

Unexpected Item in Bagging Area

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Unexpected Item in Bagging Area

by [SpaceWaffleHouse](#)

Summary

“Mr. Hollander, what’s your designation?” One of the doctors, a beta woman with kind eyes, asks, typing away at a nearby computer.

“He’s an omega,” Ilya replies for him, because at the moment, all Shane can say is “ow.”

“Any chance he’s pregnant?”

“Maybe? He’s on suppressants.”

Or Shane goes into labor at the cottage, which would be fine, if he’d known he was pregnant.

Notes

aka the one where I give Shane my worst nightmare and fuck up the domestic bliss from the cottage

Chapter 1

Shane first notices the cramps while he and Ilya are kicking the ball outside. The alpha has just confirmed he wants to trade teams to be closer to Shane, just all but confirmed he wants to be together, when there's a twinge in the omega's abdomen.

The ball rolls off and away down the hill, Shane clutching at his stomach as he doubles over. Weird, he's had some strange cramping off and on for the last several days, but this is the worst one by far. This is the first one where he actually thinks it hurts.

"Shane?" Ilya appears beside him, a hand on his back, rubbing gently as Shane blinks a couple of times, the pain slowly fading away. "You okay?"

Rubbing his side, Shane nods, placing his hands on his knees. "Yeah, I don't know, I had this... cramp." He straightens, watching the ball roll to a stop at a nearby tree. "Must've played too hard."

A strange look crosses Ilya's face, concern in his eyes, but he doesn't question him. "Maybe we should take a break."

"Yeah," Shane says, rubbing the still aching spot, but the pain does seem to be gone now. There *was* an ache, but it's passed, ebbed, flowed away. "Let me just get the ball."

Ilya hums, then he tugs on Shane's hand, pulling him in for a kiss. The pain from a moment ago is forgotten as their lips brush once, then twice, Ilya's hand caressing his cheek.

For a moment, everything is peaceful. Shane loses himself to the feeling of kissing the man he loves, even if he hasn't told him so yet. He will soon, he promises he will, but the time just hasn't come yet. At some point in the next two weeks they have together, he's going to tell him, especially now that he knows Ilya wants to move to Canada, that he wants to be closer to him.

They part slowly, Ilya resting his forehead against Shane's. "I'll get it," he tells him, kissing Shane one more time before jogging over to the tree and grabbing the ball.

Shane watches him with a smile, taking Ilya's hand and swaying their arms together as they head back into the cottage. They're going to enjoy these next two weeks before they have to go back to the real world. Two nice, boring weeks, where they'll have nothing but each other and the loons.

Assuming the loons don't scare Ilya off first.

*

The cramp returns off and on throughout the day, but he ignores it. At least, he does until Ilya talks to him about marrying Svetlana and just after Ilya promises he won't, it starts up again worse than before.

“Ow,” Shane whispers, setting his phone down as he clutches his sides. His breath comes through his teeth in a hiss, his eyes clenching shut, and suddenly he can smell Ilya at his side, all pine and lavender. A hand presses over his abdomen, another into his hair, and Shane looks up to see worry furrowing Ilya’s brow.

It’s in his scent, too. The pine turns sour, Ilya running his fingers through Shane’s hair, soothing him as the pain begins to fade. “Hey, hey, what’s going on?”

Stomach feeling a bit off, Shane pulls Ilya into his arms, the alpha sitting on the couch by his side as his fingers continue to stroke his hair. “I don’t know, it’s been happening all day.”

“What has?”

“These weird cramps. I think I pulled something in my workout this morning.” He shrugs as he pulls away from Ilya, hands resting on the alpha’s biceps. “I don’t know why it won’t stop.”

Ilya frowns. “Weird.” He presses a hand against Shane’s belly, firm and warm, and something in Shane almost wants to start purring. “Does it hurt when I touch you here?”

“No.” Shane pulls back. “It hurts all over when it happens. I felt it in my lower back, too.”

“Okay. Does not sound like appendicitis then.”

“Hmmm, appendicitis, that’s a big word for you.” He laughs as Ilya leans into him, tickling his neck with kisses as he forgets this cramp, too. “Stop making me laugh, you’ll make it hurt again.”

A grin parts Ilya’s lips as he pulls away, then he kisses Shane, patting his abdomen gently. “If it gets worse, I want you to see doctor, yes?”

Snorting, Shane rolls off of the couch, rising to his feet. “Ilya, it’s a muscle cramp, I’m not dying.”

“Your face got all scrunched up and you said, ‘ow.’ It seemed serious to me.” Ilya takes Shane’s hand when he offers it, letting the omega lead him out of the living area. “Just tell me if it gets worse.”

“Okay, I will.” Shane presses a kiss to Ilya’s cheek. “Let’s go to bed. All the talking about marrying Svetlana made me tired.”

A groan leaves Ilya. “I’m not going to marry her, I promise. It was just an idea.”

“Yeah, a bad one.”

If anything, you should marry me. Not that they’re at that stage, they’re barely even in a relationship. All Shane knows is he loves Ilya, and Ilya at least *likes* him, likes him enough to move to fucking Canada for him. That has to mean something, doesn’t it?

Ilya tugs on Shane’s hand, pulling him toward the bedroom. “You feeling better?”

“Definitely. Just tired.”

“With the cramps, you should sleep it off.”

“Yeah, I guess so.” Shane yawns, leaning into Ilya as they make their way to bed, an odd sense of foreboding filling him as they get ready for the evening.

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The cramps wake him a couple of hours after they settle in for the night. Not wanting to wake Ilya, he stays up thinking through his solution to their problem, thinking of ways for Ilya to stay in Canada or the U.S that don't involve him marrying someone.

Somehow, despite the occasional, persistent pain, he comes up with an idea, one worth waking Ilya up in the middle of the night for. The multi-year plan will allow them to be friends in public at least, then in the long term, long after Ilya has signed to play with Ottawa, they'll be able to come out as more, maybe they can even mate one day.

Ilya tells Shane he loves him amidst a series of kisses and stuttered, emotional Russian, and it's the happiest moment of Shane's life.

The emotional high of holding and kissing Ilya knowing he loves him, knowing they're now *together*, is something he doesn't think he'll come back down from. With him and Ilya, though, something always seems to get in the way. Within moments of Ilya's confession, Shane's response, and the ensuing kiss, his cramps start up again worse than ever.

This time, they're worse than ever.

Shane pulls back from the kiss, crying out sharply as the cramp gets so bad, he becomes dizzy. “Ow, ow, ow...” Nausea grows in the pit of his stomach, blooming north toward his throat, and before Ilya can inquire as to whether or not he's alright, he's up and running to the toilet to vomit.

A vague part of him is aware that Ilya is right on his heels, but he doesn't care. He's too lost in his pain, in the sudden agony blooming in his gut that's got him throwing up in the middle of the night. “Oh god,” he pants, clutching his stomach as soon as its contents are empty. “Fuck, this hurts.”

One of Ilya's hands runs up and down his back, fingers gently brushing over the ridges of his spine. “Shane, I don't think these are just muscle cramps.”

There's a sinking feeling within Shane that his partner is right, that something is really, really wrong, but he can't accept it. If it isn't just a cramp from playing with a soccer ball, then this is something bad, something that could put his career at risk. It could be surgical, or worse, fatal. “It'll go away,” he says, denial heavy in his voice. “It always does.”

“How often has this been happening? Is this why you were awake?”

A lump swelling in his throat, Shane nods. “They got bad enough that I couldn't sleep, so I started brainstorming. I figured I could at least plan how we're gonna be together if it

wouldn't stop."

That beautiful, sunshine of a smile parts Ilya's lips, and he almost looks like he wants to kiss Shane if it weren't for the fact that the omega had just puked his guts out. "Oh, Shane," Ilya breathes, pulling him into his arms.

Little whimpers leave Shane as he burrows his face in Ilya's neck, barely aware that the man he loves has reached over to flush the toilet, washing away the nasty smell that's hovering in the air. "Maybe I should just take an ibuprofen. Must be something with my suppressants acting up."

"Could be." Ilya gently strokes his hair, Shane breathing shakily as the nasty cramp ebbs in his belly. "Sweetheart, vomiting from pain... you need to see a doctor."

Shane wants to deny it, but then the cramp begins to worsen, and he groans as he pulls away from Ilya, not wanting anything to be fucking touching him. It gets worse, Shane gripping the little bathmat beneath him for dear life as he curls into a little ball. His body becomes a mess of pain, his brow breaking out into a sheen of sweat that spreads throughout his body.

Weirdly, he feels it most between his legs, a wetness that spreads throughout his thighs as he whimpers through it. *Great, I pissed myself.* He feels tears spring to his eyes, his body on fire as the new cramp begins to fade, and he looks up to find Ilya staring at him with alarm.

"We're going to the hospital," Ilya says, and immediately, Shane knows it's not an option.

Panting hard, he pushes himself up, wincing at the puddle beneath him. "Oh god, I can't believe I peed my pants."

Frowning, Ilya shakes his head, offering Shane a hand as he pulls him to his feet. There's something new in his eyes, recognition, like he's suddenly aware of something Shane is completely oblivious to. "I... I don't think that's it."

"What do you mean?" Shane looks at the liquid on the floor, and sure, it's a little clear for pee, but he keeps himself hydrated, it isn't that much of a shock that his piss is clear, is it? "What the fuck else could've happened? Clearly I'm in so much pain it's coming out of both fucking ends."

Judging by the look on Ilya's face, that's still not it. "My love," Ilya replies, a hand coming up to caress Shane's cheek as he takes a shaky breath. "If I didn't know better, I think your water broke."

The idea is so preposterous that Shane laughs. "What?"

"Shane, that is not urine." Ilya leans in, sniffing against Shane's scent gland before he pulls back, his face ashen. "Oh fuck..."

"What? Tell me what the fuck is going on, Ilya. You're scaring me," Shane breathes, still panting from the latest cramp. "What do you fucking mean, my water broke? I'm not pregnant. I can't be, I'm on suppressants."

“Like I said, if I didn’t know better, but maybe the doctors can tell us. In emergency room.” Ilya’s tongue comes out to wet his lips as he presses his forehead to Shane’s. “Your scent... is milky.”

Oh. *Oh no.* There are only two reasons an omega’s scent would be milky—if they were pregnant, or if they were actively in heat. Neither of those things should apply to Shane, not with his medication, and yet here they sit, with something so obviously wrong and his scent now changed. Fear creeps into Shane’s gut, his hands wrapping around his waist as tears spring from his eyes. “Ilya, I’m scared.”

“Me too, let me get you to the hospital,” Ilya begs. “Please.”

“Okay.” Shane presses a kiss to Ilya’s lips, short and sweet, placating the alpha as he breathes in that soothing lavender. “I love you.”

“I love you, too.”

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The pain only gets worse on the drive to the hospital. Shane’s eyes land on the clock, focusing on the time, 5:32 am, as he doubles over, clutching his stomach. “I think I’m dying.”

“Don’t say that, you are not dying. Not today,” Ilya tells him, one of his hands reaching out for Shane’s, lacing their fingers together. “We’re going to figure this out, yes?”

Shane wants to reply, but the pain gets worse, and he swears he feels something move inside him. There’s a downward shift, almost like he’s about to shit, so maybe this is all just gas pain and he really needs to poop. That would be embarrassing, but he’s okay with it if it means this problem isn’t more serious.

“Ow!” Shane cries, whimpering as he leans against the door, gripping Ilya’s hand for dear life. “Oh fuck, I’m gonna die. I’m gonna fucking die.”

“Shane, you are not going to die. Just breathe,” Ilya replies, breathing in deeply as if to encourage Shane to do the same. “Look, we’re almost there.”

Glancing out the window, he sees the lights of the emergency room before them. They’re so close, he just has to make it a little longer. He forces himself to breathe as Ilya finds them a parking space, parking Shane’s car as close to the entrance as he possibly can.

As soon as the engine is off, Ilya heads around to the passenger side, one of his hands slipping beneath Shane’s legs as the other wraps around his back. Part of Shane wants to protest being carried, but he’s not sure he can walk it’s starting to hurt that fucking bad. So he lets Ilya carry him into the hospital, his head lolling against the alpha’s shoulder as he’s brought into the emergency room.

They get him settled into a chair, Ilya helping him check in because he’s in so much pain, he can barely remember his name. It feels like forever passes, the pain ebbing and flowing before he’s finally brought to an exam room.

“Mr. Hollander, what’s your designation?” One of the doctors, a beta woman with kind eyes, asks, typing away at a nearby computer.

“He’s an omega,” Ilya replies for him, because at the moment, all Shane can say is “ow.”

“Any chance he’s pregnant?”

“Maybe? He’s on suppressants.”

“Okay, Shane? Can you hear me?”

Somehow, he manages a nod. “Yeah, I can,” he says, voice weak.

One of Ilya’s hands finds its way into his, calming pheromones filling the air. The other strokes his hair, the alpha pressing kisses to his temple in a vain attempt to keep him calm. “Shane, they want to do an ultrasound. It’ll let them see what’s going on.”

“Ok-kay.” Shane whimpers as the pain from the latest cramp starts to fade. “Oh fuck…”

Another doctor wheels some equipment forth, and Ilya manages to pry Shane’s hands away from his belly as the omega lifts his shirt up. Shane is panting as they squeeze some gel onto his skin, and Ilya has to remind him to hold still as the doctors perform their exam.

Remaining still, though, is excruciating. He just wants to curl into a fucking ball and disappear, but then an image appears on a nearby monitor, then the doctor is telling him news he’d never expected to hear when he’d woken up yesterday morning. Not only is Shane pregnant, but the fetus is measuring thirty-nine weeks.

He’s full fucking term and in labor. Holy. Fucking. Shit.

Eyes going wide, Shane stares at Ilya, panting as he does the math in his head. Nine months… what were they doing nine months ago? *Oh my god.* That was the first time Ilya had asked him to stay, the first time Shane had become aware of his feelings. It was the day that Ilya made them tuna melts and offered him ginger ale, and Shane had begged for his knot right before they’d fallen asleep.

He’d thought suppressants would keep him safe from the knot, but looking at the screen, where a fully grown baby is moving about in his belly, clearly they hadn’t.

“Ilya…”

The alpha just squeezes his hand, wiping away a tear Shane hadn’t noticed creeping onto his cheek. He looks up at the doctors. “Can we have a minute?”

The doctor performing the ultrasound frowns. “We need to see how far dila—“

“Please?” Ilya begs, because Shane doesn’t currently have the strength to.

“Let us check him, then you can have all the time you want,” the doctor typing at the computer says.

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A few minutes later, they've determined Shane still has a little ways to go—even if it's a maximum of fifteen minutes—before he's ready to start pushing. They wheel him into his own room, giving him a bed and a gown to change into. The omega becomes frightened as they leave the room, clutching at Ilya's shirt as hysterical sobs shake his chest.

"Hey, hey, hey," Ilya breathes, sitting on the bed beside him, scooping Shane into his arms as he shushes him. "You're okay, sweetheart. You're going to be okay."

"I can't—I can't have a baby, Ilya. I... I've played hockey the entire pregnancy. Oh my god, my injury, I broke my collarbone, I had bruised ribs, how did they miss this?"

"I don't know, Shane," Ilya replies, then he shushes him again as another contraction grips Shane in a vice, and the omega becomes aware that he's screaming, yelling obscenities into his alpha's chest. "Shhh. They said the baby looked healthy."

Sniffling, Shane looks up at him as the pain fades away, sweat all but pouring from his brow as he laces their fingers together. "This is all wrong."

"What is?"

"We were supposed to have years before we even talked about doing this. It wasn't part of my plan."

"Ah, yes, your ten year plan. Your... 'narrative.'"

A small laugh manages to shake Shane's chest. "I... I know you said you love me, but if this is too mu—"

"*Hollander*. Shane. Do not finish sentence." Ilya places a kiss to his forehead. "If you are having a baby, *we* are having a baby." He kisses him on the lips, a hand caressing his jaw, and Shane can see a thin sheen covering his eyes, as if Ilya is about to cry. "I love you, so much. I would do anything for you."

"Even having a kid with no warning?"

"I maybe would've liked to be married first, but no, I don't mind." Ilya kisses him again, and though Shane knows his face is already beet red, he can feel himself blushing. One of his hands comes to rest on Shane's belly, rubbing gently as he shakes his head. "I still can't believe you're pregnant."

"You really don't mind?"

"Shane, I love you, that doesn't change because our plans do." Ilya brushes away a bead of sweat as it trickles down Shane's brow. "If you want to have a baby, let's have a baby."

"What are we gonna do?" Shane asks, then he can feel the ache starting to return, and he hisses through his teeth as he digs his fingers into Ilya's skin. "Oh *fuck*."

“We will figure out plan later. Now I need you to let me call Doctor. You’re having a baby *now*.”

Shane whimpers, feeling as if the room is far too hot even though he knows the AC is blasting. But he knows Ilya is right, he can feel his contractions getting closer and knows that he’s maybe minutes away from meeting this stranger inside him. Shit, this baby is a stranger to him. He’s never had a moment to prepare, to figure out whether he wants them, loves them, or if he’s even parenting material in the first place.

Beside him, Ilya presses the button to summon the doctor, Shane still having his internal crisis as they wait for them to return. Within minutes, two doctors and a nurse appear, and Shane is being poked and prodded as they assess how close he is.

Then one of the doctors is between his legs, Shane pulling back his thighs as he’s instructed to push when he feels another contraction. He looks at Ilya, gripping his hand tight. “I can’t do this.”

“Yes you can,” Ilya assures him, pressing a kiss to his temple. “Just push, Shane. It’ll be over soon.”

Yeah, it will, won’t it? He’s just got a few more minutes of pain, then a lifetime with this person he never planned on meeting. It’s terrifying, the prospect of having a baby when he’s had minutes to prepare, but the way Ilya’s looking at him, like he believes in him, like he loves him, makes him think maybe he can do this. “Okay,” Shane breathes, gripping Ilya’s hand tighter than ever as he gives the first push.

“Good, Shane,” Ilya whispers, running a hand over the back of his knuckles as he counter-squeezes. “Just breathe, I’m here.”

Shane sobs, whimpering as he pushes again, feeling a downward shift between his legs. *Oh god, it’s really there*. He’s really having a fucking baby. He still can’t believe this is happening, that his stupid cramps were actually his fucking child, and that’s not even the scariest part.

He’d been playing hockey throughout the pregnancy, taking hits and going out with his teammates. He didn’t drink much, but he hadn’t exactly done anything to prepare himself for this. He’d eaten raw fish, drank beer, and god, his injury just a couple of months ago... he’d been six maybe seven months pregnant when Cliff Marlowe had left him concussed and with a broken collarbone. How had that affected the baby? How had he not lost the baby then and there?

“Push, Shane,” one of the doctors tells him, pulling Shane away from his thoughts.

Through his fear and panic, he does, crying out as Ilya wipes at his brow with the shirt he’d discarded earlier. “Fuck me,” he breathes, pushing again as his eyes clench shut.

He hopes his baby is okay, that all those months of hockey and not taking care of himself properly didn’t hurt them. Sure, Shane wouldn’t exactly have planned on having a baby right

now, but given he's faced with that exact problem, he doesn't want anything bad happening to them.

"Ilya, I feel like I'm dying," he says, half tempted to throw up again. "Oh, fuck..."

"You can do this, Shane." Ilya kisses his knuckles. "I promise, you can."

Crying out, Shane pushes again, relieved when the doctors tell him the head is out. He looks at Ilya, watching tears stream down the alpha's face as he looks down between Shane's legs. He's crying, too, his cheeks wet with tears and sweat as he works to clear the shoulders, whimpering as he pulls his legs back further. *Keep going*, he thinks to himself. *Just a little more.*

"Push," a doctor tells him, and Shane does, pushing until he feels something leave his body, and a sharp cry fills the air.

Eyes fluttering open, Shane looks down at the doctor between his legs, shock filling him as he looks at the tiny, pink and red wiggling thing in the woman's arms. The doctor smiles at him. "It's a girl," she says, then Shane is reaching forward, then the baby is wrapped in a blanket and handed to him, and he rests her against his chest as his body is wracked with sobs.

She's so tiny, he's almost afraid he'll hurt her, being a two hundred plus pound hockey player, but she settles into his chest as he kisses her bloody, goop covered forehead. "Holy shit, hi," he breathes. "Hi little one."

There's another sob from beside him, and Shane looks up at Ilya to see the alpha's eyes filled with tears, his fingers brushing gently over the newborn's arm as he pulls Shane in close, kissing his cheek. "You did it, Shane," Ilya whispers, smiling weakly. "You had a baby."

"We had a baby." Shane laughs, breathless as he looks down at the little thing in his arms.

Already, she has Ilya's mouth, offering no question as to who her father is. She has his moles, too, even in a similar pattern to Ilya's, but her eyes, brown and gold, staring up at the omega with a familiar curiosity, those are entirely Shane's. A loud cry pierces the air as he wraps the blanket more securely around her, and immediately, Shane falls in love with this tiny, sweet little creature.

Looking over at Ilya, he thinks the alpha has fallen in love, too. There's a softness in his eyes, his fingers running over the newborn's cheeks, then he looks at Shane, and the omega finds himself being kissed, their lips brushing together as the pain starts to fade away into something else. There's still more to deal with, the doctors still fluttering about as they stare at one another, taking in this first moment as unexpected parents.

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An hour later, Shane nurses his daughter for the first time. The doctors took her away for a while, running tests and confirming she's perfectly healthy despite everything he'd put her through while pregnant, but now she's back. And she's hungry.

Much to his surprise, he's able to feed her, the baby latching onto his nipple with minimal effort. He holds her close as Ilya slides onto the bed beside him, the alpha's arm wrapping around his shoulders. Once the nurses are certain Shane has things under control, they leave them be, the two watching as their daughter—which still doesn't feel real—drinks.

"She's so small," Ilya whispers, running a thumb over the baby's cheek. "I can't believe she was in you."

"Neither can I." Shane groans as the baby releases him, then he smiles as she yawns. "She's cute."

Ilya manages a small grin, pressing his forehead against Shane's. "Is it strange that I love you even more now?"

Heat rises to Shane's cheeks, but he doesn't protest. Weirdly enough, he thinks he might love Ilya more, too. Thanks to Ilya's quick thinking, he and the baby are safe, and they get to have a future together. The way he'd held him the entire time had made Shane realize just how committed Ilya was, how much he wants to have him in his life, to be with him maybe forever. "I love you, too," Shane tells him, then he sighs. "I'm getting a little tired. Do you wanna hold her?"

Unwrapping his arm from around Shane's shoulders, Ilya holds out his hands, smiling as he accepts his daughter from the omega. "Hello, sweetheart," he breathes. "I'm your papa."

Shane looks up at Ilya, resting his head on the alpha's shoulder. He's such a natural with her, the baby settling comfortably into his arms, eyes fluttering shut. "You know you have to stay longer than just two weeks now, right?"

"That's okay. I wanted to stay all summer with you anyway."

"Really?"

Ilya snuffles, nodding as he kisses Shane's forehead. "I can't leave you. Or her. We have to figure something out."

"We can still do my Ottawa plan."

"But before that? What do we do?" Ilya snuffles again, and Shane feels tears fall into his hair. "Shane, we have a baby now."

"I'll think of something. I... I'll call my parents, they'll help us." *Oh god*, Shane's parents still don't know anything is wrong. They have no idea Shane was pregnant or that they're now grandparents, but they're his best option, they're the baby's best option. He just has to call them first. "When we leave the hospital, we'll bring her there. We'll stop by the cottage and grab our stuff, then head to my parents' house. We can spend the rest of the summer figuring out what to do."

Ilya nods, more tears spilling onto his cheeks as he presses a kiss to the crown of the baby's head. "I wish I didn't have to go back to Boston. I don't want to leave her."

“We’ll split time. I’ll have her in Montreal for a week, you’ll have her in Boston for the week? I don’t know.”

“She’ll have to be with you. You’re nursing her.”

Pain cinches Shane’s features, but he nods. “I don’t want to separate you.” He rests a hand over Ilya’s. “She doesn’t even have a name yet.”

Ilya presses another kiss to the newborn’s forehead. “When I was a baby, my mother came up with two names for me.” He looks down at Shane. “Ilya if I was a boy, and Elena if I was a girl. She did not get to use Elena then, but maybe we could use it now?”

Elena. He lets it roll around in his head for a while, ultimately deciding he likes it. “That’s a great way to honor your mom.”

Another weak smile, then Ilya sighs as the newborn wraps her hand around his finger. “Her name was Irina.”

“That’s beautiful.”

“I wish she was here now. She would know what to do.”

“Sounds like your mother was a smart woman.”

“She was,” Ilya says, then he glances at Shane. “She would have loved you. Like I love you.”

“Can you say it again in Russian please?”

“Ya tebya lyublyu.”

Closing his eyes, Shane leans into Ilya, wishing they could always be like this, just the two of them and their new baby—Elena. Their lives, their careers, are about to demand they separate for the better part of a year once October hits, and he can barely stand to think about it. “I’ll call my parents. They’ll be able to help us through this.”

“Will they be okay with me?”

“You’re their grandchild’s father, they’re gonna have to be.”

“And us? Are we going to be okay?” Ilya asks, voice impossibly soft. “You and me?”

“I can’t believe you’re the one asking me that. You sure you don’t want to run for the hills?”

“Shane, I’d rather die than ever leave your side.” Ilya kisses him then, short and sweet. “Whatever happens, I am... all in.”

“Me too,” Shane replies, running a hand through Ilya’s hair. “All in.”

Ilya nods. “I love you, I really do,” he tells him, then he kisses him again, their lips remaining together until Elena cries, and their attention is diverted elsewhere.

Shane supposes they'll have many days like that, many moments interrupted now that they're parents. Being in a new relationship and having Elena is going to be the hardest challenge they've ever faced, but with Ilya at his side, he thinks they just might make it. Assuming his parents don't kill them first.

Chapter 2: Part two

Chapter Notes

WOW the demand for a second part was truly something! Thanks to everyone who read, this was a lot of fun to write.

Thankfully, Hayden Pike answers his phone on the first ring. “Shane! Buddy! What’s up? I wasn’t expecting you to call back so soon,” he says, sounding so genuinely happy to receive his call.

Shane looks down at the sleeping newborn in his arms, then at the sleeping Ilya on the bed beside him. The alpha’s chest rises and falls in slow, even breaths, oblivious to the world. They’ve been taking turns resting since they hadn’t gotten much sleep in the night, but by tomorrow morning, Shane will be discharged, and they’ll need a way to get the baby out of here.

Then they’ll need to face his parents.

Taking a deep breath, Shane swallows. “Hayden, do you have a spare car seat? Like for an infant? A newborn, really?”

“Uh, yeah, why?”

You can do this. Shane tells himself. “I had a baby.”

Hayden goes quiet, then he stutters a bit. “I-I’m sorry, you what?”

“I was pregnant,” Shane says, feeling a lump force its way into his throat. “I had a baby, and I’m fine, but I have to bring her home and I don’t have anything for her.” Tears fall onto his cheeks. “I... I need any spare baby things you’ve got.”

“When the fuck were you pregnant? What?” Hayden scoffs in disbelief. “I saw you three weeks ago, you weren’t pregnant.”

“It was a cryptic pregnancy.” Shane blinks, more tears spilling onto his cheeks. “I didn’t know.”

“Who’s the father?” Hayden asks. “I didn’t know you were seeing anyone.”

“You’ll find out when you get here, just... Look, how fast can you come over? I don’t want to tell my parents about this over the phone, and I haven’t slept, and I need—“

“Stop, stop, stop,” Hayden says, and Shane calms slightly as he hears the sound of his ‘dad’ voice. Normally, he only takes that tone with his kids, but right now, Shane might need to hear it, too. “I’m already in the garage, the car seat is in my hand. You’re at the little hospital by the cottage, right?”

“Yeah.”

Hayden sighs. “I’ll be there in half an hour. Just breathe, Shane.”

“How’d you know I’m not breathing?”

“I know you,” Hayden replies, laughing slightly. “Okay, I’m gonna grab a couple more things, some spare onesies and the like, and I’ll be on my way.”

“Thank you.”

“And Shane?”

“Yeah?”

“What’s her name?”

Shane looks down at his daughter, watching as she blinks awake. “Elena. Her name’s Elena.” He smiles, then he takes a deep breath. He’s changed his mind. This isn’t a shock Hayden should find out when he gets here. “Elena Rozanov-Hollander.”

A pause. “Wait, Rozanov? Like Ilya Rozanov? Boston Rozanov?”

“Yeah, that Rozanov.”

“Okay, I’ve got to leave, but you’re explaining everything when I get there.” There’s a shuffling sound, then the sound of a car door slamming, the beep of a vehicle unlocking. “You had a baby with Ilya Rozanov?”

Glancing at the sleeping alpha in his bed, Shane nods. “Yeah, I did.”

“Crazy. You’re crazy, Hollander,” Hayden tells him, but he sounds endeared. “Is he with you at least? He’s not being a dead beat right?”

“He’s here,” Shane replies, resting his head against Ilya’s. “He brought me to the hospital. He saved my life, Hayden.”

“He’s still an asshole.” The sound of a car starting fills the background. “I’m on my way, you just hang tight.”

*

When Hayden gets there half an hour later as promised, he’s carrying a large grocery store tote full of baby things. The omega barely has time to register it before Hayden sets it on the

ground, and immediately flings himself toward Shane. He's glad it was Ilya's turn to hold the baby, because his beta friend crushes him, pulling Shane into his arms.

"Oh my god, I'm so glad you're okay." Hayden pulls back, blue eyes bright as he looks Shane up and down. "Holy shit, you don't look any different."

"I feel different." Shane groans, rubbing at his tender abdomen as he looks at the baby Ilya's holding in the corner of the room. *Elena*. Her name's Elena. "Uh, Ilya, come here."

Stepping forward, Ilya has a scowl on his face, holding her close as if to shield her from Hayden. "Shane says we can trust you. Can we?"

"Of course," Hayden replies, reaching out to brush his fingers over Elena's cheek. "Oh wow, she's beautiful."

A tiny smile parts Ilya's lips. "Thank you."

"So... you two have been a thing for a while, huh?" Hayden points between the two of them.

Shane nods. "Since our rookie season."

Now Ilya's frowning. "Not true, summer before."

Hayden's eyes go wide. "Holy shit," he breathes, running a hand through his hair. "So the whole rivalry thing... you just made it up?"

"The league did." Shane stares fondly at his daughter as she grips at the fabric of Ilya's shirt. "I never hated him."

"So you've been in love since—"

"No," Ilya replies, then he shushes his daughter as she whimpers. "Not at first."

Laughing softly, Shane reaches out a hand, beckoning Ilya forth so he sits beside him again. He's scared and just wants to feel his warmth, to breathe his scent. "He actually just told me he loved me last night, shortly before this one decided to make an appearance."

Surprise brings Hayden's eyebrows to his hairline. "Wow, that's... wow..." He sighs. "That's a lot to process, guys. Have you talked to your parents yet?"

"Not yet. I wanted to tell them in person. This is a lot to process over the phone." Shane runs a finger over the back of his daughter's hand. "I mean, it'll surprise them either way, but I need more time."

Hayden lets out a slow exhale, then he looks at Ilya. "So you got him here? You kept him safe?"

"Always." Ilya presses a kiss to his daughter's forehead, then he rests his head against Shane's. "He didn't want to come to hospital, but I insisted."

“Thank you.” Hayden pulls up a chair, sitting down beside the bed. “Shane, I’m glad you listened to him.”

Offering up his middle finger, Shane looks down at the baby. “Hey, our kids are gonna grow up together.”

“Yeah, that’ll be nice.” Hayden leans forward. “Can I... can I hold her?”

Shane and Ilya glance at one another, then he nods. “Give him the baby, Ilya.”

Making a disgruntled sound, Ilya shifts off of the bed, bending to hand the baby over to Hayden, who holds her with well-practiced hands. “Hi, sweetheart,” Hayden whispers, leaning in and taking a deep breath. “Oh, I love the newborn baby smell.”

Eyes rolling, Shane watches Hayden make faces at his daughter, his heart warming at the sight of them together. Elena settles comfortably into his best friend’s arms, yawning as she falls asleep for the fiftieth time that day. God, all she does is sleep. He won’t complain, though, he’ll need a quiet baby to get through these first few months while he decides what to do.

Hayden rocks Elena in his arms, looking at her in awe. “Wow, I can’t believe you were with your papa all this time.” He laughs. “All those games...” A frown tugs on his lips. “Wait, Shane, your injury, was she...?”

“Perfectly healthy, somehow,” Shane says, shushing Ilya as the alpha growls under his breath. “She survived a whole season. I got pregnant in October.”

“Wait, so all those times with Lily... Lily... Ilya...”

“Is he always this slow?” Ilya asks, and Shane smacks his arm.

“Don’t be an asshole, he’s here to help us.” Shane swallows, still unable to believe that his daughter is here, that she was ever with him in the first place. How the universe had entrusted him with a baby, he isn’t sure, but he loves her, has from the moment he met her, even if it was barely five hours ago.

Shrugging, Hayden continues gently rocking Elena. “It’s okay, Jackie bitched at me for hours after the twins were born. New parenthood is stressful, especially when it’s unexpected.” Hayden looks up at Shane. “So you had no symptoms? No morning sickness, never felt the baby kicking?”

“Nope. I just had some cramping over the last few weeks, but I thought it was a breakthrough heat.” Shane shakes his head at himself, watching as Elena sleeps soundly in Hayden’s arms. “Next thing I knew, we were talking in the middle of the night and the pain got so bad I had to throw up.”

“That’s when I made him come here,” Ilya says, running his fingers over Shane’s arm. “His water broke, and I think that’s when I figured out what was going on. But Shane thought he’d pissed himself.”

“I thought I was in so much pain, I’d peed myself.”

“But it was her,” Hayden replies, brushing a thumb over her cheek. “Wow, Shane, when I asked you when you were gonna join me in this nightmare, I didn’t think you’d do it so suddenly. And I definitely didn’t think you’d do it with Rozanov.”

Shane groans. “Look, Ilya’s a good guy, he loves me, and I love him. And he’s been with me through this whole process, even when we didn’t know it was happening.”

“That is not true,” Ilya interrupts. “There was the three months you dated Rose Landry.”

Oh god, that’s another person he’ll have to tell. Rose will get a kick out of having dated a pregnant guy, he thinks. “Oh my god, I told you, we’re just friends now.”

“Still dated her.” Ilya’s face is scowling, and Shane turns, placing a hand on his cheek.

Leaning in, Shane presses a short kiss to his lips, ignoring the tiny, surprised gasp from Hayden. “I love you, asshole. Not her. Not like that.”

“So you guys are raising this baby together, huh?” Hayden asks, still rocking the baby in his arms as she sleeps on, oblivious to the conversation. “What are you gonna do when the season starts?”

Shane’s heart drops in his chest. “We aren’t sure yet.” He watches Ilya place a hand on his thigh, stroking him soothingly. “That’s part of why we needed the car seat. I need my parents’ help. This happened so suddenly, neither of us knows what to do.”

“Oh, Shane,” Hayden breathes, looking down at Elena as she makes a noise in her sleep. “We’ll help you, too. Me and Jackie. We can help watch her when we play here in Montreal.”

“It’s Boston we’re worried about,” Ilya admits. “I’m stuck with them for another year. After that, I will ask to trade to a Canadian team—we are thinking Ottawa—but for now, I am far away.” He rises from the bed, holding out his arms for his baby as if realizing how precious his time is with her. “That is what’s scary. We both want to have our careers and raise her.”

Hayden hands the baby to Ilya, looking at him with sympathy for the first time. “I know the feeling, being away from them on the road is hard. We can talk about it if you want, I’ll listen.” He coos as the baby settles into Ilya’s arms. “Obviously our situations are different, since Jackie stays at home. I’d talk to your parents about how much they’re willing to help. And yours, Ilya, if you can.”

“I don’t have any,” Ilya replies, voice watery as he looks at Shane, then Hayden. “They’re both dead and in Russia.”

“Oh... oh god, I’m sorry.”

“Is okay. You didn’t know.” Ilya swallows. “I really, really don’t want to go back to Boston.”

“Talk to Shane’s parents, his mom knows the ins and outs of the industry better than anyone I know. She may be able to help you get out of your contract early. You have options. Both of

you do. You're not alone."

Overwhelmed by the love and care his friend has shown him, Shane snuffles. "Thanks, Hayden."

"Of course. Now... when are you getting discharged?"

*

They keep Shane and the baby overnight for observation, since his pregnancy and delivery were so unusual, but just twenty-four hours after she was born, they're set free. Poor Hayden returns to the hospital at half past seven to help them buckle in the car seat, refusing to leave Shane and Ilya to have to figure it out themselves.

Shane holds the baby while Ilya and Hayden work to get the car seat installed. It's slightly imperfect, and they'll need a new car seat once they're more settled, but it'll do to get them to Shane's parents. Then they strap Elena in, Shane kissing his daughter's tiny little nose as he closes the door, and pulls Hayden in for a hug.

"Thank you so much, for everything." He pulls back, tapping his forehead against Hayden.

"Of course. I put some spare diapers in the bag, but you'll need to stop for more probably within a day, depending on how much she poops."

"Thank you," Ilya replies, offering Hayden his hand, and smiling as the beta shakes it. "You've been very kind."

"Thank you for looking after my best friend." Hayden pats Ilya's shoulder, then he looks at Shane. "Take care, and good luck with your parents."

"I'm gonna need it," Shane breathes, watching Hayden walk away to his car.

Hayden shakes his head. "You'll do great."

*

Shane can only hope that's true as he and Ilya pull up to his parents house a little less than an hour later. They'd stopped for fast food on the way, Shane craving an uncharacteristically sweet milkshake to calm his nerves as they drove. He's still not sure what he's going to say, how he's going to say it, or how his parents will react to any of this.

They don't even know he likes Ilya, let alone that they're together. Or that Shane even likes men. They'd always thought he'd get with some nice, alpha girl, maybe a beta, and they'd mate and get married eventually, but choosing Ilya? A male alpha? That will be surprising.

Mostly, he thinks it'll be a surprise that it's Ilya. That's what surprised Hayden the most.

He looks back at his daughter in the rear view mirror as they approach the house. He'd texted Yuna and David to let them know he was coming, that he had big news for them, but kept quiet about everything else.

As they pull up to his parents' house, Shane hopes they'll understand him, that they'll love his daughter the way he does. It's been a day, and yet he loves her, he loves her so fucking much.

He looks back at the sleeping newborn, still barely able to believe she came from him, that just two days ago, he didn't know about her. Now he would do anything to protect her, to keep her safe. Hopefully, his parents will, too.

Together, he and Ilya get out of the car, and Shane comes over to the back to get her out of the car seat. "Hey, sweetheart," he whispers, kissing Elena on the top of her head before pulling her into his arms. The baby coos, causing Shane to giggle softly as he looks at Ilya. "You ready?"

"As I'll ever be."

"Can you open the door? I've got my hands full." Shane looks down at the drowsy baby in his arms. It amazes him how much time she spends sleeping, only waking to cry or make cute noises, staring at him like she's just as confused as to how she got here.

Ilya opens the door to his parents house, and Shane calls out for them. "Hello? Mom? Dad? It's Shane." The baby makes another disgruntled noise in his arms. It echoes through the house, causing Shane to wince. "Shhh, sweetheart."

"What, you think your parents aren't about to find out?" Ilya asks, rubbing Shane's arm as he looks around at the house, at the pictures on the wall depicting the omega's family. His eyes land on one of baby Shane, and those cute dimples of his make an appearance. "You look just like her."

"I think she looks more like you," Shane says, then there are footsteps from down the hall, and Yuna and David Hollander appear before them.

At first, their eyes light up upon seeing Shane, then he watches them register the baby in his arms, then he watches them register Ilya. Yuna looks shocked, David just looks confused.

"Hi," Shane breathes, then he looks between his parents and his daughter. "So, I have a lot to tell you, and I'm honestly not sure where to start."

Yuna blinks. "Whose baby is that?" she asks, then points to Ilya. "And why is *he* here?"

"It's uh, it's our baby. Ilya is the father and my, uh..."

"Lover," Ilya says, placing a hand on Shane's shoulder.

"No, Ilya, that's gross." Shane shakes his head, then he sighs. "I got pregnant last October, uh, and I didn't know about it until yesterday morning when I went into labor. Doctors said it was a cryptic pregnancy."

"That's your baby?" Yuna asks, voice soft. "My grandchild?"

“What’s her name?” David steps forward, reaching out to touch the newborn, pulling back the blankets from her face.

“Elena.” Swallowing his nerves, Shane steps past his parents. “Can we, uh, can we sit down?”

“Sure.” Yuna guides them into the kitchen, pulling back chairs for Shane and Ilya before she and David sit across from them. “I thought you hated each other.”

It’s quiet for a moment, then the baby coos, and Shane shushes her, Ilya running a hand over the short, dark curls atop her head. They share a glance, Ilya offering him a kind smile as he leans a head on the omega’s shoulder. Then David clears his throat, drawing their attention across the room.

His father leans over the table. “Clearly, we have a lot to catch up on.”

“We do, I’m sorry, I didn’t want you to find out this way,” Shane says, feeling a lump forming in his throat. “I was gonna tell you later, after we figured ourselves out...”

“I can’t believe you were pregnant,” Yuna breathes, staring at the baby, then at Shane. “You really didn’t know?”

“No idea.” Shane runs a finger along Elena’s arm. “I started feeling muscle pain the day before yesterday, then when it got really bad, Ilya made me go to the hospital.”

His parents’ eyes turn to Ilya, and the alpha rests a hand on Shane’s thigh, squeezing gently. “He kept insisting it would pass, but I knew it wouldn’t. It kept getting worse. Next thing we knew, she was here.”

“God...” Yuna runs a hand through her hair, David rubbing her back as she exhales deeply. “And your injury? The hockey you played? Is she healthy?”

Shane nods. “They said she was the healthiest baby they’d seen lately.”

“She’s beautiful.” David smiles, looking at his granddaughter with fond, kind eyes. “Can we hold her?”

Part of Shane never wants to let her go, never wants to be parted from his baby for even a second, but his father looks so genuinely excited. He can’t deny him this chance, especially given that he’s about to ask his parents for their help in getting through this first year of her life. Rising slowly to his feet, Shane walks over to the other side of the table, handing his baby over to her grandfather as David looks at her like she’s pure sunshine. “Careful, dad.”

“I’ve held a baby before, Shane,” his father replies, then he smiles down at his granddaughter. “Hello, sweetheart.”

Elena gives a tiny hum, almost a grumble, but settles into David’s arms as Shane takes his seat beside Ilya. He laces their hands together, squeezing tightly as the anxiety fills him once more. There are still so many questions, and so much to answer. “Are you okay?” Ilya asks, running a thumb over the back of his knuckles.

Taking a deep breath, Shane gives a small smile. “I’m okay. I’ll be okay, I’m just freaking out.”

“Hey,” Ilya whispers, wrapping an arm around Shane’s shoulders, then he pulls him in for a brief kiss. “We’re good here. Your family is here, your boyfriend is here...”

That gives Shane pause. They still haven’t come up with a label for themselves. With how quickly things had progressed after Ilya professed his love for him, neither of them had the time to figure out what they wanted to be called. “Boyfriend?” Shane asks.

“Well, yeah, I think so.” Ilya smiles, kissing him on the cheek as Shane looks over at his shocked parents.

Right. They still need to explain this part.

“You say it like you’re not sure,” Yuna says, pointing between them. “How long has this been going on?”

Shane takes on another breath, then tells his mother as much of a PG rated version of what happened as he can. He explains that he and Ilya developed an attraction to one another shortly after meeting, that they became a sort of enemies-with-benefits before their rookie season, and more recently, that they’ve fallen in love. “After my injury, I wanted him to stay, so I invited Ilya to the cottage.” Shane tightens his grip on Ilya’s hand. “Unbeknownst to either of us, that probably wound up saving my life.”

“It started normal,” Ilya explains. “He picked me up from the airport, drove us to the cottage, we were... hanging out... and after a couple of days, we were planning a future together.”

“Which is where I need your help.” A pause. “*We*, need your help. Ilya wants to come play for a team here in Canada—we’re thinking Ottawa—but he’s stuck in his Boston contract for another season. Neither of us wants to keep him away from the baby that long, and having her travel that much between Montreal and Boston won’t be good for her.”

Yuna’s eyes soften, and she looks over at the baby sleeping in David’s arms, reaching over to place a hand on her cheek. “No, it wouldn’t.” She glances at her husband. “Mind if I have a turn?”

David nods. “Go for it.”

Shane watches his father hand Elena over to his mother, the two of them listening attentively once the baby is settled in her arms. He sighs. “I can’t be away from her either, since I’m probably going to be nursing her for the better part of the year. Not to mention, we want to keep her private, we *need* to keep her private. At least for a little while.”

“What are you going to tell the league? Your teams? You won’t be able to keep her a secret from them, your team doctor will need to be informed that Shane is post-partum and nursing. Otherwise he could treat him wrongly on the ice,” Yuna points out.

“We were hoping you could help us figure it out,” Ilya admits, squeezing Shane’s hand.
“We’re fucking terrified.”

“I can only imagine.” David gives him a sympathetic smile. “New parenthood was scary enough without the world breathing down our necks—plus we knew Shane was coming for a good eight months. You’ve had no time to prepare.”

“We don’t have anything. No supplies—aside from a few hand-me-downs from Hayden—no one to tell us what to do—“

Reaching across the table, Shane’s father takes his free hand. “Breathe, Shane,” he tells him, watching the omega lean his head against Ilya’s shoulder. “I know it’s scary, but we’re here for you now, okay?”

Nodding in agreement, Yuna gives them both a kind smile. “We have a lot of your old baby stuff. Kept some of the onesies just in case we had another baby, but it never happened. We always considered ourselves lucky just to have you.” She looks down at Elena, who is now awake and staring at her grandmother with wide, sparkling eyes. “Your old crib is in the attic. We’ll bring it downstairs and set up the old changing table. Do you boys have any diapers?”

“Hayden gave us some, but he said we’d probably run out before tomorrow,” Ilya replies.

“Okay, we’ll make a quick run to the store, me and Yuna,” David tells him, planting a kiss to his wife’s temple. “You’re both welcome to stay here as long as you need, at least until you get on your feet.”

Ilya quirks a surprised eyebrow. “You’ll let me stay in your home?”

“Of course, you’re Elena’s father.” David looks between them. “And based on what you’ve just told us, Shane’s crazy about you, but if you hurt him...”

“I would never,” Ilya replies, running a thumb over Shane’s hand as they exchange small smiles.

“And don’t worry about staying in Boston,” Yuna adds. “I’ll call our lawyer in the morning and see what we can do about letting you out of that contract early. We’ll nip this right in the bud.”

Feeling tears well up in his eyes, Shane smiles at his parents. “Thank you, both of you. We were—are— so fucking scared.”

“The good news is, you’ve got a few months before the season starts to get everything figured out,” Yuna replies. “So, while you’re scared, it’s obvious you’d both do anything for Elena. You should enjoy this time you have together. It’ll go by faster than you think.” She looks knowingly at Shane then, as if she’s still picturing him at Elena’s size, all wrinkly and little.

Elena chooses this moment to snuffle awake, her little whimpers becoming a full blown cry as she’s rocked in her grandmother’s arms. Leaning down, Yuna gives a cautionary sniff, then

smiles at Shane. “Sounds like she’s hungry.”

Rising to his feet, Shane accepts his daughter back from Yuna, shushing her gently as he brings her into his arms. He finds himself a little stuck, though, unable to both hold the baby and unbutton his shirt to give her access to his nipple. Luckily, Ilya rises to the occasion, briefly taking Elena into his arms while Shane undoes his shirt, shrugging off one shoulder.

Part of him feels a little shy, doing this in front of an audience, but with how urgent his daughter’s cries have become, he finds he doesn’t care too much. Once he’s got his shirt in a good position, Shane takes her back into his arms, whispering sweetly to her as he brings his daughter to his chest. Thankfully, she’s a little rockstar, latching onto him with little effort, her cries ceasing the moment she begins suckling.

Letting out a sigh of relief, he looks up to find his mom staring at him with tears in her eyes. “What?”

“I’m sorry,” she says, wiping at her eyes as David wraps an arm around her shoulders, rubbing gently up and down. “I just can’t believe this is real. We have a granddaughter.”

“I still can’t believe Shane was pregnant,” David replies, then he looks to Ilya. “Thank you for getting him to the hospital, I don’t know what we would’ve done if Shane...”

“I love your son.” Ilya rests a hand over Shane’s where he’s holding their daughter to his nipple. “I don’t know what I’d do without him either.”

Shane rests his forehead against Ilya’s. “I love you, too.”

“We’ll go ahead and get you both some baby things from the store, give you some privacy,” David says, rising to his feet. “Shane, are you hungry? Do you need anything for pain?”

“No, I’m okay, I haven’t been that sore.”

Yuna scoots back in her chair, allowing her husband to help her to her feet. “We’ll get you something with protein, and some soup. Trust me, you’ll want and need them both. Maybe some chocolate, too.”

“Mom, you know I don’t eat chocolate.”

“Honey, you just pushed out a little watermelon, you deserve a treat.” She comes around the table, kissing the top of Shane’s head as she watches Elena feed from her father. “You’re going to be a wonderful dad.”

“I hope so.”

“I know so,” she tells him, then she heads back over to David. “Make yourselves comfortable, we’ll be back within the hour.”

*

That night, Shane puts Elena to bed in a crib by his and Ilya's bedside. They're sleeping in one of the guest rooms—formerly Shane's childhood bedroom—tonight, since it's the only other room big enough for both them and the crib. Shane's parents had bought a baby monitor if they wanted to convert another room into a nursery, but Shane hadn't wanted to sleep far away from his baby yet.

He might be able to handle it later on, but with her still only a day and a half old, Shane doesn't want to be apart from her anymore than he has to.

Swaddling her tightly in a blanket, Shane places a kiss to her little head, Ilya following suit as she slumbers on in a crib that used to belong to her omega parent. Once she's settled, Ilya takes Shane's hand, tugging him into the bed before he scoops him into his arms.

Every kiss Ilya peppers on the side of his head has Shane sinking into a deep state of relaxation, the two of them melting into each other as the exhaustion of the last forty-eight hours sinks in. Shane's body *is* sore, though not just from giving birth—he's been in a constant state of worry over their lives, Elena's life, their careers, and just how people would react to all of this. If Hayden and his parents are anything to go by, they may just have support.

Luckily, they won't have to worry about anyone finding out about her if his parents can help Ilya get out of his contract successfully. Then they can move to a house between Ottawa and Montreal, and his parents or even Jacki can watch Elena on nights they're both away. At least, that's the plan Yuna had come up with after they'd gotten back from the store with diapers, onesies, a stroller, a breast pump, and more baby bottles than Shane knows what to do with.

Now Shane gets to just float in the strangeness of unexpected parenthood, in the glow of his new relationship, and he's scared, but so, so tired from it all—in a good way. He rolls onto his side, wrapping an arm around Ilya's waist as the alpha cards his fingers through his hair. "Ilya?"

"Hmm?"

"I'm glad it was you. I'm glad you're her father."

"Me too, would make what happened at the cottage a little awkward, I think, if I weren't."

"Shut up, it's not just about that." Shane rolls his eyes. "I mean, I've been falling in love with you for a long time. I wouldn't have wanted it to be anyone else even if I had known about her."

Ilya's lips press to Shane's forehead. "I'm glad it was you, too."

"Do you think we'll be any good at it? Raising Elena?"

"I don't know," Ilya admits, and Shane can feel his heartbeat spike where his head rests on the alpha's chest. "But we'll try, I think that's important, yes?"

“Yeah,” Shane yawns, then he presses a kiss to Ilya’s neck, right over his scent gland. “I love you.”

“I love you, too,” Ilya yawns back, then he pulls the sheets over them both. “We should get some sleep. We have long journey ahead.”

“We do. Goodnight, Ilya.”

“Night, Shane.”

Then Shane closes his eyes, willing sleep to come quickly as he fights to get those little pinches of rest between newborn tantrums, and the hectic craziness that is about to descend upon his life.

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