

Dead Mom Jokes

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Dead Mom Jokes

by [Pickle_Chips](#)

Summary

“You miss your mommy, Rozanov?”

“Not as much as I miss yours.”

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Starting when he's 13, a series of looks into Ilya's relationship with his parents.

Also featuring an answer to the famous question 'What did Ilya and David talk about while Shane was talking to Yuna?'

Notes

A/N: My credentials for this include that I'm obsessed with this show and both my parents died, so all jokes made in good faith and good fun.

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

I am only 13, Ilya wants to scream. I tried.

His father is 2 hours deep into berating him, mocking him. Ilya's job was to sit very still, and say 'Yes, father,' and 'No, father' at the right points. He could not scream, under any circumstance.

Ilya had been discharged early today, from training camp. He had gotten into a fight. His nose smarted where it had smacked against the ice when he fell. This was overall, shitty on a lot of levels, including that he now had to go home until school started.

He was normally fairly good at not getting into fights on the ice. Not... excellent. His father wouldn't have tolerated him being thought of as weak, and Ilya got mad and hopped up on adrenaline just like all the other boys. But he was out for hockey, not blood. He didn't want to fight. Plus, he was one of the youngest boys at these camps, usually, thanks to being tall and fast.

The boy he fought with today was 16, and way stronger than Ilya. Maybe he was mad, because Ilya was better than him. Ilya had been chosen to be today's starting center, just a camp thing, but there was growing resentment that he was too young, a baby. At their little face off, Solovyov was probably trying to get under his skin about that. He probably didn't know.

"Going to cry to your mommy when you lose, Rozanov?"

Ilya hadn't replied anything he had prepared, no *"you're going down,"* whatever. He said nothing at all, but Solovyov could tell he had hit a nerve. His grin was enormous, and then it was on.

"Mama's boy scores!" He yelled, when Ilya scored a goal. Boys laughed. Ilya said nothing. He knew he should say something, knew how to diffuse this normally. But it was too soon. It had only been 4 months, since his mother's funeral. Two weeks ago was his first birthday without her. He wasn't quick enough, with a quip. His eyes made a quick dash to his coach, who was watching with dispassionate apathy.

Solovyov didn't know she was dead, but his coach did, right? Ilya thought he must be really over reacting, if even his coach didn't think it was a big deal. He felt his heartbeat louder in his head. But he couldn't just say this shit, right?

At half time, Ilya watched the big bud of a player Ivanov skate over to Solovyo laughing. Ivonov was 17, and it was certain now that he would never be anything in hockey. Ilya wasn't even sure why he bothered coming to camp. And he was slow, and rude. He said something to Solovyo and they both laughed.

"Hey, Rozanov," Solovyo skated over, putting on a mock sad face, "I'm sorry." He got close enough to Ilya that the coach couldn't hear, though Ilya wasn't sure it would have mattered anyway.

Ivonov, in the distance, hid his face like this was so crazy funny he couldn't breathe.

"I didn't know your mother was *dead*, Rozanov. Tough break. Guess she didn't love you enough to stick around!"

Ilya saw red after that. He wasn't even sure how he went from sitting to hitting, but he had broken Solovyov's nose. He remembered looking at his knuckles, raw and bloody, in the office after. They kicked him out, but Ilya was too good, they wanted him back next year. Ilya's hands hurt.

Ilya knew he would need to respond better next time. And it got easier, when it wasn't so fresh. People tried, at the next training camp. This time, Ilya was ready. And Ilya was... well. Ilya was an asshole.

"You miss your mommy, Rozanov?"

"Not as much as I miss yours."

“I fucked your mother all night, Rozanov, she was moooaannningg.”

“That tracks, I bet no living women would get near your dick.”

“Is your mother embarrassed that she raised such a shitty skater, Rozanov? Does she cry herself to sleep every night?”

“Don’t know, you can ask her when you go to visit all your hopes of joining the KHL.”

That one was met with a blank expression, so Ilya had to add, *“She’s dead.”*

He won the faceoffs.

When he got older, men didn’t do it so much. There were better insults, easier ways to get under someone’s skin. It was a cheap shot, to go after someone’s mother. There was a rule in North America, something about family and chirps.

But it still came up, and it always brought every conversation to a grinding halt.

Ilya had tried it the classic way:

“Eh, Rozanov, is your mom always crawling up your dick about getting injured like mine is?”

“She died.”

“Oh my god man, I am so sorry, I had no idea.”

“It’s ok, it was a long time ago.”

He tried making it as uncomfortable as possible, on purpose:

“Ilya, when do we get to meet your parents, man? Your tits are huge, so I bet she’s fucking stacked.”

“She’s dead, Miller.”

“Oh, I was just -”

“I can still pull up a picture if you want to see if she’s stacked, though. I think there’s one on her... how do you say it in English, obituary?”

“Come on man I didn’t know, I’m sorry. I take it back.”

He tried not saying anything:

3:03 pm Ilya: I can be nice. I am a gentleman.

3:13 pm Anna (New York) : I bet you are. I bet you call your mom every Sunday. Take out the trash for her. I bet I can make you bad for me.

7:09 pm Anna (New York) : Are you still coming over? Going to show me how nice you can be?

7:15 pm Ilya: Yes, sorry, practice went long.

He tried a sort of half lie, best for parties and people he would never see again:

“I bet your parents are so proud, Ilya, I bet they wish they could be here to see you win MVP. Tell me, what do they do?”

“My father works for the police.”

“Oh, in Russia! Wow. What about your mother, does she work?”

“Not anymore.”

In the end, all the approaches all made him feel hollow. No one wanted to know about his mother. He couldn't talk about her in the locker room, with his friends. Not even to say that she, what, used to love candles so that could be a good mother's day gift? Anytime she came up, the everyone went silent.

His teammates knew, and avoided the topic like the fucking plague. When girls found out, they wanted him to cry, wanted to hold his head in their laps and have him tell them how sad his life was. He didn't want that. He just wanted to be... Ilya. A guy who had a mother, who didn't anymore. And he missed her. It was fucked up, all these guys who complained and talked and referenced their families all the time and he couldn't say anything at all.

So he stopped. Ilya never mentioned Irina.

Most people got it, when they said 'family' and he said 'my father' so the half-lie became his whole truth.

He wondered, often, if his cross was a bad memorial to her seeing how often he did terrible shit to it. He put it in his mouth, obviously. Biting down on it when he was annoyed, fucking around with it on his tongue while he watched TV.

He let it get sweaty in the gym, clean in the shower, tangled with his hair he had to rip out.

He let it cut his chest when people slammed into him on the ice, sometimes it would leave a perfect little cross bruise.

Pretty girls touched it when they took his shirt off.

He thought, its fine.

When he really thought about it, it was more that she was part of him. The chain was his, now, as much as it had been hers. He was walking around, partly her, and this was just decoration that said that. Some part of him he couldn't name, but was still there. Ilya's literal cross to bear.

Or at least, that's what he told himself when Shane Hollander kissed it during sex and Ilya thought he'd cum so hard he'd had a religious experience.

On the plane home from Russia, after burying his father, Ilya realized he'd need a new strategy now. Deflecting to his father wasn't going to work now that he was... an orphan? Could you still be an orphan, as an adult?

He leaned his head against the window, and looked at his lap where he had been rereading messages from Shane. He missed him. That was a dangerous thought, it burned. He wondered what Shane would say to do, how he would navigate all the parties when people asked him what his parents thought of all his successes.

But Shane's parents were alive, and in his life. He'd never watched the facial expressions when you told people your parents were dead. He's probably say some perfect PR answer, maybe that really would fix it. Whatever. Everyone Ilya knew already knew, and most of them would be too afraid of him to say anything about it anyway.

He'd work it out later.

Ilya really wasn't expecting *later* to be sitting across from David Hollander in his kitchen, while Shane and his mother held each other on the lawn outside.

"I hope when you came out to your parents it wasn't this much of a shit-show." David said, offhandedly.

Oh god, Ilya thought. David didn't keep up with hockey as much as Yuna, Shane had told him, why would he remember which players' fathers had recently died? He was grateful he was less expressive than Shane, he imagined his face didn't look quite as caught as Shane's would have.

"I... didn't. Uh, Russia is different. And they have both... died."

Ilya's English was very good now, but he was pretty sure he was supposed to have used a euphemism instead. Passed? Moved on? Too late now. For a moment, the worst silence of all time fell over the kitchen, and Ilya considered asking if he could go wait for Shane in the car.

"Oh my god, I really just shoved my foot in my mouth there, didn't I? God, I am sorry. I probably shouldn't be asking people about coming out in the first place. I got a little jumbled up today." David asked, half laughing.

Ilya smiled at him. He felt the tension break. So often people made their embarrassment his fault, made him comfort them for making them squirm. It was nice, David wasn't like that.

"It's fine. It's been a long time," his auto response kicked in. Then he remembered. "Er- actually. A long time for my mom, my father was more... recent. But less sad."

"Less sad?"

"Yes."

David nodded thoughtfully.

"I'm sorry for your losses, Ilya."

Another beat passed, and Ilya thought maybe they would just sit in silence, but something was brewing on David's face. He looked like Shane, deep in thought like this.

"Well, and also, sorry if this isn't my place but uh, if we're the first parents you're coming out to, thank you for telling us. And you're always welcome to be exactly who you are, here. We'll like you just the same."

Ilya smiled at him. That was... nice. A little clumsy, maybe, but Ilya hadn't exactly come out to a lot of people before, and he would take it.

“Like me the same as before, so, hate me?”

David smiled.

“Yes, but only professionally. Personally, you seem ok.”

Ilya laughed.

When he talked about his mother to Shane, he asked follow up questions. First, how she died. That wasn't Ilya's favorite question, but someone should know, and if Shane was going to know him... he should know.

Then later, he asked her name. Ilya was surprised by how nice it was to tell him even this small thing about her.

Shane kept it up. Not a lot, not all the time, not so much it made Ilya uncomfortable.

“Was your mom allergic to tree nuts too?” Shane asked, one night, over thai takeout. She was.

“Did you ever meet your grandparents, were they nice?” No they were not.

“What did your mom do for fun?” Shane had asked on a long weekend they had spent in Boston. Ilya had explained as best he could what she did for work, but also that she liked to paint and draw, that he had always hoped she would do that instead. That she used to make things for the house, little paintings and doodles. Made lunch notes when Ilya went to school.

“Was your dad that big of a dick to your brother, or just to you?” Shane had asked on a phone call where Ilya had ranted for more than hour that his brother just kept calling. He snorted, and told an anecdote, how his father thought he was soft, how it didn’t matter what Alexi did.

Ilya found himself shocked to answer, shocked that after years of shutting down any family questions he could tell Shane. That he wanted to tell Shane. That Shane could hear the answer without flinching, without looking at him like he was deeply damaged. He felt like it had brought two halves of himself together, like Russia him and Hockey him were in the same room for the first time.

He didn’t know how to tell Shane that. So he just kept answering.

Ilya had felt like the world's biggest jackass, the first Christmas he had spent with Shane’s parents. He hoped they couldn’t tell he was sulking, but Shane had noticed he was off, and he felt like a villain for not being able to smile bright and give Shane the *together* Christmas he deserved.

He had waited for Shane to be snoring softly before he snuck out to the deck, to smoke. To look at the stars. He took a blanket from the living room, his favorite one. He hoped no one would mind.

It was so hard, sometimes. Even without the Shane factor, walking into a loving home was hard for him. He felt 15 again, he felt like the ‘bad kid’ nobody’s parents liked them hanging out with. He felt like being 17 and none of the players wanting to come over to his because it was silent and evil in there, stiff and terrible.

When he walked into the Hollander home it was *warm*. There were little pictures of Shane on the walls. They loved their son so much they would even open the door to Ilya, even though sometimes when they thought he wasn't looking he could see Yuna make an anxious face, could see David trying to wrap his head around talking to him. They were trying so hard. They loved Shane so much.

They had given him a great gifts, a picture of him and Shane talking on draft day that David had found deep in his camera roll where they looked angry and fond, and a joking Metro's sweatshirt, and a new travel overnight bag. Ilya liked them very much.

He wondered what his mom would have given Shane. It felt too far away, too difficult to see. It made his heart hurt.

"Hey," came a soft voice from behind him.

Ilya felt himself smile, despite himself.

"I'm sorry," He said, as Shane settled in next to him. He offered him part of blanket, and Shane snuggled in.

"What's going on, Ilya?"

Ilya sighed, shook his head. "I don't know how to explain and if I did I think it would be... unfair."

Shane was sleepy. He rested his chin on Ilya's shoulder.

"Try?"

Ilya put out the cigarette, to make sure no smoke got on Shane. He sighed.

"I... am jealous?"

Shane wrinkled his brow. Ilya could always tell when family stuff came up that Shane was trying to be extra careful.

“Because my parents know about us?”

Ilya wobbled head to mean, sort of. “Because... they are here. And they love you.”

Shane and Ilya had once gotten into a really tense car ride after Ilya had said something similar and Shane had replied that *‘Your parents loved you too, Ilya’* which was very much not the thing to say, so Ilya knew Shane wasn’t touching that one.

“They love you too, I think. Dad is so stoked to watch you play next month.”

“Mm, it’s very nice. I’m glad. Sometimes, though, it is worse that they do. I don’t know, it’s not fair. I like it here. I like them very much. It’s just that...you have parents that love you so much it overflows into me, you know? They love you so much they want to be closer to you, no matter what. I don’t have parents at all. When I did my dad mostly wanted me to be... very different”

Shane nodded, absorbing.

“I don’t know what that’s like.” He said, honestly.

Ilya smiled sadly. He loved how honest Shane was. He deeply preferred that answer to *‘I totally get it.’* which made him want to hit a wall.

“This Christmas was so nice it made me sad, I think. But it’s like... a sadness of richness. Champagne problems is a phrase, right?” Ilya asked.

Shane made some sort of sleepy noise of disagreement. “I’m not very good at this stuff, but I think it’s ok, that it makes you sad that your parents are gone, sometimes. I don’t think you

need to think it's champagne problems."

Ilya stared out at the stars, contemplating. He tangled their fingers together.

"Maybe we could do something that was like... centered on you, sometime. We could remember your mom, or look at embarrassing pictures of you as a baby for a change. I... want to be your family. If that's not too cheesy."

Ilya kissed him, hard on the temple, mumbled I love you into his hair.

"Way too cheesy." He said, making Shane laugh.

Ilya had way more patience than most people gave him credit for, especially off the ice. But he was wearing thin, and he was having to close his eyes and count to ten. He loved Yuna Hollander, *loved* her, loved how fiercely she loved Shane and how much she had taken him in. But she was going to kill him.

Being outed had been terrible. Ilya was relieved, and glad the worst of it was over, and grateful for his team. The press had been horrible. He was so grateful for Shane, and that Shane had regained some of his footing, and thrilled that Shane was sticking it to the commissioner, and thrilled that Shane would be joining them on the centaurs next year but they were 8 hours deep into a press junket Yuna had organized and Ilya was going to *lose his mind*.

They had started at 6 am. David had been driving, and Yuna was reading off articles she had printed off to tell them tips and tricks about how to talk about being gay publicly. Ilya rested his head on the window. All he wanted now that this was all over was to be honest, to say what he really thought, but she was saying,

"Shane, honey, ok listen please. This could be a really big deal for little LGBT people looking up to you. The prevailing narrative seems to be to push the idea that gay couples are

just like straight couples. Politically, that seemed to be part of the reason that gay activists targeted marriage equality first. But a lot of people think it undercuts that, that a lot of gay relationships are more promiscuous,-”

Shane made an angry sound at the back of his throat.

“-So you might not want to bring up that you were, you know, not monogamous but together for so long. For optics.”

This was so many words and all Ilya was hearing was ‘lie.’ He felt his phone vibrate in his pocket.

Jane: I’m just letting her talk till she tires herself out.

Jane: We’ll say whatever we want, obviously.

Ilya had smiled at him.

Yuna had moved on to defining 'gay activist terms', and Shane hid his face in his hands.

It didn’t stop. So many questions from the press. *What did this mean about their records? Had Shane thrown games? Had Ilya? Had they made people uncomfortable in locker rooms?* Just insult after insult. Ilya’s clothes were hitting him all wrong. Yuna Hollander kept trying to fix his hair.

One of the reporters had asked Ilya if this meant he had *used women*, how that related to Dallas Kent, as if by being bisexual that had been the same as being a predator. He hoped he had been articulate in his answer because what he wanted to say was *'fuck you.'*

In the 15 minute break between questions after that one, Yuna was saying something to him about maybe not emphasizing being bi, maybe it was more simple if he focused on Shane and he felt something break inside him. His eyes snapped to Shane, knowing he would understand.

“I need five minutes.”

Shane nodded at him, jerking his head to the service door. Shane was no stranger to overwhelm. “Go, we’ve got it here.”

“But-” Yuna said.

“Go.” Shane said again.

Ilya had practically run to the door, inhaling the cigarette deeply. He relished the silence. He wondered how he was doing. He wondered which clip would be the headline tomorrow. He looked up at the clouds, and his hand found his necklace.

Would she think he was doing this right, Irina? She always said what was on her mind. Ilya felt his eyes get hot, and he swallowed deeply. Even when he was a little kid, when people called him weird or soft or slow she loved him anyway.

I love you just as you are. Follow your own path. Be kind. Be honest. Be nice to people. Sometimes they are going through a lot. He remembered her saying all these things, remembered her telling him to sit with kids when they were alone. He thought *she would want me to be honest.*

Mama, I’m being honest. He thought, more of a prayer.

But even that was interrupted.

“Ilya, honey, break is over, we need you.” Yuna was leaning out of the door. He smiled at her.

“Ok. Coming.”

“You know I wish you wouldn’t smoke, it’s so bad for you.” She said, wrinkling her brow just like Shane.

“You’re not his mom,” Shane said, appearing next to her.

“I’m as good as!” Yuna protested, joking. Ilya felt a little stab in his heart.

Shane looked at her, serious. “No, mom, you’re not.”

Yuna blinked, blinking as if he’d shined a bright light at her. Her change was instant.

“No I’m not,” she turned to Ilya, looking a little cowed, “I’m sorry, Ilya, I didn’t mean-”

Ilya waved his hand, as if to brush the bad vibes away. “Its ok, I know what you mean. You take good care of us.”

Yuna looked like she wanted to cry then, too.

“I’m sorry I’ve been so much, today, I can feel myself doing it it’s just...”

“You’re scared.” Ilya said, simply.

Yuna looked like she wanted to say it was more complicated, but realized that actually it wasn’t.

“We’ve been scared a long time,” Shane said, “So we get it.”

“Yeah,” Ilya agreed, “But we have nothing to hide. We are in love. It’s not scary.”

Yuna hugged him, and they went back in to answer endless questions.

Ilya would love to say it stopped, got better. But love doesn't erase pain. He still had his moments. Troy Barrett's mom flew in to support him when he came out and Ilya went on an extra run. Shane complained about David's boring texts and Ilya gritted his teeth. Harris and his sisters were laughing in his office and Ilya's heart clenched.

But the thing about families, Ilya had learned, was they didn't just shrink. He was adding. Added Shane, added Yuna and David, added Anya. Introduced Sveta, added his teammates. Added rookies and gay hockey players and even Hayden Pike's children.

And one day, he came home and Shane had quietly hung a picture of Irina up in the hallway, with the picture of them from the CCM commercial and from the day he met Rose Landry and the Christmas card they had taken last year. Proud, like she was here, a welcome guest in their home. Not hidden and not a punch line. Ilya traced her face with her finger tip, and he thanked her for all she did, for this life she gave him, filled with love.

End Notes

A/N: I do love Yuna Hollander I mean no disrespect she's trying to help, she just seems like a person who gets stressed and tries to control of the story to me.

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