

icymi

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by [anincompletelist \(soldouthaz\)](#)

Summary

In late 2012 when Shane has a meltdown and frantically tells them to call Lily, for the first time Yuna's ever witnessed, Shane is coaxed *out* of one of them instead of just suffering through until the exhaustion wins out instead—and all by some mysterious, apparently very well attuned to Shane, 'Lily'.

She hadn't meant to see the number before she'd pressed it and fumbled the phone up to Shane's ear. It was simply a byproduct of the situation, something Shane had *asked* for her to do.

...Memorizing it and then *texting* that number to thank Lily for their help was *not* something she'd been asked to do. But she worries so much about Shane, and Lily is a reassurance. Not a pry for details but the simple, verifiable confirmation: *he's okay*.

Lily, on the other hand, very much enjoys being able to make oddly specific 'your mother' jokes to Shane much more often now. (And maybe the whole *family* piece of it, too.)

Notes

HIIII I HAD SO SO MUCH FUN WITH THIS ONE :D

once again, ALL CREDIT FOR CSS/HTML/CODING GOES TO [miscellaneous_misty](#) here on ao3, you can find their tutorial and all other materials used to create the skin in [this work](#)! please go give it some love! it's so incredible.

a few other notes on how to navigate this bad boy:

first of all, I know that this fic starts in 2012 and that people did not have modern iOS-looking phones back then, but I think we all get the gist.

secondly, some of the text screens scroll, and others don't. the shorter ones are just snapshots of the conversation, but the expanded ones may have more that you have to scroll to read! if you're unsure just try so that you don't miss anything.

lastly, I've double checked the coding to try and make sure that all of the alt text and labeling is correct so that if you need to download or turn the style off for some reason, it *should* still appear with the name of the person sending the message and a small description if there are any images. but once again I am an amateur, so if I missed anything that causes glitches or something please kindly let me know!

this has not been proofread yet. <3 enjoy!

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

Chapter 1: 2012 | Yuna

2012 | Yuna

Yuna's hands are still shaking when she gets back to the hotel room.

Shane is okay, she thinks, and they'd seen him off to his own room before coming back to theirs. He shouldn't have to leave it until his flight tomorrow afternoon, which should be plenty of time to rest and recuperate before he has to be around the team again.

David follows a few steps behind her, gently closing the door and slipping off his shoes. Yuna lays her jacket over the back of the desk chair and smooths out a wrinkle near the pocket, then works at several others that emerge when she fixes that one.

When she's nervous she clings to facts, statistics, schedules. Things she can verify. *He's okay. He's okay.*

Is he okay?

The numbers flash in her head again in between the image of Shane on the floor in the empty conference room, adrenaline making them stick like concrete. She'd thought she'd have forgotten them by now but they're still there, still something left unaccounted for.

Who is Lily? Is she a liability to Shane? Someone that might've recorded the phone call and would exploit him or blackmail him with it somehow? It hadn't seemed like it, but the nerves have her catastrophizing. She thinks Shane might be very upset if she were to lightly suggest they have an NDA drawn up. Yuna picks up the jacket again, re-folds it, lays it back over the chair.

She's never even heard the name before, and she hadn't been close enough to hear the voice on the phone. Does Shane have a girlfriend, or is she just a close friend? Yuna can't think of anyone that Shane trusts enough to be that vulnerable with; he can hardly stand her and David being present when he's so overwhelmed. This Lily person, whoever they might be, must be something special.

"You okay, hon?"

"Fine," Yuna chirps, fully aware that he doesn't believe her.

David sighs, palm warm at her shoulder, and squeezes once as he heads for the phone on the nightstand. "I'm going to order us some dinner. I don't think either of us will be going out again tonight."

Yes. Dinner is good. Yuna tries to think about what she'd like to order, but all that comes up is the string of numbers again. She closes her eyes, breathes in through her nose.

"I know what you'll eat," David tells her. "Why don't you go on and change into something more comfortable? We can find a movie while we wait for the food."

She exhales. “Yes. That sounds nice. Just make sure to keep your volume up on your phone, in case —”

He smiles lightly, knowingly at her. “I know, hon. It’s on.”

“Okay. Good. I’ll get changed, then.”

She turns and walks into the attached bathroom, leaving the door just barely cracked between them. She can hear the television click on, David’s murmur into the phone as he places a room service order. Yuna grips the countertop, and the numbers are still there.

On an instinctive whim, she swipes her phone off the marble and unlocks it, clicking on the notes app. She types out the phone number in its entirety, a little of the tension in her shoulders slackening once it’s finally out.

There is no reason she needs to use this. She’s *not* going to use it. It’s just helpful to have in case of some sort of emergency, or if Shane needs help again. That’s all.

She leaves the phone by the sink and debates a bath or shower, but doesn’t think she’d be able to sit still or focus for long enough to get through either. The hand towel off the miniature shelf gets used instead, wetting it and dousing it in face wash, scrubbing at the bags underneath her eyes and the makeup that’d done little to cover them.

Her thoughts, naturally, drift back to Shane. He’s handled all of the attention so well these last few years since the draft, but she knows it hasn’t been easy. That Shane is just private, that he doesn’t like anyone to know if he’s having trouble. Not even them.

Lily knows, a voice in her head whispers. She snaps the face wash closed and reaches for the soap to wash her hands.

Would it *really* be so inappropriate to reach out? Yuna’s not going to ask anything from her. Just express her gratitude. She’d felt so helpless today, watching Shane fade to a place she couldn’t reach until eventually there was a breaking point, her strong boy that carries so much and talks about so little. If Shane were still sixteen, she’d be more inclined to demand some answers. To know how to help. But he *isn’t* sixteen, and that’s fine, and Yuna doesn’t need it to be *her* that fixes all of Shane’s problems anymore, but she just—

She just wants to know that Shane is okay. Because when she asks, Shane is only ever fine. *Fine, mom. I’m fine*. But fine encompasses everything from unbearably happy to devastatingly upset for Shane, and though she trusts him with her life, she isn’t sure that she trusts him to tell her when he’s struggling. When she needs to give him a break and let him breathe. And if there were someone *else* she could ask instead of bothering Shane about it...

Yuna rinses her face with cool water and pats it dry, wrings out the towel and leaves it beside the sink for later. She changes into a fresh set of pajamas and moves back into the bedroom, settling into her side of the mattress while David pats her knee and takes his turn to freshen up.

Impulsively, she reaches for her phone again. Presses on the number, clicks *add new contact*. It would be good to have it already programmed in an emergency, she thinks. And she doesn’t want to forget the name.

Even if she doesn’t think she could, at this point.

Her blood pressure lowers throughout the movie as they eat their early dinner, the time stretching on and on with no updates from Shane.

“He’s probably resting,” David assures her. “He’s had a long day.”

Which is true, yes. But also—what if he has a migraine? He gets those sometimes, after his nervous system spikes like that. She has some approved pain killers in her purse, but the mini-mart downstairs at the hotel also carries other brands if he wants those. What if he’s stuck in his room right now, nauseous or in pain, head hurting too badly to call one of them? What if he needs ice from down the hall for a compress and he can’t get to it because he’s dizzy or tired?

“Yuna,” David says.

“I know.” She slips another bite of room service pasta onto her tongue. Thinks about whether or not Shane might have run out of prepared meals. “He’s probably fine.”

“Yes,” he agrees, “and even if he isn’t, he’ll be okay.”

He’s okay. He’s okay.

Yuna unlocks her phone.



Lily?

Today 05:17 PM

Yuna: Hi there! Is this Lily?

+ Message

The message sends. She locks the screen, sets it down by her hip. Waits. A few minutes later, David eyes her when it buzzes. She scoops it up and unlocks it again.



Lily?

Today 05:17 PM

Yuna: Hi there! Is this Lily?

Lily: Possibly.

Lily: Who is this?

Yuna: This is Yuna Hollander. I can send a photograph if you'd like proof?

Yuna: Also, plausible deniability - smart! I like it.

Lily: No. No photos is ok.

Yuna: Alright. Thank you for responding! I was with Shane earlier when he asked us to call you. Saw your number when I handed him the phone. I just wanted to say thank you for talking to him -

he doesn't typically let us help very much and it means a lot to David and I that you could be there for him that way.

Lily: Oh. No need for thank you. He is easy to talk to.

Yuna: That makes me very happy to hear.

Lily: I am glad he is ok.

Yuna: We are too. I know this wasn't very conventional, but it's been nice to "meet" you today, Lily. 🥰

Lily: Yes you too

Yuna: Okay. Take care!

+ Message

Okay. *Okay.* Everything's okay. Lily doesn't seem concerned. Maybe Shane really *is* fine, and he's just resting for now. That's good.

It lessens the tension enough to be able to avoid a migraine of her own as the night wears on, one movie shifting into the next on the television as her and David clean up the food trays and start getting ready for bed.

Before she goes to sleep, Yuna opens her thread with Shane and offers to meet him for brunch in the morning before his flight. They'd agreed to that initially, but if he needs to skip it, they can see each other when they get back to Montreal after Shane's next game.

The text sends, and a minute later Shane's response comes through. **We can still do brunch. I'll see you in the morning. Love you.**

I know we can, Yuna thinks. *But do you want to?*

Love you too, she types. Locks the phone and sets it up on the charger on the nightstand.

"Get some sleep," David murmurs, already dozing himself as he rubs her arm.

"I will," she promises.

She tries, honestly. But it's still a long night.

Chapter 2: 2014 | Ilya

2014 | Ilya

Moscow is empty and cold, and Ilya is currently very drunk inside of it.

This happens, when he comes home. In Russia, his accomplishments feel more like weights attached to his ankles and less like things he can actually be proud of, stepping stones up to a pedestal that will never hit the mark to earn him the title of *enough*. In Russia, Ilya feels like nothing but a failure. In Russia, all he ever wants to do is leave.

The vodka is thick and it burns in his throat, enough to keep him tethered to his body. He isn't sure if that's a good thing or not. He's been sipping it for so long it's started to taste sour, the glass heavy between his fingers. He wants—something else. Not this. He wants so many things.

Hollander's text sits, unanswered, in his phone beside him.

You ok?

Ilya can't answer, because what would he say? That everything is very terrible and he hates it? That he feels like he's drowning beneath the weight of his father's expectations, backed into a corner with his brother's incessant habit of bleeding Ilya dry, punishing him for being the one who was able to get out? Would he tell Hollander that he's miserable here, and that he'd rather be anywhere else, but mostly *with him*, under warm sheets with a familiar body that holds him even when it shouldn't and lingers when he should be running far, far away?

He has a tendency to get sentimental when he drinks. So, no, Ilya thinks. He absolutely cannot text Hollander.

He opens up his messages anyway, scanning for some sort of entertainment or distraction. There are many on the other side of the world but in Russia he has to be more careful about where he goes, how he passes his time. He doesn't live here anymore enough to know the loopholes the way he used to, to feel safe enough to let loose in any way that would help.

Sveta is busy. The thought of Sasha suddenly makes Ilya's stomach turn. And every step he takes in this house creaks underneath his feet, his father only a couple of floors away. It feels like miles. It feels like he's breathing down the back of Ilya's neck.

He scrolls and scrolls through more useless distractions and bad ideas until he his thumb stops beside Yuna Hollander's name. He'd nearly forgotten about it now, their one stilted conversation after Shane's panic attack. Ilya can still hear it now; his shuddering breaths, his harsh, scared noises, the way his voice, thick with tears, had just almost said something like his name before he'd corrected it.

Ilya downs the rest of the vodka and clicks on the messages.



Yuna

Today 03:53 AM

Lily: Yuna.

Yuna: Hi, Lily! It's good to hear from you again.

Lily: Hello.

Lily: Are you with Shane?

Yuna: Not right now, but David and I just saw him for lunch a few hours ago. Is everything okay?

Lily: I wanted to ask how he is doing

Yuna: Oh. He seemed okay to me at lunch, maybe a little tired. Have the two of you not talked lately?

+ Message

Ilya shoves a hand through his hair, forcing an exhale through his nose. He shouldn't have messaged her.



Yuna

Lily: I am traveling for the summer. Have not had much time to talk

Lily: Can you not tell him that I asked you this please

Yuna: Sure, I won't. I still don't think he knows that I saw your number. But you should reach out, if/when you can! I'm sure Shane would be very happy to hear from you.

+ Message

Unlikely, Ilya thinks.



Yuna

Lily: Maybe

Yuna: I think so. 😊

Yuna: I hope you have a wonderful rest of your summer, Lily.

Lily: You too.

+ Message

The clock on the mantle ticks past four in the morning. Ilya's mouth tastes like sand. He thinks of the cool air on his face in Boston, thinks of the way a cigarette forces him to inhale deep enough to calm down for a second before everything rushes back in again.

He thinks of Shane's mouth, soft and sweet against his, pulling the bottle from his hands, stubbing out the cigarette, helping him up and leading him to bed. Slipping fingers into his hair, pulling the blankets up, holding him until he falls asleep.

Ilya lets the hazy image of it tug him up from the chair by the window, dragging his feet toward the mattress. He faceplants onto dusty sheets and follows the mirage into restless sleep, just him here, alone with the ghosts.

Chapter 3: 2015 | Yuna

2015 | *Yuna*

She's almost completely certain that her son has a girlfriend. Never in her life has she seen Shane so enamored with things in his phone, never seen him bite back a smile as his thumbs move quick over the screen, dipping his chin to hide the red in his cheeks that stains long after he's slipped the phone back into his pocket.

Yuna's not sure what happened around summer of last year but they appear to have moved past it, Shane's moods better and his energy that had been briefly drained finally coming back. Not that Lily is the key to his success, Yuna knows—but it very certainly makes some things easier. She's just happy that he has someone.

Tonight, eating dinner with Hayden and Jackie Pike, she'd wondered if Shane had been thinking about Lily. Hockey has always been his top priority, and over the years, Yuna had considered that Shane might not end up with anyone at all. He seems to thrive in his own space, at his own speed, without anyone in his way to slow him down.

Somewhat selfishly, though, she's also hoped that maybe Shane might learn to open up to someone someday. Not someone who would try to fix or change him, but just someone who would *fit*. She used to think she would have high standards for anyone Shane brought home, but then, after he'd broken up with his high school girlfriend, the longer he'd gone without introducing them to *anyone*, Yuna just found herself hoping that however the cards fell for Shane, he just wouldn't feel alone.

And then there are days like today, when Yuna has been watching Shane around a barbecue and holding a baby, and she thinks that this is somewhere he could *fit* too. If he wanted to.

They'd dropped Shane off about an hour ago now, her and David back home. She puts the leftovers away that Jackie had loaned her tupperware for and settles into the couch to watch some news before bed. Slipping her glasses onto her nose, she unlocks her phone, the photos she'd taken of Shane tonight still up on her screen. She'd been looking at them in the car.

She smiles, zooming in on Shane's face. Shane hates photos of himself. She can't post them on Facebook, nor anywhere else online where they might leak before they've been approved by Shane's agent. David has already seen them several times, and her friends are smart enough not to say it to her face, but she knows they get tired of her bragging on Shane constantly. (She isn't sorry about it. There's a lot to brag about.)

But she can think of *one* other place she might be able to share them.



Lily

Today 08:34 PM

Yuna: Hi, Lily! I hope it's okay that I'm reaching out again. I assumed you must have gotten back to Shane since we last talked since I've seen your name come up a couple of times on his phone lately.

Lily: Hello Yuna. Yes it is ok.

Lily: Is something wrong with Shane?

Yuna: Oh, no! Nothing's wrong, I didn't mean to worry you. We just got back from visiting the Pike family. I'm not sure if Shane mentioned Hayden's wife just had baby Arthur!

Lily: Wow. Exciting for Hayden's wife!

Yuna: Yes, they're very happy and baby and mother are doing well!

Yuna: I got several pictures of Shane with the baby while we were having dinner. I already know that he'll refuse to let me post them anywhere but they're so cute I didn't want to keep them to myself. I thought maybe you might want to see them?

Lily: Yes send me them please

+ Message

Smiling, Yuna clicks the add attachment button and selects the group of them she'd snapped at dinner. They send, and while she waits for Lily's reaction, she swipes through them again herself, shaking her head a little at how hopelessly confused and endearing Shane looks while he attempts to hold the baby.



Lily

Today 08:45 PM

Lily: Yuna.

Yuna: Yes?

Lily: These are AMAZING

Yuna: Haha I'm glad you agree! Shane kept telling me to stop but I just couldn't resist. You can tell in the first one he wasn't sure how to hold the baby the right way - Jackie had to show him and he was so embarrassed. Hayden couldn't stop laughing.

Lily: Red like tomato. This is so perfect.

Lily: Do you have more?

+ Message

Something loosens in her chest. Her whole life is Shane; she knows this. Knows that she can take it a little too far sometimes. Knows that most parents aren't *also* managers and advocates and correspondents. But when Shane struggled to let her in emotionally, she'd naturally fallen into a role that mimicked what he *would* allow her, a sacred space alongside his routines and schedules and timetables, and one that Yuna does not take lightly.

But it means that she's also, a lot of the time, the only one who sees just how much work Shane puts in. He accomplishes a lot of things and gets accolades for them publicly, and she's just as proud of those. But there are so many *other* kinds of accomplishments she wishes she could brag on. Wishes that she had someone else who knew Shane enough aside from her and David that she could share things with who would *get it*.

She thinks maybe Lily does, after being in Shane's life in some capacity for at least three years now.



Lily

Yuna: I don't have any more from tonight but I did just recently scan some of our photo albums so we'd have digital copies. I have a few of Shane's baby pictures, but you have to promise not to tell him that I shared them with you!

Lily: Pinky swear I will not.

Lily: Please send them I need to see baby Shane

+ Message

With a grin, Yuna finds the photo app and selects some of her favorite shots she's been sorting through recently. None of them *too* incriminating. Lily had had enough information years ago to have sold Shane out if that's what she'd planned on doing. It goes against her typically rigid rules, but Yuna doesn't feel the need to send an NDA anymore.

She does send the photo of two-year old Shane in the bathtub though, a cheeky smile on his face as he looks over his shoulder, his little butt on full display. She can't resist.



Lily

Today 09:03 PM

Yuna: I can send you the link to the company I used to digitize the photo albums if you'd like. Maybe your parents could scan some of yours!

+ Message

The photos and message send, and the minutes unfold with no response. She has no idea where Lily's from, she realizes. She doesn't want to pry. Maybe it's late where she is.

Locking the phone briefly, Yuna catches the end of the news she was watching and then turns it off, heading upstairs for bed. She gets another text when her and David are brushing their teeth at the sinks, and checks it when she climbs into bed.



Lily

Today 09:29 PM

Lily: No thank you.

Yuna: Okay, sure! That's fine too.

Lily: Can you send me more pictures if you have them please

Yuna: Of course! I'll find some more before I go to bed and send them over.

Yuna: It's been really nice talking to you again, Lily.

Lily: You too.

Lily: You are a very good mother.

Lily: I am glad Shane has you.

+ Message

Yuna pauses when the message pops up at the top of the screen, overlaid by the photo albums of her and Shane and David throughout the years. She doesn't move for a long moment, just staring at it until it blurs a little in her vision.

She's used to people tuning her out when it comes to Shane. Used to the subtle, heavy breaths when she brings up what he's working on currently or where he's been. The way even her closest girlfriends stopped asking for updates, sharing glances with each other over bottles of wine.

She knows that she's a good mother. Or that she tries her best to be one, at least.

It's just that she can't actually remember the last time someone had *told* her so.



Lily

Today 09:36 PM

Yuna: I'm glad he has you too, Lily.

+ Message

She uploads several more photos for Lily before she plugs in her phone for the night, the smile still clinging to her lips. It's been weirdly very nice to have Lily, and the way their own conversations have blossomed just a bit past necessity lately.

She loves that Shane has Lily as a girlfriend or whatever the nature of their relationship is, but it's also kind of nice, she can admit, to have something like a friend herself.

The phone buzzes a few more times on the nightstand, and Yuna can't help checking it one last time before she falls asleep. There's a grin on her face before she even sees the screen.



Lily

Today 09:48 PM

Lily: So he has always turned so red! Hahahaha

Lily: This is the best day of my life Yuna Hollander

Lily: I am going to frame the bathroom one to hang above my tub. Shane will be so confused. It will be so funny

Lily: (Do not worry I will not tell him was from you 😈)

Lily: THANK YOU

+ Message

So Shane is seeing Lily's bathroom, then. Yuna falls asleep with a smile on her face.

Chapter 4: interlude | Shane

interlude | Shane



Lily

Today 06:01 PM

Lily: Where are we meeting after game 🤔

Shane: Hotel. I'll send you the room # after.

Lily: Ok 😊

Shane: Don't be weird.

Shane: And since when do you use emojis?

Lily: Since your mother. 😊

Shane: You have got to stop it with that. It's not funny.

Lily: 😈

Shane: 😬

Lily: 🏃🏻🥇🛼🌀🏠🔑😬🍆💧🩸👏

Shane: 😞

Shane: I hate that I understand that.

Lily: 🙌🙌

Shane: 🖐

Lily: 🙄

+ Message

Chapter 5: 2016 | Ilya

2016 | Ilya



Yuna

Today 07:18 PM

Yuna: Hi, Lily. It's Yuna. I wanted to check in and see how you're doing.

Yuna: You don't have to answer back, but know that I'm thinking of you. If you want to talk, I'm here. Just between us. You have my word.

+ Message

Ilya stares at the messages for so long he starts to think he's hallucinated them. But he blinks, and he blinks, and he blinks, and still, there they are.

He hadn't thought he would talk with Yuna again. In his head, he pictures Rose Landry perfect and proper and everything Ilya is not. She fits. She seems nice, and she's private the way Shane is, and she has the kind of *Midwest manners* that he'd thought the Hollanders would love. Ilya has been reading too many headlines.

Point is, Ilya had figured that he would be the last thing on Yuna's mind. Shane had found someone, a real person who doesn't have any reason to use a fake name and hide behind a screen, a girl he can marry and buy a house and have millions of kids with until he's a spitting image of Pike. He sees it all in his head every time he closes his eyes, Shane's new ten year plan, Ilya's name scratched off the list.

Mothers love that sort of thing, don't they? Yuna should want a *nice girl* for Shane. Someone that makes sense. The pictures just came out days ago. She should be inviting Rose Landry to dinner at the family cottage and showing *her* the photo albums, should she not?

Because Ilya—Ilya is alone in Boston, in the house that Shane left him in because he's miserable and some part of him feels like he deserves to sit in what he's lost. He's already moved past the vodka to the cigarettes this time, arms huddled around his knees out on the patio, the sky beginning to turn black overhead. Ilya likes the way the smoke looks light against its backdrop. Ilya hears the phantom echo of Shane telling him it's *bad* every time he lifts it to his lips. Each time he inhales.

Ilya, no matter how he tries to look at it, is not good for Shane. And he'd known this, but he hadn't thought—he'd *never* thought it would turn out to be what it had.

And Yuna Hollander has a piece of this one, private thing that Ilya has held in for all these years that no one else does. She doesn't know the truth, not really. No one does. But she knows more than anyone else about *Lily*. About the lengths he'd tried to go to to be good enough. It's humiliating. It's comforting. It's—Ilya's head fucking hurts.

He tortures himself just a little more, just this one thing. Tells himself he'll stop after he gets an answer.



Yuna

Today 07:56 PM

Lily: Is he happy?

+ Message

He regrets it immediately, but he can't take it back. He lifts the cigarette back to his mouth, but it only tastes like ash now.

The typing bubble pops up on his screen, and Ilya watches the hypnotic pulse of the dots as they disappear and reappear again and again.

After the third time, they don't come again. The phone vibrates in his hand: a phone call from Yuna.

Fuck. *Fuck*. Ilya panics briefly, stubbing out his cigarette on the ash tray as if she's somehow able to *see* him. He should not answer this call. He can't say anything out loud, can't let her hear his voice or his accent. He's too drunk for this, he thinks, even as he suddenly feels strikingly sober.

He presses accept.

Nothing happens for a moment. There's silence on the line, like Yuna is alone somewhere too. That makes Ilya feel better at least, that no one will overhear—whatever this conversation is going to turn out to be.

"Lily, honey?" Yuna asks.

Ilya drops his head against his knees and tries hard not to cry. It's been so long since anyone's used that tone with him. So long since anyone's treated him like he's capable of breaking.

He can't talk, but he takes a slow, somewhat steady breath, just loud enough for the speaker to pick up.

"That's okay. You don't have to say anything," she tells him. "Is it okay if *I* talk for a minute?"

Shakily, Ilya pulls the phone from his ear just long enough to send *Yes*. in their messages. Then he presses it back to his cheek and waits.

"I don't want to overstep. So, if I say something wrong, or if I'm messing anything up here, just—make a noise, or send me another text, or something. You can even hang up on me, if you want. I'm not—I didn't really plan on doing this. Calling, I mean."

Yuna pauses to give a small, breathless laugh, and Ilya wonders where she is right now. Where *Shane* is right now, who undoubtedly has no idea that she's calling him either. He sniffs lightly, some vague form of confirmation to her request.

She sighs. "I'm going to be honest with you. Or, at least as honest as I can be," Yuna prefaces. "I have a lot of respect for you. And I know that we don't really know each other that well, but you've been there through a lot of important things for Shane. Which means they're important things for *me*, too. You never sold him out, and you've stuck with him through the chaos of some of the last few years, even when you didn't have to. And every time I catch Shane looking at his phone smiling or looking happy, it's always your name on the screen. And that—*that* means more to me than you know."

There's an alarm blaring in Ilya's head, a voice all too eager to remind him that he does not deserve this. He is borrowing something he should never have had access to in the first place, taking comfort from someone who does not owe it to him.

But there's a much smaller voice deeper still, locked protectively behind his ribs, that feels vindicated for the first time in a decade. It's the one that keeps him from hanging up, even if he should.

“And I’m not trying to speculate or give out false hope, but—Shane has a hard time doing things because he *wants* them. I’m sure, by now, you probably know this. He does a lot of things because he thinks he should, or because it would make it easier for everyone else, or because it feels like he has to even if he doesn’t.”

Yes, Ilya knows this. He feels it too, to some extent, but much differently than Shane. Both of them want love, want people they care about to be proud of them. But the risk is different, the scale unbalanced. When Shane loses, his worst enemy is himself. When Ilya loses, he is punished. Prodded at to find which wound stings the most, only so that salt can be shoved into it harder. Deep enough to remind him that his *best* had not been enough. Ilya’s accomplishments are currency that buys him the things that Shane gets for free, if he’d only *ask* for them.

But that is the problem. Shane doesn’t ask.

“Look. I’m not going to speak badly about anybody. And I’m sure that she’s lovely. David and I haven’t met her yet. Shane hasn’t introduced us, which sends its own message, really. But. That’s my point—Shane can only handle the ‘*shoulds*’ for so long before he can’t anymore,” Yuna says carefully. “I know you remember the first time we talked. *That* day was one of those times. And when he did break, he asked for *you*. And I think... I think that that means something.”

Ilya closes his eyes when they begin to burn. He remembers that day. He remembers, he thinks, every interaction he’s had with Shane since the moment he’d stuck out a clammy palm in Ilya’s direction in Saskatchewan, had treated him as if he were worth talking to, worth *knowing*, even with no stick in his hand and no puck to chase, no expensive emblem slapped onto his back.

Even when all he’d had was a cigarette and cold cynicism. Ilya blinks harshly at the ash tray beside him, still giving off occasional whiffs of gray.

“I know it’s unfair of me to ask you to wait for him. I don’t know the situation. I don’t even know who you *are*, really,” Yuna laughs. “And maybe I’m completely off base here, in which case you can ignore me and forget about this. I just couldn’t not talk to you, I couldn’t—”

She cuts herself off abruptly with an inhale, lets it out slow the way that Ilya had earlier.

“I can’t—I can’t speak to how he feels. He doesn’t really talk to me about that sort of thing, and I wouldn’t be at liberty to disclose it even if he had,” she says gently. “But I have this feeling that things won’t be this way forever. Maybe not for very long at all. And I’m not usually wrong about these things.”

As quietly as he can manage, Ilya reaches up to knuckle at his eye with his free hand, wiping away the wetness on his cheeks. He doesn’t think it’s as subtle as he’d hoped. Yuna gives another small, sad sigh.

“He hasn’t been talking to David or I much lately either, so I don’t really have any updates for you. Answers, or—anything else that might help. The only thing I’m certain about is if you’ve been in Shane’s life for this long, you must be very important to him. You aren’t a ‘*should*’. You’re someone he goes to when he finally *can’t* anymore,” she says. “I just, I know that nobody really knows about—this. The two of you. And I didn’t want you somewhere by yourself thinking that it didn’t mean something to him. I know that it did. That it *does*.”

Silence settles between them, but it isn’t uncomfortable the way Ilya thought it might be. He wishes he could thank her. Wishes that he were allowed to act like a child for a moment, to cry and stomp

his foot and fall into a pair of open arms waiting to hold him until he feels steady again.

It would be so easy, Ilya thinks. But he can't do that to Shane. Ilya is a secret, but the label doesn't mean he's entitled to tell it.

Nighttime drapes itself heavy over the patio, over Ilya's empty house, and suddenly he's exhausted. Yuna's reassurance had stopped the near panic that Shane might forget him completely, but now, in its place, Ilya is just—blank.

It's still an improvement.

"David and I are about to make dinner so I'll have to let you go soon," Yuna tells him after they've been sitting together for a while, sounding tired herself. "But I just wanted to tell you—you're not alone. I hope that if you need anything, you'll let me know."

Ilya sniffs again, less for show this time than it is to really clear his sinuses. He tugs the phone back, the screen foggy now, and types.



Yuna

Today 08:01 PM

Lily: Yes.

Today 08:45 PM

Lily: Thank you.

+ Message

Yuna's soft exhale of a laugh meets his ear. "Anytime, honey," she says. "Hang in there, Lily."

Ilya isn't sure he can make any promises.

But at least now he feels a little more like trying.

Chapter 6: 2017 | Yuna

2017 | Yuna

The soft beep of the monitor beside Shane's bed is both keeping her sane and driving her crazy.

The room he's in at the hospital is nice but small, and the claustrophobia had set in hours ago. It doesn't matter; she'd sit through anything for Shane. Even if her brain is screaming at her to *move*, to do something, to be productive somehow. It's either that or the fear, and neither are seeming to cancel the other out.

She's already been as productive as she can be at the moment. She's reached out to Shane's coach to give an estimate for the length of Shane's leave. She's talked to his agent to draft up a statement about his condition for public release later this afternoon once Shane can approve it. She's updated everyone in their close friends and family who saw the footage and reached out to check on him—even the ones she knows are more about appearances and less about actually *caring*.

Which leads her, once again, back to Lily.



Lily

Today 09:35 AM

Yuna: They're saying pain level is decreasing into a normal range for this type of injury. A nurse came by to decrease the meds again to see how he does with them. David ran out to get some food, but I'm staying here with him for a while longer in case he ends up needing the stronger dose again.

Today 10:16 AM

Yuna: If all goes well, they're going to release him tonight or early tomorrow morning to go home. Fingers crossed! 🤞

Yuna: I'll let you know when he's there and when his phone is turned back on in case you want to give him a call.

Today 11:29 AM

Yuna: I'm sorry. I feel like I'm blowing up your phone. You can tell me if this is too much. I've just been so nervous about him and giving you updates reminds me that he's okay. It helps to see it in writing. But I can tone it down.

Lily: No, not too much. I have been also very worried. Updates have been very helpful

Lily: Sorry I was on a flight last few hours.

Lily: You are doing ok?

Yuna: Oh, no worries. I hope you arrived where you were going safely!

Yuna: I've been better, to be honest. I know this sort of thing happens often in hockey and we should probably be used to it by now. But it never gets easier, seeing him like that. I hate it when he's hurt, especially when it's because of something he loves.

+ Message

She cringes reading the text back once it's sent, aware of her rambling nerves but still much too keyed up to censor herself. Lily had texted first this time, right after the game when Shane had first gotten to the hospital and shortly after Yuna and David arrived. She'd asked for updates and Yuna had given them, although she doubts Lily had wanted *this* much information.

The typing bubble startles her, and Yuna chews at her lip while she watches it, solid, for a minute or so before several texts come in one by one.



Lily

Today 12:06 PM

Lily: Yes, it is difficult. Hockey is rough sport and you are right this happens often. But it does not mean is not ok to be scared. It is nice sometimes to have people be scared for you.

Lily: I don't know if I am saying it right.

Lily: You are scared because you care, yes? Shane knows this. Even if he does not say, he can feel it.

+ Message

Glancing up at where Shane is napping in the hospital bed, Yuna carefully and quietly wipes at her eyes behind her glasses. Lily doesn't have to comfort her, but the words had been almost exactly what she'd needed to hear.



Lily

Today 12:10 PM

Yuna: That means a lot coming from you, Lily. Thank you.

Yuna: I'm really sorry we missed you coming by yesterday. I'm sure you were very scared too. I'm glad the two of you had a moment alone but I wish I could've given you a hug. I think we both needed one, ha.

Lily: I am sorry I couldn't be there for long.

Lily: Do you need anything else? I am not in the city anymore but I can have things delivered to hospital. Do you need hotel or food or ?

Yuna: That's very sweet of you to offer, but I couldn't ask you to pay for that. Especially not if you're paying for flights!

Yuna: David and I have a hotel room next to the hospital but we've mostly been here with Shane. We're very lucky to have so many people stopping by to check on him and make sure we have what we need until he's discharged.

Lily: That is good. I am glad people are showing up for him. He would hate attention if he was in right mind but he deserves people caring.

Yuna: Yes, he does. ❤️

Lily: He talked about people coming by?

Yuna: He did. I'm sure you know from when you stopped in that the medication makes him a bit confused, but he was lucid enough to talk to Hayden this morning, and he had a short conversation with his coach. Apparently Ilya Rozanov came by as well yesterday when David and I were out getting lunch. You must have just missed each other.

Lily: That was nice of him

Yuna: It was. It meant a lot to Shane. It earns him some points, in my book.

Lily: Rozanov scores many points yes. Very talented hockey player.

Yuna: Haha Shane would be furious if he knew you said that!!

Yuna: ...And he would be furious with me too for admitting that Rozanov is *objectively* a very good player, yes. Even though Shane is #1.

Lily: Eh cannot be mad at the truth ㄟ(ˊˋ)ㄏ

Lily: Shane should be humbled sometimes. Healthier for him.

+ Message

Yuna laughs, trying hard to keep quiet, and only realizes belatedly that her cheeks are wet. She smiles, grateful, and wipes her eyes so she can type again.



Lily

Yuna: Thank you, Lily. I think this is the first time I've laughed since Shane was hurt.

Lily: You're welcome Yuna

Lily: Please text me if you or Shane need anything else.

Yuna: I will. And vice versa!

Lily: Vice versa?

Yuna: You text me if you need anything too, Lily.

Yuna: I would really like it if we could meet you one of these days. When you and Shane are ready.

Lily: Maybe

Lily: I would like that too. One day.

Yuna: Okay. 😊

Yuna: The doctor is coming back in to speak with us, so I'll let you get back to whatever you're doing!

Lily: Ok good luck.

Lily: I would not mind updates after

Yuna: Will do. ❤️ Talk soon, Lily.

+ Message

The noise of the doctor returning rouses Shane from his sleep, and he turns to her, blinking the tiredness from his eyes. Even like this, Yuna can see a brightness back in them that'd been missing for the last several weeks.

Shane frowns when he sees that she's been crying. "What's wrong?"

Yuna waves a hand. "Nothing, honey. I'm fine," she says.

Finally, maybe, in the way it counts.

Chapter 7: 2017 | Ilya

2017 | Ilya

Ilya sits up against the headboard, ankles crossed, television flickering with game highlights from the day before.

Sveta just left less than a week ago but Ilya doesn't feel the sharp cut of loneliness that he typically does after she goes, the dread of not having a warm body beside his—though he *would* very much prefer a different one here now.

On the screen in front of him, he watches Scott Hunter swerve around the rink and land a puck into the net, lost to a sea of red jerseys and bumping helmets afterward. Ilya would never say it to his face, but he's always admired the way Scott runs his team. That fine line between discipline and compassion. It's the same thing Ilya strives for with his own.

Just because he's a hundred years younger than Hunter doesn't mean he's *copying* him. Ilya watches him circle back on the screen for a second goal minutes later into the game. He rolls his eyes.



Yuna

Today 02:14 PM

Lily: Shane says you think Admirals are going to win the cup this year.

Yuna: I do, yes.

Lily: I don't think so.

Yuna: Oh? Why not? Scott Hunter is having a great year so far.

Lily: He is also 100000 years old Yuna !!!!

Yuna: Hahaha he is not that old!

Lily: Ugh. You sound like your son.

Yuna: He does take after me a little bit. 😊

Yuna: You're all kids to me. When Shane won the cup it felt like I was watching the version of him from his very first skating lesson lift it up over his head. It was surreal.

Lily: My mother was the same with me when I was young.

Yuna: Oh, you took skating lessons? I didn't know that.

+ Message

It's quick and instinctual, the way that Ilya's body freezes.

The words had gone straight from his brain through his fingers, thoughtless. Easy. As if he hasn't spent the last decade painfully careful not to say too much, not to press on the wound, like it'll go away if he just doesn't acknowledge it.

It's a quiet grief now. Even this moment is bittersweet, Ilya's fingers coming up to touch the cross hanging from his neck. It's the same thing he does when he's around Shane, when he catches himself just seconds before he would have told an old story, something sweet and harmless, a memory just out of reach until suddenly his body decides he's safe enough to unlock it again.

It's nice, but it's hard. It's heavy. Ilya aches for the past, and now, he looks forward to his future. He floats.



Yuna

Today 02:31 PM

Yuna: Lily?

+ Message

He locks the phone gently and lets the white noise of the game lull him into a melancholic calm. He doesn't answer Yuna again that night.

A week later, he reopens the thread as soon as he gets off the phone with Shane.



Yuna

Today 08:24 PM

Lily: You were right about Admirals.

Lily: And I am a little bit happy for Scott Hunter.

Yuna: I'm right about most things, usually. 😊

Yuna: Hope you're doing okay, Lily.

Today 08:50 PM

Lily: I think I am going to be.

Yuna: ❤️

+ Message

Chapter 8: 2017 | Yuna

2017 | Yuna



Ilya ❤️

Today 12:03 AM

Yuna: Ilya, I won't say too much here that I didn't already say at dinner, but I've been reading back through our texts and I just. I'm relieved, and I'm hopeful, and I'm also a little sad. I'm not upset that we didn't know. I've been in this industry since Shane first put on a pair of skates. I know how it can be. I get why both of you had to keep it a secret. But I am heartbroken too, that it has to be

this way. That both of you were so terrified not only for the world to find out but for David and I to know. I'm sorry that you weren't able to come out to us on your own time, but I'm happy to be able to assure you now that you will always, always have us in your corner. I know Shane knows this, and I'm sure we'll have our own conversations about it as well. But I want you to know, Ilya, that all of it applies to you too. We will fight for you as hard as we fight for Shane. We will support you like we support Shane. We will help you with your plan, and if you do end up here around Ottawa, please know you always have a home with us.

Yuna: I can't stop thinking about the night I called you on the phone and you couldn't say anything. I know that this has been hard for both of you in so many ways, but I hope that you also had people to turn to. To lean on for support when you were lonely or unsure. I hope, that night, that any of what I told you helped, because I meant every word of it.

Yuna: I know it's late and it's been a long day, and honestly I hope you've already powered off your phones so you can get some sleep and enjoy the rest of your trip. But I couldn't go to bed without making sure that you knew that this doesn't change anything. All the ideas I had about who 'Lily' was to Shane, every assumption I made - I hope you know that you don't fall short in any way to me. Not because of who you are, not because of the way this all panned out, nothing. None of it could make me less grateful for you. In fact, I think finding out that it was you has only made me love you even more. I'm just so happy to keep getting to know you, as Ilya this time.

Yuna: There's no pressure, but if you and Shane feel up to it, feel free to stop by again any time before you leave. And if it's anything other than that, well, you've got my number. ❤️

+ Message

Chapter 9: +1 | Shane

+1 | *Shane*



Mom

Today 12:21 AM

Shane: Why is Ilya crying.

Shane: What did you say to him?

Yuna: You'll have to ask him, honey.

Shane: He won't let me see it.

Yuna: ㄹ_(_)(^)_/

Shane: ?? Where did you learn how to do that

Yuna: Your boyfriend.

Shane: Oh my God.

+ Message

End Notes

i'm on tumblr @ anincompletelist ! x

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