles a bit too which makes Yuna feel less like an ass.

"It is *weird*. We both know that. Know that nobody else will really understand."

Yuna nods again, trying to imagine the public's reaction if anyone were to find out. Rozanov is right. No one would understand.

It would be the biggest scandal in the hockey world since... well, *ever*. And if Yuna herself had that brief fear that they were throwing games for each other, she can't imagine how much worse everyone else would take it.

Rozanov is right, about this and about Shane. Shane *needs* this. Needs her and David's support and needs them all to get along.

Yuna pushes down her fear about saying the wrong thing. She can't stay silent any longer.

"It might be weird to me right now, but it's not *bad*," Yuna clarifies. "It'll take David and I some getting used to, but—" She points a soapy spoon at him. "We're looking forward to get to know you better, Rozanov. Know you how Shane knows you."

His grin splits his face in two. It gives him a boyish-like quality, a certain youthfulness that Yuna's never seen on his face before. Granted, before she's only really ever seen his face on TV screens and in press conferences. There's a lot she doesn't know.

A decade worth of hiding this.

Shane fell in love with someone and hid it. Tried to stop it.

He's lived a whole other life behind Yuna and David's backs. Something he didn't think he couldn't share with them.

And somehow, somewhere along the way, Ilya Rozanov became important to him, and Yuna isn't going to fuck this up. Not again.

She hands Ilya one last cup to dry and watches again how he puts it away, slotting it into the exact place it goes in the cupboard. He's not the cocky asshole she always thought he was—or maybe, he *is*, just a little bit, but *still*.

I've only ever loved one person, he said.

"You're moving to Ottawa for him?"

Ilya nods. He shrugs even, as if that makes the notion seem more casual. *Moving countries for her son*. "Yes. For him, but also for me. Will be good for me to not have Russian passport eventually, and I would rather Canada than America."

"You won't miss Boston?"

"Oh, I will. But there's a lot to like about Canada, yes?"

Yuna laughs. "Maybe not Ottawa, though."

Ilya waves her concern away. "They can afford me. It's close to Shane."

"You'll be in the same town as me and David. Might get sick of us."

Ilya smiles again, and he appears so much looser now than when he first entered this kitchen. His shoulders aren't up to his ears anymore, and he turns to lean against the counter as he speak. "No, I do not think I will."

"Are you close with your parents?" Yuna asks, then she wants to kick herself. *Ilya's dad just died for fuck's sake*. "Oh, sorry, I didn't mean—"

"Is okay," Ilya gently interrupts. "My mother died when I was young, and you know about my father. I would not say him and I were close though."

"He wouldn't accept...?" Yuna trails off, not sure how to finish that sentence.

"Russia is not safe for people like me. My father loved his country."

Yuna falls silent for moment, taking in the gravity of his words. He might be too old for the word *orphan* to really fit him, but he's still too young to know that loss. Yuna herself felt all too young when her own mother died a year ago, even though she knew it was coming. Even though they weren't ever all that close.

And to *know* that his father would never approve...

Well, it makes Yuna's heart ache for him.

No matter how strange it still is that Ilya Rozanov is in her son's cottage—in her son's heart—she knows he doesn't deserve to feel alone.

"I understand. And—" Yuna dries her hands off on the towel. "This might not mean much, but you'll always be welcome in David and I's home once you're in Ottawa."

"Thank you." Ilya gives her a soft smile. "I was saying before how good this all is for Shane, but it is good for me too. Thank you for welcoming me. I know it must not be easy, with who I am."

Yuna's heart does the same little flip it did when Shane apologized to her. He shouldn't be so grateful for something that Yuna should have just been able to *do*.

"Of course," she says, trying to put as much intensity as she can into the words. "I'm happy Shane has you. And I'm looking forward to knowing you more, Ilya."

Ilya laughs, and Yuna feels the piece of her that came off in that garden with Shane slowly fit back into place.

End Notes

Thank you for reading! A comment would mean the world 🧡

I am also on [tumblr](#) and this fic is rebloggable [here](#). Feel free to hmu on there and tell me all your heated rivalry thoughts!!

my second heated rivalry fic but there will be more 🙏

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