

Oh, that's a long time

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Oh, that's a long time

by [Eros Gillespie](#)

Summary

'Shane nodded, listening to his boyfriend. He'd realized before, that whenever the other would talk about Russia, his accent would thicken. It would also be like that when Ilya was excited about something. His accent would be much more present again; endearing, really. He also sometimes mixed Russian words into his sentences, something he only ever seemed to do around Shane, though.

“What are bliny?” Shane asked then.

“Блины,” the other corrected.'

Shane and Ilya have a late night talk, where Ilya talks about his grandparents for the very first time. Shane decides to cook something for Ilya as he seemed happy remembering it that night. And Ilya is very obsessed with Davids homemade bread.

Or, they cuddle, talk and eat.

Notes

heyyy, this is my first heated rivalry fic!! I hope y'all like how I characterized them here. And that my explanation around Shane's issue with food makes sense. Yes, I spend far too much time over studying soup and yes, I will make it at some point cause it sounds delicious to me. Also, Ilya grandparents are inspired by my grandpas grandparents, of which he always tells stories about. English isn't my native tongue, either, so excuse my german ass for any mistakes.

There are some russian words used, so here's the translation as well as the pronunciation for them:

дед [ded] - granddad, opa
(Моя) бабушка [moya babushka] - (my) grandmother
блины [bliny] - Blini
Борщ [borshch] - Borscht
уха [ukha] - Ukha
Да [da] - yes
моя любовь [moya lyubov] - my love

Have fun reading!!

It had been freezing cold for a while now, snow turning the world into a picture of light, rather than the colours that usually were part of the scene. Shane had always loved the cold weather, he'd loved the snow and the ice that came with it. Many of his favourite childhood memories were linked to the wintertime. Going out on the lake with his dad, his mum always watching them. Or sledding down the hill not so far from his home.

Those were moments he could still see in front of his eyes if he concentrated hard enough. There was also a particular memory from where he'd been six years old, and his parents had taken him out to the cottage they usually only spend their summers in. Just for a weekend. And somewhere at his parent's place, there still had to be pictures of those two days.

Shane on the lake with his dad. Grinning from ear to ear after scoring goal after goal, celebrating every single one. Then there had been a huge snowman they'd build together, Shane standing next to it, not even able to reach the head even he'd jump.

One of his mums favourite pictures had been taken that day.

It had been for supper when his mum had cooked his favourite spaghetti. And little Shane, who'd been active all day, had absolutely demolished them. Much to his parents' amusement; especially when the sauce had somehow ended up under his eye.

Until a certain point, he'd also found it funny because his parents had been very happy, though, even little Shane couldn't stand feeling dirty for more than twenty minutes. So there was also a photo of him wrapped into a very fluffy, gigantic yellow towel.

His mum had actually shown those pictures to Ilya earlier that day, who had looked at his fiancé with this shit eating grin he so often pulled as he saw the one of Shane passed out on the rug by the fireplace.

It wasn't even that this wasn't like one of the most adorable pictures that had ever been taken of him. It was more that a very adult Shane had indeed fallen asleep on the floor just a week before Ilya had been shown that very same picture. So it had been a grin, followed by the sentence, "So you've always done this?" And then his mum had proceeded to tell the other player like five other times they had found Shane sleeping on the floor.

Later that night, when they'd both been tired out by the day and Shane busy with reading the newest book he'd bought last week. Ilya had got ready for bed, when he'd chosen to crawl into the space besides his partner, promptly attaching himself to him. Sliding further down, he'd rested his head in the other's lap, hoping he'd get the hint. He had, as strong fingers had started to carve through the taller's locks, gently, on the side of his head.

They'd stayed like this for a solid five minutes, when Ilya had let out a small sigh. It was a subtle call for attention, which Shane had given him immediately.

There had been no other sounds, apart from the flock of Canada Geese you could hear in the distance. Shane had grown up to that sound, and Ilya had started to like it more and more.

Especially after David had given him an older book about native birds in Canada. He'd looked through it on a quiet, lonely night in a hotel in New York.

Ilya had then proceeded to reveal that when he'd been younger, maybe three, his mother and he had visited his grandparents sometimes. He'd never mentioned them before, but from what Shane could hear in his voice - there had to be a smile on his face.

As a toddler, he had once fallen asleep at the kitchen table, with old folksongs playing in the background. His дед had taken him out into the stables, where he'd had some chicken and a single very old stallion. Ilya had loved his grandparent's animals. His father had never allowed him any pets.

Technically, he'd also been against Ilya visiting his grandparents with his mother. Grigori had never been very popular for them - actually, thinking back, Ilya could only remember them talking bad about his father.

He'd stolen their girl from them, after all. The horrible person he'd been. And he'd taken her life, in the end. No one could tell Ilya otherwise. Luckily, his grandparents had been long gone when that had happened. He liked to imagine that now they all were together again. While his father rotted in hell.

It wasn't even that he actually believed in god any more. Years of living in a country that hated you for your mere being, trapped in a family that only wanted and never gave - what kind of god would have their worshippers' life like that? But heaven and hell were a concept he could, at least, somewhat wrap his head around. Even if only to imagine that his mama was happy again.

But back then, he'd been too young to really understand why his дед had hated Grigori with all his guts. And maybe that had been for the better.

"Моя бабушка always made so much food when we visited them," Ilya mumbled, and Shane was fairly sure that he was talking about his grandmother. He was working on his Russian and that word sounded very familiar to him. "Like, there was so many different things. Sweets, and meat and bread and fish and vegetables, but like in a glass from past year. And she made the *best* блины."

Shane nodded, listening to his boyfriend. He'd realized before, that whenever the other would talk about Russia, his accent would thicken. It would also be like that when Ilya was excited about something. His accent would be much more present again; endearing, really. He also sometimes mixed Russian words into his sentences, something he only ever seemed to do around Shane, though.

"What are bliny?" Shane asked then.

"Блины," the other corrected, turning onto his back so he could gaze up at his fiancé, whose hand fell off the locks and onto Ilya's chest. "They are pancakes, but a little different. Not so much sugar. Very tasty."

"When did you last have them?" He wanted to know then, pushing his glasses up his nose.

The taller sighed, though the small smile on his lips remained, "Summer before my father died."

"Oh, that's a long time," Shane stated. He was quiet for a moment.

For the past months, he'd been trying to adjust his food palette for more things. It had caused many arguments between them, and Shane honestly had started to envy his boyfriend for his freedom of eating whatever he wanted.

And one night, when things had got bad between them. Like full on shouting to a point where Shane had found himself in his bedroom, head between his knees so he could just keep breathing.

Ilya had entered the room just minutes later, sitting down beside him, no touching. He hadn't said sorry. And a small part of Shane had known that it had been for the better. His boyfriend hadn't said anything actually wrong, he made his point clear, had only snapped after Shane just wouldn't calm down. And sure, maybe Ilya shouldn't have snapped at all, but everyone did that. No one was able to swallow everything down over and over again, without snapping eventually.

And he'd asked Ilya that night, much later, if he could show him how to eat so careless with so much on your shoulders as they had. Because from Shane's standpoint, it had been the only thing he'd been able to control in his life on his own, and the discipline that came with it was important. He'd actually, once again, woken Ilya up for telling him just that.

They'd worked out something that seemed to work fairly well for them now. His - then - boyfriend had taken his time with thinking about Shane's explanation on why he had that diet. And he'd concluded that it might have something to do with the stress they both had to put up with. He knew that Shane was somewhat different, that his brain worked differently, at least.

And with the whole point of the diet being strict control, he'd asked Shane how he'd done it as a child. If he'd always been this peculiar with eating. It had been no surprise that he had. So Ilya had nodded along, had promised Shane to help him with that, and then he'd kissed him and grumbled something about sleeping now.

In the morning, he'd called Yuna, who'd told him that back then they'd always sat down as a family and had written a meal plan for the week. And that no one had ever been forced to eat anything they didn't like. So Shane had got something like chicken and rice when his parents had wanted to make steak, just like David would never eat mushrooms.

And with that, Ilya's plan had been made, and he'd explained it to Shane. They'd sit down together and write a meal plan. With that, there would still be a list, something Shane could look at and see that it stood on the list, and he would do right in eating what stood on it.

It was under his control what stood on there, and there were no strict rules which items he was allowed to eat whatsoever. And after some weeks it had actually started to work very well for them. Even with setting days when they would get some takeaway.

Sure, Shane still ate disgustingly many things from his former diet, but he also ate other stuff now. Not like Ilya, of course, but the day they'd ordered pizza and his fiancé had actually got a pizza and no salad, Ilya had been so happy for him.

And there had been no freaking out about carbs or dairy. They'd just sat down in front of the TV, Shane had chosen a movie, and then they'd eaten together. It had been nice. The kind of moment you wanted to last forever.

"Is alright," the taller muttered then, eyes focused on the other's face. Ilya could see that man a thousand times in glasses, and he'd never be able to get over the way they framed his beautiful face. The faded freckles, not as harsh in the winter, but still so perfectly fitting on his cheeks. "I tried making them, but they tasted not so good."

Shane nodded, his gaze drawn to where his hand was placed on Ilya's chest. He often did that, looking at anything but his fiancé's eyes. Ilya liked how the other man could be an entirely different person around him, that he felt comfortable enough to be himself rather than the Shane he presented to the world.

"What other dishes did your grandma make for you?"

The brunette felt the corner of his mouth draw upwards. He intertwined his fingers with the others. Their hands rose with every breath he took.

"Many. Like Борщ. That's soup with red beet and cabbage. But I did not like it as a kid," Ilya recalled. And then, as if just remembering that now, he smiled a little more. "And sometimes my дед would go fishing with his neighbour. And one time he made a fire outside with me, and he let me help him make yxa. It's like a fish soup. Very good with bread to dip in."

"Like Seafood Chowder?" Shane asked.

His fiancé made a confused face, "Like what?" He'd heard that before, but couldn't really remember where.

"Seafood Chowder," the older replied. "It's a creamy Canadian fish soup. You had it at my parents last winter."

"Ah," he made. Now that Ilya thought about it, he had a vast memory of David serving a fish soup. It had been tasty, though, in his opinion, yxa was a little better. "Yeah, it was good."

"You've had three servings," Shane reminded him, his brows furrowed slightly. Still, there was a smile edged onto his face.

"Well yes, your father is a good cook, yes?" Ilya simply stated in return.

And no one could truly deny that. It was a fact that David Hollander could cook like a three-star chef. Last month he'd made a vodka pasta and Ilya had practically drooled at alone the smell of it.

It had taken three weeks until they could meet again, after that weekend they'd both had two days off together. It didn't happen often, and after having visited his parents together for some hours, their weekend had felt like it had been over already. Two days weren't enough. And Shane had been thinking about that night they'd cuddled so often in those past weeks.

Ilya rarely sounded positive when talking about his childhood in Russia. But he'd seemed happier talking about his grandparents. And Shane loved to see his fiancé like this. He could honestly watch him for hours.

He could actually watch him for hours, no matter what. Gliding over the ice, talking about something, or that one time he'd found him vibing to Russian Indie-Pop. Ilya was just so - easy to look at.

So many people made it difficult to watch them. They would eventually stare back, raise an eyebrow, demand eye contact no matter what. But Ilya, being the most attentive person Shane had ever met, never did that. Or, at least, not in a way that made him feel uncomfortable. He'd let him admire him without any complaints. And there was a lot to admire.

So Shane had come to the decision that he'd cook for him - them. He'd written it down in his meal plan on the day they would usually get takeaway, so there was no set meal there. Then he'd looked for an Ukha recipe online.

Well, he'd looked at it while Hayden had told him to just make a chowder. Which had resulted in him explaining to his best friend that seafood chowder and Ukha were two different things, and that they had Canadian and American stuff all the time. So it was time to make something specifically for Ilya.

Then Shane had texted his dad - a week prior - to ask him if he could take him to his favourite fish market. And also to ask him if he should make the traditional Ukha without any vegetables in it, or with; since Ilya hadn't gone into detail there. His dad had advised that he should make the latter. And then his dad had offered to bake one of his sourdough breads for them, since his fiancé always absolutely devoured them at their place.

Ilya would arrive some hours after Shane, which allowed him enough time to grab the groceries and have a quick stop at his parent's house. Because his dad had decided that he should take the herbs he'd use for the soup from his personal plants, and not something store-bought. Then he'd head over to the others place where he could start cooking in peace.

"Okay, the fish," Shane mumbled to himself after washing his hands thoroughly. He grabbed the salmon they'd picked up earlier - it was a nice size; his dad had specifically pre-ordered one, even if Shane hadn't asked him to.

He placed it on the wooden chopping board and grabbed his filleting knife - yes, he'd brought the one from his place - and went to fillet the fish like he'd been taught as a kid.

Setting the fillets aside, he removed the head, the spine and the tail before adding them to the pot. Water was filled up, and he brought it to a boil, setting it to a medium heat afterwards.

And then he was supposed to wait for 40 minutes and let it simmer. So he used that time to peel two big potatoes, a medium-sized carrot and a medium-sized onion. The potatoes and onion he cut into bite sized pieces, and the carrots were sliced.

Still, there were some minutes left of just waiting until he could continue the dish, and Shane used those to grab himself a ginger ale and to check his phone. A new message of Ilya on Instagram, which meant he was still on the plane. It wasn't anything of major importance, honestly, just asking if he was already in Ottawa. So he responded, adding a thumbs up to the end of the text.

Overall, it took him roughly a little over an hour until he added the last bit, a shot of vodka. Ilya had messaged, saying that he'd be home in some minutes. So it had been no surprise when the front door was opened, cold air flooding the hallway. Moments later, his steps could be heard.

Shane was currently busy with chopping up parsley and dill, so it took him a moment to realize that his fiancé hadn't moved from the doorway. When he finally looked up, the older suddenly felt extremely silly for doing all this. They'd agreed on take-away today. And now he was cooking. He was messing up their plans. What if-

"Are you making yxa?" Ilya suddenly asked, bag dropping to his feet as he stood there, watching his partner. He took an audible sniff, head raised slightly into the air.

"I uhm...", he shrugged, looking at the wall behind the taller. "Well, yeah."

Ilya nodded, his face betraying nothing. It was unsettling, extremely so. Shane couldn't read him like that, and that disturbed him. A real reaction would be much more to his liking.

But then his fiancé moved over to him, stepping behind the kitchen isle to spin him around. He didn't force the eye contact, though once Shane's eyes collided with his, the man couldn't look away. The blue in them glistening bright in the warm light of the kitchen light.

"I missed you, моя любовь," Ilya stated quietly, as he placed his hands on Shane's waist, pulling him closer. He leaned in and without any restraint, the other returned it. Their kiss was different from usual. Usually, it was full of passion, run by lust after not seeing each other for weeks. Sometimes it was just sweet.

But this, this was pure longing. Chasing a feeling they both needed so bad. Though Ilya, who initiated it, seemed to crave it like a sailor the sea. He huffed out a breath, eyes closed, hands coming up to hold Shane's face close.

"What was that?" Shane couldn't help but asking when they finally parted, though their foreheads stayed connected.

"You are making Russian food," Ilya stated. He bit the inside of his cheek as he swallowed. "Last time someone made Russian food really for me was when I had been twelve."

Okay, wow. That stung. Shane hadn't really thought about that before. Maybe he should've. Ilya had mentioned before that after his mother had passed, no one had actually bothered with him any more. Which also included cooking meals specifically for him because he liked them. His father definitely wouldn't have done that.

But what to respond to that? Because Shane honestly had no clue what he should say now. So he decided for the easiest answer, which was no answer. Instead, he pressed his lips to Ilyas chin, and then the corner of his mouth. Affection as an answer was good, right? His fiancé always liked it when he kissed him like this.

As he pulled away again, Shane made sure to get a little distance between them. Otherwise - he was sure of it - he wouldn't be able to part from the taller at all. And he hadn't made this soup for nothing. Plus, he still had to clean up, set the table and cut the bread.

Though, as he turned back towards his herbs, the other immediately attached himself to his back, arms snapping around his middle. He could feel the hot breath against his hair, felt lips pressing against the back of his head. Ilya inhaled slowly, smelling the expensive shampoo Shane was keen on using.

"Leave me alone," he said, jokingly, hoping to lighten the mood a little more.

It worked, as he could feel the smile forming on Ilyas features. The whine that followed was offered in the same playful tone he always used when 'annoying' Shane, "Nooo..."

The next kiss was pressed right under his ear.

"You're in my way," Shane said, finishing his work by slicing the lemons he'd bought earlier. "I have to clean up. And cut your bread."

"What type of bread?" Ilya asked, as if that would affect his next move. Maybe it did.

"Dads bread."

There was an audible gasp, and Shane was certain that the other eyes widened in a comical motion. Shane was sure, that no one loved homemade bread as much as Ilya did. He'd probably kill for a loaf of it.

The taller detached himself without any further protest.

"Да. Right, I will let you work," he said, already moving over to the cupboard. "And I will set the table, yes?"

"If you want," the older replied, taking his used dishes over to the sink. It wasn't much, so he decided to just wash them now. Their bowls, later, wouldn't take more than three minutes, either.

"I want to," Ilya said, pulling out two of the soup bowls he'd bought online a while ago. Yuna had told him that every good household should have nice soup bowls and obviously, he'd listened to her. She'd also helped him pick out some as they'd scrolled through some websites together.

He brought them over to the table, while Shane was busy with the dirty dishes. It would never be not endearing to him how his fiancé couldn't stand it to leave a mess anywhere. Especially not when he'd been the one to make it. Though in Ilyas opinion, the kitchen had been clean, even with some dishes standing around. When he himself tried a recipe, it often resembled a battlefield afterwards.

Finally sitting down to eat the soup, Shane had spent so many thoughts on, said one was actually kind of nervous on how Ilya would like it. He'd put out the herbs, the lemon wedges and salt and pepper with it, just like the online recipe had told him to.

And still, what if he'd messed it up completely? Or missed a step? Or it tasted nothing like the one Ilya had at his grandparents? It hadn't been like Shane could contact them for a recipe, right? Like, even if they had accepted their grandsons gay fiancé. They both had died when Ilya had been five years old. So it wouldn't be Shane's fault for it tasting entirely different.

"I uhm, put carrots and potatoes in it," he said then, placing the pot on the table. "I didn't know if your grandpa had done that, but the online recipe had told me so, so I put them in. It's alright if yo--"

"Shane," Ilya interrupted his - admittedly nervous - rambling. "My grandpa put vegetables in the soup. And if not, it is no problem, yes? You made this for me. It will be good, yes? Smells amazing."

He just nodded, sitting down. Ilya filled his bowl first. Shane watched him, mirroring what he was doing then, as Ilya took both dill and parsley, as well as a wedge of lemon to squeeze into his soup.

It was good, not as good as his dad's chowder, but still tasty. At least that's what Shane thought after the first few bites. His fiancé, though, took one bite and let his spoon sink again, leaning back in his chair.

"Is it that bad?" The older man asked, not able to scold his expression as it inevitably fell slightly.

But Ilya, seemingly realizing how his reaction could be interpreted, simply shook his head as he cleared his throat. He swallowed, tilting his head slightly as he looked at his man.

"No," Ilya said. "It is really good."

The statement was followed by a sniffle. A sniffle Shane had heard before that had him whipping his head up as he looked for more evidence in the other's face now. Damp bright

blue eyes, and Ilya turned his face away from view. Just like he always did when he was about to break.

“Sorry,” the man muttered. There was a crack in his voice. “I am just tired.”

“Don’t be sorry,” he replied, not sure if he should get up and try to comfort the other. Or if Ilya needed this moment to just process. Shane also wasn’t exactly sure if it was good or bad that he’d brought his fiancé close to tears. “It’s alright.”

“It doesn’t taste like in Russia,” the taller states then, having somewhat collected himself after some seconds. “But, it nearly does. Different fish, yes? And different way of cooking. Makes it taste different but very similar.”

There it was again. Ilyas accent becoming stronger, the words he used more simple. But there was a smile forming on his face which seemed so misplaced considering he’d been close to tears just a minute ago. Shane didn’t understand.

“I got salmon cause I like it the best,” he replied. “Next time I could use a different fish, one you’d used back then.”

“No,” Ilya shook his head. He reached out to grab Shane’s hand. “This is perfect. It is... made with love, yes? And for me. And I know you like salmon, and I like salmon too, so it is alright and good and very tasty. And I will eat the whole pot myself if you don’t look out.”

The man squeezed his hand, smiling a little brighter now.

“I was just... I didn’t expect it to make me feel like that,” Ilya tried to explain. And Shane was so incredibly grateful that he did. Because there was no way in hell he’d be able to understand the switch of emotions on his own. “It reminded me of my childhood, and my grandparents and mother. Nice memories. Mixing with what I’m feeling for you now. It was just a little too much to feel.”

“So, you’re overwhelmed?” He asked, hoping that he’d understood right.

Ilya gave a firm nod, “Да. Yes. And I want you to make this soup again some time. Maybe at the cottage, with me helping you. We could invite Yuna and David.”

And now it was Shane’s turn to smile at his fiancé. The other was such a family man! Honestly, sometimes he had the feeling that Ilya talked more to his parents than he himself did. Which had to mean something, considering that they were pretty close to begin with.

“Yeah, we could,” he stated, looking down at the bowl of soup for a moment. It wasn’t steaming any more. “But now, we probably should eat before it gets cold.”

“Okay,” Ilya rolled his eyes playfully, but he dutifully picked his spoon back up, promptly shovelling some of the food into his mouth.

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