

Take Care

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by [five_ht](#)

Summary

August 2017: Svetlana finally meets Jane, because Ilya has failed to anticipate the inevitable result of sharing the code for his front door with more than one person.

Notes

This was definitely not what I thought I'd be posting when I started watching the queer hockey show with all the butts. This fic marks the third time in 25 years of fandom participation that I have written a thing that qualified for a T rating. I almost want to apologise. I'll try to get back to our regularly scheduled gutter filth soon.

But listen, I just really love Svetlana, and I'm so grateful to Jacob Tierney for developing her character the way he did, and I wanted to think for a while about how she and Shane would interact with one another. So I did, and I wrote it down.

The original title of this document was "I could marry Svetlana", not because it had any relation to the content of the story, just because I, five_ht, would marry Svetlana in a heartbeat.

Svetlana squinted at the keypad next to Ilya's front door as it flashed an error at her. Shit, what was the new code again?

1410, that was it. The keypad chimed as the lock whirred, then clunked open.

She stepped inside, expecting silence, and was instead greeted by what sounded like pots and pans clanging in the kitchen.

"Ilyushka?" she called, rummaging in her purse for her phone. No missed calls or texts. He didn't ignore her often, or lightly, but a trip home could wreak havoc on his mood at the best of times. She hadn't pressed for an explanation when he'd cancelled after the Cup in June, and part of her had hoped he might simply have decided to never go back. Russia didn't deserve Ilya Rozanov.

So last week had been his first time returning since his father's funeral, which meant Svetlana could forgive him the silent treatment, but she would always reserve her right to check up on him when she had good reason.

"Ilya?" she called again, toeing her shoes off. The noise from the kitchen stopped abruptly. "Sorry to drop in," she continued, as she made her way down the hall, "But six days with no response is where I..."

Her voice died as she rounded the corner and found Shane Hollander standing alone in Ilya's kitchen, clutching a frying pan in one hand and a spaghetti strainer in the other, his face a mask of horror.

For several seconds, Svetlana held his terrified gaze and debated her best course of action. The man looked as though his heart would stop if she moved too suddenly.

"Hello," she said in English, in a tone previously reserved for greeting her mother's skittish rescue horses.

Shane Hollander opened his mouth, then closed it again. He was breathing fast through his nose. A panic attack, probably, or something close to one.

"Sorry, I'm--" she took a half step into the kitchen, and regretted it when his grip visibly tightened on the cooking implements in his hands, still held awkwardly out in front of his body like ineffective armour. "--I'm Svetlana. I'm a friend of Ilya's. Is he...?"

She glanced around, already knowing that if Ilya was home, he certainly wasn't anywhere nearby.

"I know," croaked Shane Hollander. Shane Hollander, standing in Ilya's kitchen, rummaging through Ilya's cupboards, wearing a fucking Boston Raiders t-shirt. Wait, what *did* he know, exactly? "He's in Russia."

"Oh," Svetlana said with a frown, looking down at her phone. "He told me he would be back on Tuesday."

"He--" Hollander's voice broke, and he coughed. "He changed it. He's back tonight. He's not... in Russia now. He's in the-- on a plane. To... to here."

As he spoke, his arms slowly relaxed, until they were hanging limply at his sides, still holding the frying pan and the strainer. Svetlana desperately wanted to end his misery, but she had no idea how to do so.

"Okay, that's okay," she said in the most soothing voice she could muster, taking a step back. "I haven't heard from him in a few days, so I was just checking in. Will you tell him I came by, when he gets home?"

Shane Hollander nodded, seemingly at a loss for words. Svetlana turned to leave.

"You're Svetlana," he blurted, before she could take a step. She turned to face him again. "You-- you already said that, sorry. You're just-- you're Svetlana." She had never seen a man look so uncomfortable, and she had sat through dozens of Rozanov family functions.

"Yes," she said, nodding. She could only assume her name had come up, and she didn't want to imagine the context. Ilya was such an idiot sometimes. "Ilya and I are old friends."

Still-panicked eyes darted from her face to the stove, where, she noticed, a pot of water was sitting, with a faint trail of steam beginning to rise from the surface.

"I'm Shane."

Oh, sweetheart.

"I know," Svetlana smiled.

Shane looked down, finally noticing the frying pan and the strainer. He shoved them onto the nearest countertop with a discordant crash that echoed through the quiet house.

"Right, because..." he wiped his hands hastily on his jeans, "You're into hockey." He was still plainly terrified, but he took a step forward with a hand held out between them.

His palm was cool and clammy, but his grip was strong, and he met her eyes, because Shane Hollander was brought up knowing the importance of a proper handshake, even when you're on the verge of a panic attack. Or, maybe especially then.

"I don't think someone really needs to be into hockey to know who you are," Svetlana said gently. And truly, even if she had never seen a single game or any of his commercials, she would know Shane as the star of the one program Ilya refused to erase from his DVR. Svetlana herself could probably give tours of that cottage.

"Oh," Shane said weakly, stepping back out of her vicinity as soon as he dropped her hand, his eyes darting around the kitchen again. She would hug him if she wasn't certain it would cause some sort of cardiac event.

"I thought you'd have an accent."

Svetlana watched him cringe before he was even finished speaking, scrubbing at the back of his neck as a flush bloomed on his cheeks. Jesus, Ilya was doomed.

Biting her lip, she fought off a laugh that she was sure would sound condescending, when it was the furthest thing from her intention. "I do sometimes. If I speak English with Ilya, you can hear it. I went to school here, though."

Shane nodded, his frantic gaze finally landing on her again, almost pleading. It dawned on her that he was waiting for her to state the obvious, so he wouldn't have to.

"You're waiting for him to get home," she supplied. He nodded. "You were going to cook him dinner." Another nod. "Does he know you're here?"

That one got a small shake of the head, which made sense. Ilya would have headed Svetlana off with an appealing text if he'd known Shane would be waiting for him, given her propensity to drop in unannounced whenever he went silent on her.

"He uh," Shane cleared his throat, tucking his thumbs into his pockets like he couldn't decide where else to put his hands, "He's expecting me on the weekend. I just... wanted to surprise him."

Svetlana smiled. "He'll be happy about that," she said, and she meant it. Ilya needed a lot of love after a trip to Moscow, though he would never ask for it directly. It was good to see that Shane already knew.

Shane nodded again, this time seemingly to himself, his eyes a little unfocused, gears almost visibly turning in his head. She let him think, and the silence stretched, until finally he swallowed, meeting her gaze again.

"Did you know?" he asked, his voice wavering on the last syllable. His eyes were glassy, and he didn't blink.

"He didn't tell me," she said quickly. "I knew he was seeing someone. I thought it might be you, but he didn't tell me."

Shane looked downright alarmed. "Why did you think it was me?"

"Oh, no, it's not--" she stepped toward him, and at least this time, he didn't tense. "It wasn't something that anyone else would have noticed. I just know him. And I know how he plays, and I see how he plays with you..." The All Stars game was the final piece of a thousand-piece jigsaw puzzle, and even then, she would never have presumed to really know. Not unless, of course, she walked into Ilya's kitchen and found Shane Hollander making him dinner in a Raiders t-shirt with the name ROZANOV printed across the back. "I put it together after a while," she finished.

"Nobody else knows," Shane said, a little urgently, "Except my parents, and that was... also an accident."

God, she would like to hear that story, but this probably wasn't the time.

"I'll take it to my grave," Svetlana said sincerely, and she didn't miss the split second where Shane's eyebrows knitted together at that, but she wasn't sure what to do about it. She followed his gaze as he glanced toward the stove again. The water was boiling.

"I was going to make pasta," he said, turning the knob to shut off the burner.

"No no, don't stop, I'll get out of your way," Svetlana said, turning to pick her purse up off the counter, but she was halted again, this time by a hand on her arm.

"Wait, just--" Shane pulled his hand back quickly, looking surprised at himself.

"It's okay," she said, smiling. "You don't have to explain anything to me. Just tell him I'll call him tomorrow, yeah?"

Shane was scrubbing at the back of his neck again, squirming. "Can I just ask you something?"

"Anything."

He took a breath, and let it out. He wasn't looking at her anymore, but at a space somewhere past her shoulder. "Do you think..." he started, then trailed off. He blinked twice, and shook his head, still focused on the middle distance. He didn't seem to be able to find the words.

Finally he sighed, and looked up at her. "Never mind," he said, with a smile as sad as it was charming. "Do you want a glass of wine?"

A brief flash of headlights in the darkened hall and the sound of tires on gravel signalled Ilya's arrival, and the look of unrestrained glee that lit up Shane's wine-flushed face was beyond description.

"He's home," he said, leaning across the couch towards Svetlana to deliver this announcement in a stage whisper. Then his face fell. "Oh, fuck, I was gonna make dinner."

Svetlana snorted, tipping back the last mouthful of wine in her glass. She hadn't intended to stay so long, but as it turned out, Shane Hollander might be the only person on earth who could match her enthusiasm for the minutiae of hockey. Time had just run away from her. "He'll be fine. He's got better things to eat, no?"

The electronic beep of the keypad echoed from the foyer, and Shane shushed her hastily, though his eyes were sparkling and his lips were pursed with suppressed laughter.

"I see a hideous new Mercedes in my driveway," Ilya's voice sung out in Russian.

"He saw my car," Svetlana whispered to Shane, before she raised her voice and answered in English, "In the living room!"

"I knew I shouldn't have given you the new code," Ilya responded, still in Russian. His voice drew closer, punctuated by thumps of sneakers being unceremoniously kicked off and discarded in the hall. "I should start charging you rent if you're going to--"

It was Shane who came into his view first, perched on the end of the couch with his wine glass dangling precariously from his fingers. Ilya's eyes narrowed in confusion, then widened in shock as his gaze fell on Svetlana.

"Sveta, I--" he stammered, but he was looking back at Shane when he said it, his panicked eyes pleading for an explanation.

"Ilyushka!" Shane exclaimed, springing to his feet. He crossed the room with a bounce in his step Svetlana wouldn't have thought him capable of. "That's your name forever now, it's Ilyushka," he declared, wrapping his arms immediately around Ilya's neck, and Ilya, for his part, did not hesitate to steady him by his hips.

"What the fuck is going on?" Ilya asked weakly, peering over Shane's shoulder at Svetlana.

"Oh, relax," she laid her glass on the coffee table and stood, "It was about time I got to know Jane, don't you think?"

"She's really smart," Shane murmured, his face buried in Ilya's neck. Svetlana watched Ilya nod bemusedly.

"He knows that already," she said, approaching them. She kissed two of her own fingers and pressed them to Ilya's cheek. "It's all right, Ilyushka. Everything's all right."

Ilya nodded again, and his attention shifted back to Shane. "Are you drunk?"

"No," Shane said, too quickly. He pulled back, though he hardly loosened his hold on Ilya's neck. "But we should probably order a pizza, because I had two glasses of wine instead of making you dinner."

Ilya's expression was soft, and Svetlana watched long enough to see him bring a hand up and brush his thumb gently across the freckles on Shane's flushed cheek.

"Have a good night, boys," Svetlana said, starting off down the hallway toward the door before she could witness too much of what felt like a very private moment. Sound travelled easily through Ilya's house, though, and she could hear a murmured conversation, interrupted by soft laughter, while she quietly slipped on her shoes.

"It was really nice to meet you!" Shane called after her as she opened the front door.

"You too, gorgeous," Svetlana called back. She stole one last glance down the hall just in time to see Ilya hoist Shane entirely off his feet at the threshold of the living room, and carry him out of sight.

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