

Shots

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Shots

by [broccolicheddarchicken](#)

Summary

"There will be a pinch. Remember when you were two months old, and four months old, and you had to get shots? It will be like that."

Sonya didn't respond. She probably was feeling betrayed.

"It only hurts for a little bit," Ilya said. "And then you will get a little bit stronger, because of it."

Sonya looked up at him with her big, brown eyes, seemingly unconvinced. She was adopted, but Ilya could've sworn she'd gotten her eyes from Shane. At the minimum, he must have at least taught her how to use them to tug at Ilya's heartstrings.

"I will get you something sweet after, if you are brave."

Ilya takes his and Shane's six-month-old daughter to the pediatrician for a checkup and vaccines.

Notes

the softest shit i've ever written

I hope you enjoy reading this at least half as much as I enjoyed writing it <3

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

The room was mostly empty, other than a young mother with two small children trying to get her son to eat some apple slices from her purse. Ilya gently rubbed his daughter's back. She was high-energy right then, bolt awake and grabbing at his clothes, and if they were at home, Ilya would definitely have been digging through her toys and playing with her.

Unfortunately, they weren't at home. They were in a pediatrician's waiting room, just the two of them. Shane wasn't there. Usually, they both attended Sonya's appointments (as much as possible, anyway), but today Ilya had to go alone. Late the night before, Shane had realized that they'd accidentally double-booked themselves for Sonya's six-month checkup and a call with Farah in the morning. With Shane retired but Ilya still playing, days off came rarely, and they had to squeeze things in where they could.

It didn't really matter, of course. There was no reason both of them *needed* to be on the call, and there was no reason both of them *had* to take Sonya to the doctor. They'd divide and conquer, and then have the rest of the day to spend however they liked, which would hopefully involve a bit of rest on Shane's part and a whole lot of playing with and cuddling the baby on Ilya's.

Ilya decided to be the one to take Sonya to the doctor, because he wanted the time with her, and Shane stayed home to talk to Farah.

Ten minutes or so after Ilya had checked in, one of the nurses entered the waiting room. "Sofia?"

Ilya stood with his daughter in his arms and followed the nurse back to the exam room. He sat in one of two chairs, and tucked Sonya against his chest, cradling her against him.

Sonya's name was officially *Sofia*, but Sonya was a nickname for it in Russian, and what Ilya chose to use. Shane usually stuck to Sofia, which was fine. Sometimes, when they met new people, usually other parents, they became a little confused when they realized that Shane called her by one name and Ilya by another. A quick explanation cleared that up easily, however.

Dread began to tighten in Ilya's stomach. It had been there all morning, but now, sitting and waiting for the doctor, it was reaching its peak. Sonya had to get vaccines today, and Ilya hated watching Sonya get vaccines. He knew how important they were, of course, and that's why he was taking her to get her shots, but he also hated to watch it. He hated that he had to hold her little arms down as the doctor gave the injection.

The first two times Sonya had been vaccinated, she'd cried her little head off as soon as the needle went in, and it had taken almost fifteen minutes for him and Shane to calm her down. Now he had to do it alone, and he almost felt hypocritical. He was the one who did this to her, right? It was his fault she was so upset, and now he was going to comfort her?

It was extremely irrational, and Ilya knew it, but he couldn't help it. Sonya was entirely reliant on him for protection and care, and he was going to have to see her helpless and in pain.

Maybe he could explain it to her this time?

When Ilya was alone with Sonya, he spoke to her almost exclusively in Russian, and he tried to talk to her as much as possible. He wasn't sure if just their conversations would be enough for her to pick up fluency in the language, but he hoped she'd at least be able to speak some. He wanted to be able to hold a conversation with his daughter in his mother tongue.

"There will be a pinch. Remember when you were two months old, and four months old, and you had to get shots? It will be like that."

Sonya didn't respond. She probably was feeling betrayed.

"It only hurts for a little bit," Ilya said. "And then you will get a little bit stronger, because of it."

Sonya looked up at him with her big, brown eyes, still unconvinced. She was adopted, but Ilya could've sworn she'd gotten her eyes from Shane. At the minimum, he must have taught her how to use them to tug at Ilya's heartstrings.

"I will get you something sweet after, if you are brave."

There was a knock at the door, so Ilya looked up as Dr. Katri entered the room. She was Sonya's pediatrician and was truly fantastic at her job. She had such a great way of interacting with Sonya, and was able to pull insights and symptoms from her behavior that neither Shane nor Ilya would've had any hope of decoding.

"Good morning," she said, sanitizing her hands. "There's the little princess."

Ilya smiled, then changed the way he was holding Sonya so that Dr. Katri could see her better.

"Where's Shane? I was looking forward to seeing him today."

"And I am chopped liver?"

"Yes. I don't like Boston," Dr. Katri reminded Ilya. "You've made everyone else forget, but I remember. In fact, I only took on your little lady as a patient to make sure she grows up a Cens fan."

"Both her parents played for them, and she will grow up in Ottawa. I think it's a lock."

"You can never be too sure."

Ilya chuckled. He liked the rapport between him, Shane, and Dr. Katri. It didn't matter so much now, but he hoped it would mean that when Sonya got older, she'd have a good relationship with her doctor, too.

"Shane had to stay home today," Ilya finally explained. "Zoom meeting with our agent."

"Ah. I guess it's just the three of us then."

The actual appointment went by rather quickly. Dr. Katri asked how Sonya was doing with her sleep issues (much better), gave her a physical exam, and asked Ilya about some of her developmental milestones. She asked about teething, and showed Ilya how to brush baby teeth. Everything seemed normal and healthy.

Then she changed her gloves, and the needles came out.

"Alright." Dr. Katri was preparing one of the injections. "We have two shots today. Rotavirus and D-tap. And no more until her twelve-month appointment, which I think she should be very excited about."

Ilya breathed a sigh of relief—the last appointment had required *four* shots. "She will be."

This was the part Ilya hated most. He held each of Sonya's hands to help keep her from moving too much. She curled her hands around his fingers, like she always did.

Ilya thought that she seemed suspicious. Did she somehow know what was coming?

"I'm going to do them one after the other, okay? Quick as possible."

When the first needle went into Sonya's thigh, she didn't react as strongly as Ilya had feared. Her little face scrunched up, almost confused, and she pushed against his gentle restraint, but she didn't cry. Maybe today wouldn't be so bad.

Then the second shot was given, and Ilya immediately knew he'd been wrong.

The moment Dr. Katri withdrew the needle, Sonya began to sob. Ilya set his jaw and tried to remind himself that she was *fine*, that nothing was actually wrong, that it was just a little pinch. The first time he'd watched her get injections he'd nearly cried himself, and he'd really rather not have a repeat performance.

To make matters even worse, a dot of blood prickled up from the spot the needle had entered, seemingly specifically to trouble Ilya. *Look. Your little one is hurt.*

"Oh, I hear you, Sofia. That second needle is rough." Dr. Katri put a dot bandage on the both spots, then took off her gloves and looked up at Ilya. "All done. She did a very good job."

Sonya *had* done a very good job, but it didn't change the fact that she was crying now. Ilya scooped his baby up. Her face was red, her cheeks all wet, and her tiny lungs were producing the loudest wails she could manage. He immediately tucked her face against his shoulder, nearly pressed into his neck.

"I know, I know. You were so tough. I know. It hurts, and you don't understand why."

Dr. Katri smiled at the pair of them. "I hear you, Sonya. I'm the worst."

"She will be okay," Ilya said. "I'm giving her something sweet after this."

"The make-up treat. Every parent does it."

Being casually called a *parent* was still a relatively novel occurrence in Ilya's life. It still made him smile every time.

"She did great, everything seems normal and healthy. Call in if she starts having sleep trouble again."

Ilya nodded. "That has been good, lately. I don't think she will have trouble again."

"I don't think so either, but they're changing so fast at this age. You never know." Dr. Katri clapped her hands together. "Alright. I'm going to go take a few minutes to chart everything, and you should be good to pick up your visit summary and go in about ten minutes. You can stay in here or go out to the waiting room, whatever you prefer."

Sonya was still sobbing.

"I think I'll stay here until she calms down a bit."

"Of course. Take care, Ilya. Tell Shane I said hello."

"I will. And—oh! Before you go. Here." Ilya reached into his coat pocket with his free arm and handed Dr. Katri a small Ottawa pennant, signed by both him and Shane, which Shane had promised her at Sonya's last checkup. "Shane was very worried that I would forget to give you this and make a liar of him."

Dr. Katri squinted for a moment, then smiled as she realized what was in her hands. "Oh, I completely forgot about that. I thought he was kidding! Tell him I said thank you. And thank *you!*"

"It is not a problem. And Shane is never kidding. About anything."

After a few more minutes of soothing, then sorting out the paperwork at the front desk, Ilya took Sonya back outside to the car. It was below freezing, but she was dressed warm, and Ilya kept her cradled against him as tight as he could. He rocked her slowly, sometimes bouncing a little. He just wanted to calm her.

"It's okay. I know, sweetheart. You're alright. I know that it hurt."

Ilya kissed the top of Sonya's head gently. She wasn't really crying anymore, just sniveling and looking at him and rubbing her palms against Ilya's jaw, but he wanted to hold her a little longer before loading her into the car seat. A little more bouncing, a few more kisses, a bit more whispered Russian. Before long her breathing had evened, no longer wrought with hiccups, contented. She had handfuls of Ilya's shirt in both her little fists.

The sight of his daughter curled against him brought a certain heaviness—a certain awe, really—to the forefront of Ilya's mind. Sonya trusted him, implicitly. She had no other choice. She relied on him and Shane for everything, every little need. Every desire. She had no way of functioning without them.

Ilya and Shane were completely responsible for the health and happiness of this little person. Sonya was theirs to raise. Theirs to love, and cherish, and protect.

Protect. It seemed like an understatement—Ilya would kill for the little bundle in his arms. He'd die for her with a smile on his face. Ilya had always had similar feelings about Shane, but this was different, because Shane, ultimately, was a grown man and completely capable of taking care of himself. Sonya was not. It brought an entirely new level of worry and care to Ilya's mind.

Ilya didn't understand how a father could feel even the slightest bit differently about his children. Why he would want to do anything other than love them, make them laugh, make them happy, help them grow. He didn't even understand how it was theoretically possible. Ilya's devotion to his family felt like it came from his very center. There was nothing on the planet more important to him than his husband and child.

Why had his own father been so different? Was there something wrong with Ilya, Andrei, or his mother that made them so unlovable?

No. Grigori Rozanov was mean and selfish, and that was all it came down to. The past didn't matter. Ilya didn't want to think about it, he didn't want to give it any power over him. Ilya had cut himself free and built a real family for himself. His children would never feel the way he did. They would never know anything but loving, supportive, attentive parents.

Ilya took a moment to look at his daughter's sweet, peaceful face instead, and couldn't help the little smile that graced his own cheeks.

Affection overwhelmed Ilya's body when he looked at her. It always had.

Satisfied that they were ready to leave, Ilya carefully unballied Sonya's fists, put her in her car seat, and buckled her in. He pressed a tiny kiss to her nose.

"We will be home soon, little loon."

Sonya's paperwork, all labeled "Sofia Hollander-Rozanova" at the top, was tucked safely into the passenger seat. He knew Shane would want to read it over, even after Ilya told him that Dr. Katri said everything was normal.

On the drive back home, Ilya stopped at a Starbucks not too far from the house. He ordered drinks for himself and Shane, and pup cups for Sonya and Anya. Sonya *loved* the whipped cream, and Ilya had promised her something sweet after her appointment. Once he got the order he parked the car, unbuckled his seatbelt, and held the little cup into the backseat for his daughter.

"Here, my love. Because you were so brave."

It took Sonya a moment to take it, and then she just held it and stared. Once she realized what she had, however, she held it up to her mouth with both her little hands and started to eat the whipped cream. Ilya knew there was a fifty-fifty chance that she'd throw the half-empty cup somewhere in the car, but it would hardly be the first time she'd victimized his Mercedes' interior.

His phone rang, then. Usually he'd be able to answer it with his car's Bluetooth system, but it wasn't properly connected. He'd figure out the reason why later. For now, he simply picked it up and checked who was calling.

Ilya was greeted with a picture of Shane smiling in the light of sunset at the cottage, his eyes bright and nose crinkled. Below that was a single word—"Wife"—and a red heart emoji. Ilya liked to update Shane's contact information every few months or so, purely for his own amusement. Sometimes he would change it back to Jane, sometimes he would do something else. This was the latest iteration.

Shane had scowled the first time he'd seen it, but he'd also blushed, so. Ilya answered the phone.

"Hello, beloved."

Ilya loved dropping unexpected, saccharine pet names on Shane. It always made him need to reboot.

"Hi," Shane said, voice soft. "I was just calling to check in. I assumed you'd be done by now—are you done?"

"Yes, we're done. We are in the car."

"Okay, good. How was the appointment?"

"It was okay. She cried, but I was able to calm her down faster this time. Very brave."

"Good. Any reaction to the shots?"

It hasn't even been thirty minutes, Ilya didn't say. Shane had always been such an overthinker.

"Not yet. The call with Farah?"

"It was fine. The same stuff as always. I took a couple of notes for you to read when you get here, but it's not anything you're not already expecting."

"Yeah. We're pretty boring, now."

Ilya could almost hear the eye roll.

"How far away are you, anyway?" Shane asked.

"Not very. I'm at the Starbucks by the mall. Should be home in ten or fifteen minutes. I got a coffee, I got you an iced tea, and Sonya and Anya get pup cups."

There was a pause.

"You're giving our daughter a pup cup?"

Ilya imagined Shane with his eyes narrowed, that adorable indignant expression on his face. "Yes."

"That's for dogs."

"It's just whipped cream."

"For *dogs*. Sofia's not a dog."

"She doesn't know that." Ilya looked at her in the rear-view mirror, whipped cream all over her mouth. The cup was gone, probably on the floor. "She's having a great time."

Shane made a suspicious noise. "I can't believe you're giving her a pup cup."

"She loves it."

"Right."

"I'm going to start driving again now."

"Okay. I'll see you two soon. Love you."

"Love you too." Ilya put the phone on speaker and twisted in his seat to hold it up to Sonya. "Anything to say for daddy?"

Sonya babbled a few times, then tried to bite Ilya's phone. He quickly withdrew it before she could get a grip on it with her little cream-covered hands. After one more quick goodbye, Ilya hung up, put his seatbelt back on, and started the car.

By the time they got home, Sonya was half asleep. It was about the time for her morning nap, so Ilya figured he'd put her down once they got inside. He carried her in one arm and the drink carrier in the other. Inside, he set it carefully on the kitchen counter. Anya was jumping all over his legs in excitement.

There was a thumping from the stairs as Ilya bent down to pet Anya (and give her the treat he'd ordered her), and by the time he stood back up, Shane was standing in front of him. They exchanged a quick peck before Shane reached to steal Sonya, which Ilya allowed.

"Hi, princess," Shane cooed, gently brushing his nose against hers. He had never even baby talked the *dog*, but for Sonya he always melted into a pile of goo. "Papa says you were very brave."

"She was determined. Stoic."

"Wonder where she gets that," Shane said drily. He leaned up and kissed Ilya's cheek, then, baby still tucked against him, and Ilya had no choice but to wrap his arms around both of them. Everything he loved most, captured in a single embrace.

End Notes

Thank you so much for reading! Every single kudos and comment is so so very appreciated :)

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