

It's All Okay

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It's All Okay

by [wapbamboomalakazam](#)

Summary

Shane watched her eyes drift up in thought before looking back down, settling onto his face. With careful consideration she asked her next question. “Mr. Hollander, is there a chance you could be pregnant?”

Shane sputtered at that very notion. No! Absolutely not! He couldn't be! Obviously! He denied that very idea.

Or

Shane has a cryptic pregnancy and goes into labor right before a game against Boston.

Notes

This was supposed to be a one-shot!

I got about 9,000 words into the fic and realized I still had far too much more to write and that it may be more easily digestible if I broke it up into a couple of chapters.

I don't know how many chapters this will be. We'll find out when I decide I've written enough of this fic.

Chapter 1

Shane had awoken into a mostly normal sunny morning – mostly – outside of two key details.

For one, he had awoken in the arms of his boyfriend. It was a most welcome difference in his usual routine. One he doesn't get to experience all too often. One he can't wait for the day it becomes more common.

It was Ilya's last season with Boston. Shane had kept reminding himself. And that meant not too much longer from now he'd be moving up to Ottawa. Only two hours away from Shane. He'd smile a little every time he was reminded of that fact. Two hours apart meant more frequent visits. More time for them to be together. He didn't have to wait for their teams to play against each other next just to enjoy these quiet moments together.

Yes, waking up in bed tangled up like this was something Shane Hollander could get very used to.

On the other hand, he had also woken up to a dull ache in his lower back. It wasn't awful, but it was something Shane instantly noted.

He figured it's something he'd be able to take care of himself. Something he was used to to some extent being an athlete. Something he can handle through tonight's game. A hot compress, some good stretches, and plenty of water would help what he assumed was just an overexerted muscle.

The pain would likely wash away in a couple hours, Shane assured himself. He would compartmentalize this knowledge for a Shane at a later time.

As of right now he wanted to enjoy this moment. His head rested on Ilya's chest. He listened to the rhythmic breathing of his boyfriend as he still slept a little longer. He breathed in Ilya's scent. A calm sensation washing over his body as it always did. He traced Ilya's bare abs with his fingers, feeling his taut skin. Ilya's skin felt so nice under Shane's hand. Shane wanted to take in every little detail of this morning in Ilya's bed.

At this moment, everything felt okay.

Shane felt the shift in his boyfriend's breathing, and a little stir from beneath his head that told him that Ilya was beginning to wake up.

“Hmm'mornin’.” Shane heard the raspy timbre of a still sleepy Ilya mumble out in barely intelligible English. Shane placed a gentle kiss on Ilya's chest as a reply.

Ilya yawned. His hand that had been idly holding onto Shane's waist through the night had shifted upwards to Shane's hair. The Russian began petting Shane's head lazily. It was a tendency of Ilya to do so right at the start of the morning. It was something Shane loved just as well.

The two of them lay just like that for a moment. It was quiet. It was peaceful. It was a perfect morning.

Shane moved his head up to glance at Ilya. His eyes welled up with love at the sight of his boyfriend. Ilya was so soft and beautiful in the mornings.

Ilya understood what Shane was thinking as he reached down to plant a tender kiss on Shane's lips. Shane sighed into it, he wished every kiss with Ilya could last an eternity. He wanted to soak in this morning time as much as he could. They were not going to have a lot of time together before their game this evening. They both had practice in a couple hours, but Shane was taking in this moment in time where he could indulge himself.

"I need breakfast." Were Ilya's next words, taking Shane away from this still moment in time. It pulled him back to reality.

"Do you now?" Shane smirked back. He was going to take this opportunity to tease Ilya a little.

The hand that Ilya was carding through Shane's hair stopped and ever so lightly thumped Shane in the back of the head. Shane knew it was a teasing smack, no malice in it. Fun, playful, and a little flirty.

"You're a pervert." Said Ilya.

Shane giggled a little, a hand coming up to cup Ilya's face. "What? It was just a question." He gave Ilya another kiss. Shane could feel Ilya smile into it. He wanted them to linger together in bed a little longer, but Ilya rolled himself out of his entanglement with Shane, leaving the other man behind.

Shane stayed laying there for a moment longer. The sudden disappearance of Ilya's warmth didn't go unnoticed by him. It always made Shane feel a sort of emptiness. That feeling, however lonely it was, didn't stop him from wanting to curl up and go back to sleep again.

He'd been feeling rather tired lately. Shane didn't think too much of it though. There'd been enough going on in his life to warrant it, he supposed. On top of the regular season there was helping Ilya finalize his plans for next season, all the work going into getting the Irina Foundation up and running, and the constant secret of it all. No, Shane didn't think too deeply about his fatigue. He never let it win. Even now, still under the covers of Ilya's bed, he knew he was gonna get up. He just needed the extra second.

He found Ilya in the kitchen rummaging around his fridge, no doubt trying to decide what's good he could make for the both of them. Shane took a seat at the island and watched Ilya move about. Ilya pulled a small plastic bag out of his produce drawer. "Is avocado toast alright?" He hung the bag of avocados in the air.

Shane nodded. "I like a little protein with mine."

"Salmon okay?"

Shane nodded again.

Ilya got to work making their breakfast himself. Shane sat there wondering if he could help at all and in what way. Surely, Ilya would ask if he needed the assistance, Shane told himself.

He resigned himself to checking his phone. He had a text message from Hayden. Shane snorted when he opened it up. That got Ilya's attention.

“What's so funny.” Ilya raised an eyebrow at Shane.

Shane shook his head. “Nothing, just a picture Hayden sent me.” Shane waved his phone over at Ilya so he could see.

“What could Pike send that is so funny?” Ilya asked as he took the phone from Shane. He glanced at it and was left even more confused. “Is boring picture.” He told Shane. “Pike may be even more boring than you.”

“It's a normal picture.” Shane snatched his phone back from Ilya.

The photo wasn't something Ilya would find interesting, Shane knew. Hayden had already come to figure that the hotel room they were supposed to be sharing was all his for the last night. The picture, clearly taken just moments ago, was a view from Hayden's bed staring at the other bed Shane had declared as his before stepping out to meet with Ilya. The bed in question was now covered with all of Hayden's luggage. A little message just below the pic wrote *'don't worry I left it warm for you 😊'*

“Whatever you believe.” Was all Ilya would reply with. He turned his full attention back to food prep.

“You're an asshole.” Shane chuckled a little.

They sat on the couch in a mostly comfortable silence as they ate their breakfast. It was nice, as all things with Ilya were.

“Is good?” Ilya asked him as he watched Shane take a bite of his toast.

“Yeah. It's really good.” Replied Shane in-between chews.

After he said that though, something began to feel strange inside him. A weird twist in his gut. The cramping moving up to his abdomen. Shane winced, a hand coming up to rub at the part of him that hurt. A motion that not only caught Ilya's attention, but immediately concerned the Russian as well.

“Shane, are you okay?” Ilya asked, his voice dripping with worry as he moved in closer to his boyfriend.

“Ah, yeah.” Shane had sort of lied. He got up from the couch. “I think I just need the restroom real fast.”

Shane sat on the toilet a little longer than he would've liked. There was no movement. Nothing. Okay, Shane's head began to think. Constipation, he decided. It had to be. That would make the most sense he supposed.

Shane was usually very careful with his diet. He tried his hardest to eat clean healthy foods to keep his body in its top shape. He can admit, though, that in the last few months he was a little less strict. There were certain times where he'd get a craving so strong he had to indulge himself a little. It wasn't all too often, but it wasn't impossible now for an inflection like this to happen to him because he let loose a little more.

There was a sort of relief when he sat down on the toilet however. The cramp washed away quickly, so he supposed relaxing his muscles did help a little.

Ilya's eyes were on Shane the second he returned from the bathroom. He was watching Shane's movements like a hawk from the couch "All better?"

Shane went back to his seat. He shrugged, not knowing how much he could tell Ilya "I suppose..."

"Is not better?" Ilya shook his head. He posed it as a question, but Shane knew Ilya meant it as a statement. The man could read right through him.

"It's—" Shane chose to tread delicately, but as honest as he could. He didn't want Ilya fussing over him any more. He sighed and went on. "If I tell you, do you promise not to make fun of me?"

Ilya looked all around the room exasperated, pretending like he was ensuring there was no one else there to witness their interaction.

"Obviously I'm not going to tell anyone." Ilya rolled his eyes when they landed back on Shane. There was an honest smile on his face.

"I'm being serious." Shane glared at him, but he smiled as well.

Ilya allowed his expression to match Shane's more seriously. It was an acknowledgement that they were on the same page.

Shane bit his lower lip. "I think I'm a little..." he waved a hand in the air, "constipated?"

Ilya's eyes were blank as he looked at Shane. Shane wished he could understand what Ilya was thinking in that moment. It wasn't the most insane revelation Shane had let off on Ilya, but it was certainly up there as one of his most embarrassing.

Ilya hummed. "I think I have tablets." It was his turn to get up off the couch and make a quick trip to the bathroom. He returned a moment later with a small bubble pack of little round pills.

Shane was grateful for Ilya to be so understanding in this moment. It sounded stupid to Shane, but he needed the reassurance.

He took the pack from Ilya. There were some instructions on the back. He popped out a couple pills and downed them with his glass of water. Surely, that would help his unease.

“There, now when you lose to me tonight I know it won't be because you're dreaming of a bathroom.” Ilya smirked as Shane finished off his glass of water.

“Oh, when you win?” Shane smirked back as he sat his glass down.

It was shortly after that when Shane had to leave Ilya's home. He didn't want to. He so badly wanted to stay behind, but he had to get himself back over to the hotel to get changed and prepare himself for practice time on the ice before their game.

Shane felt that same abdominal ache from earlier return as he got back to the hotel. He stopped himself in the lobby for a second. He breathed in, grasping at his stomach, and began to exhale slowly. Once again, the pain eased away after a few moments. He sure hoped he would be okay come game time.

He was very not okay come game time.

Over the next few hours, the pain in his abdomen came and went in waves. Shane kept trying to convince himself that he was going to be okay. Kept hoping each trip to the bathroom would relieve himself. Kept breathing. Kept working through it.

It didn't go unnoticed during their practice, much to Shane's annoyance. A few of his teammates had given him concerned glances. A couple had asked him if he was feeling alright. “Just worry about tonight's game.” He would say in reply. He kept dodging the question entirely because answering it meant admitting to himself that there was something more wrong with him. And Shane wasn't ready for that quite yet.

Hayden certainly never eased up on him. Every little wince, every second that Shane paused, every absentminded rub at his stomach to try and fight down the pain, his best friend was by his side almost in an instant.

“Dude, I don't think you're up for playing today.” Hayden had told Shane as Shane braced himself against the barriers for a second when nothing was going on.

“It's not serious. It'll pass before the evening.” Shane tried to assure him.

“Is it a recent injury? It probably wouldn't hurt to at least speak to the team doctor before the game.”

“I'll be fine.” Shane skated away before Hayden could press him further. He really, really did not want to keep having this conversation.

The cramps had mostly stayed pretty mild up to that point. They were a little annoying, but doable. He was certain he could push through tonight's game in this shape. He just hoped he could relieve himself before that evening so it wouldn't be an issue.

It wasn't any use though. While the cramping never lasted longer than a minute, it kept increasing in intensity. It went from something Shane could mostly ignore, to something he

had to fight back a reaction to. It was getting exponentially harder to hide that he was in pain.

As they neared game time the cramping had ramped up to a pretty steady rhythm. He was biting down groans in the dressing room as he was gearing up. Hayden kept his eyes locked on Shane in the stall next to him. Shane tried his best to avoid Hayden's gaze, which wasn't too terribly difficult to do since he was far more focused on breathing through this cramp. He felt his stomach twist and tighten almost like he was going to throw up. Shane had to hold himself up or he was sure he was going to collapse.

When Shane had managed to gather himself, he promptly took a seat on the bench with a heavy sigh. He could just finish getting ready sitting down and save his energy for the ice.

His stomach did not give him a whole lot of time to relax before he felt it twist itself back up. Shane had accidentally allowed himself to react to it this time. A low groan slipped out of his mouth as he doubled over himself from his seat, a hand pressed firm against his abdomen.

"Shane!" He could only vaguely hear Hayden shouting his name, though Shane couldn't focus on anything around him.

He paid attention to his breathing, in and out, in and out. He knew his teams' whole attention was on him. In and out, in and out. His muscles tensed beneath his shirt and he felt another rush of nausea. In and out, in and out. He really felt like he was going to throw up, the pain was so bad.

As Shane felt the cramping release itself from him he realized Hayden was crouched down beside him rubbing circles around his back. He had that look in his eyes that Shane only ever saw when Hayden was doting on one of his kids. That concerned dad face. God it made Shane feel so pathetic.

Shane let out one last shaky breath as his stomach settled again. He kept one hand pressed to his midsection, his other hand waved dismissively in the air toward Hayden. "I'll be okay."

But that lie was even beginning to wear on Shane. The truth was that Shane was certain he was very much not okay and that maybe it wasn't constipation after all. But what else could it have possibly been?

His appendix perhaps? Or maybe a kidney stone? Shane really didn't want to think about the possibility that he might have to get surgery and be laid out for the rest of the season. Not now. The playoffs were right there. They were at the finish line and a shoo-in for them this year. He had to lead his team to another Stanley Cup victory.

He hoped that whatever it was could've been an easy fix, preferably something he could continue avoiding a little bit longer. Just at least until they could get this game finished. He could get checked out by the physician afterwards.

"*You don't look okay.*" JJ was on the other side of Shane now, inspecting him up and down. He spoke to Shane in French. "*You look a little pale. A little sick. Are you sure you should be playing today?*"

"I'm fine!" Shane snapped back, also in French. He didn't mean to raise his voice like that. Not at his friend who was simply trying to check in on him. *"Sorry. Sorry, I just..."* Shane sighed, *"I'll be alright. I have to get through this game first."*

"It's okay, Shane." JJ continued. *"I'd rather play this game knowing my friend is being taken care of and doing alright, than worrying that my captain is going to collapse on the ice. We're all really concerned for you."*

Shane swallowed thickly. He admired JJ's concern for him, everyone's concerns really. But it was going to take a lot more than these cramps to get him off the ice. "I can do this." he gritted back in English.

"If you're sure you can play." Hayden removed his hand from Shane's back and stood back up. Shane could hear the uncertainty in his voice.

"I'm sure of it." He wasn't. "Now," he grabbed his helmet from the spot next to him on the bench, "let's go kick some Boston butt!"

The first period had barely even started when Shane had to be pulled from the ice as another cramp ran through him. The medics had taken him back to the dressing room and began doing routine vitals. Shane wanted them off of him. He had to prove to them he was okay enough to be let back out.

He barely had enough time to recover from the last wave of pain when another one came rushing through. Shane hissed, flinching as a medic was trying to take his blood pressure.

She was a woman about Shane's age. She was really gentle with him which he was at the very least grateful for. She was also the one who was very adamant he got off the ice and got looked at, which Shane didn't like as much. He would behave himself though. There was no use arguing when he really did feel quite awful.

"Hey, Shane. It's okay. It's okay." The medic spoke in such a calm, nurturing voice that once again made Shane feel so very helpless. "Okay, even breaths for me." She began demonstrating breathing exercises, in through the nose, and a slow exhale out the mouth. "Can you do that for me?"

Shane tried to follow through. The pain was making it too difficult for him to even think about breathing. He choked through a couple as tears began to prickle at his eyes. He never felt so weak before.

The medic turned back to her partner, a man who had been organizing and preparing all their supplies. "Get the stretcher ready." she called to him.

"What, no way!" Shane began to protest. "I need to get out there. I need to—" he punctuated his unfinished plea with a moan that told the medic all the more she needed to hear.

"We need to get you to the emergency room."

Shane continued his protests as he was carefully moved from the bench and onto the stretcher. He groaned as he was lifted up into the ambulance, a hand keeping its grip to his abdomen. He didn't want to let go, falsely letting himself believe that holding onto himself would somehow reduce the intense pain that kept washing over him.

Panic was rising in his chest as the ambulance took off down the streets of Boston. This really was it for him. There was something so dangerously wrong with him. He didn't think he was dying. Shane hoped he wasn't dying. But he had to resign himself to accepting that he was probably going to be out for the playoffs again for the second year in a row. This pain was all too real to ignore.

He tried to think of Ilya, maybe as a distraction, but also because it was impossible not to worry about what his boyfriend could be thinking right now. *'I'm okay.'* he mumbled quietly believing those words would make their way to Ilya still on the ice. *'I'll be okay. Don't worry.'*

The female medic had ridden in the back of the ambulance with Shane trying to keep up with his vitals and asking Shane questions about his medical history. She got Shane to lift up his jersey and undergarments as high as they could go so she could inspect his abdomen. She felt around and asked him a couple more questions about the pain he was experiencing.

As much as he hated laying there in a stretcher, in the back of an ambulance, on his way to the hospital instead of being out on the ice pushing through Shane was doing his best at following the medic's orders. He had no choice, really. Shane had accepted that something was wrong and he really needed that something to go away as fast as possible. Giving this woman any more grief than he already did wouldn't do him any good. Shane needed this pain gone.

He warned the medic as he felt the pain beginning to build up again. He was becoming all too aware of the pattern that it was following though it didn't change the amount of agony he was in.

The medic froze from where she was touching Shane's stomach as she felt the muscles below her touch begin to tighten. Shane couldn't prevent the tears from forming in his eyes as he fought through the pain. He felt the medic release her hands from him. Her eyes moved to glance at a watch on her wrist.

"I'm timing the pain. Tell me when it subsides."

Shane didn't understand why she was doing that but he just nodded and tried his hardest to breathe through the fire in his stomach. He followed through her breathing instructions from earlier. In through the nose, out slowly through the mouth.

"65 seconds." She said after he told her he was coming down from the last little stretch of it. Shane watched her eyes drift up in thought before looking back down, settling onto his face. With careful consideration she asked her next question. "Mr. Hollander, is there a chance you could be pregnant?"

Shane sputtered at that very notion. No! Absolutely not! He couldn't be! Obviously! He denied that very idea.

Okay, maybe it wasn't impossible. He knew that a very small percentage of men could get pregnant. He supposed it wasn't out of the realm of possibility for him. He had a very active sex life with Ilya, and while they tried to be careful, they weren't always the most attentive to that sort of thing. Especially after becoming exclusive. The chances – though slim – were not zero.

But surely he would know he was pregnant, right? There would be signs. Pregnant people had symptoms. Like nausea, mood swings, weird... cravings... fatigue... and oh—he recognized a couple of those symptoms on himself. In fact, all the symptoms he could list in his head he was sure he felt a few times in the last several months. He didn't look pregnant though! Didn't most people get a round belly? Shane's stomach was for the most part the same as it always was. Maybe a little softer? Not as defined. But he chalked that up to his little indulgences. His... cravings...

Nope! Shane fought to suppress those thoughts down hard. He would've known if he was pregnant! He wouldn't have allowed himself to play hockey if that were the case. He probably wouldn't have gone through with it at all had he'd known. So, no, for Shane's own sanity, he was squashing that idea real fast.

They arrived at the hospital right before the medic could extract any more information out of Shane. They rushed him through the ER and got him back into a room and onto a bed so quickly Shane was barely able to process anything going on between the transfer and the initial triage and examinations. The world around him was spinning. Shane was fighting back everything to not let his mind slip into a panic attack. Between all the medical questions and the constant wave of pain that was only growing more intense, Shane was so overwhelmed.

He couldn't remember what was being asked or what he was even telling all these medical professionals. It was all such a blur. It wasn't until someone came into his room wheeling in a little screen with him that Shane was able to start processing where he was and what was going on again.

“Hello, Shane. We're going to do a quick ultrasound on you.”

“An ultrasound?” Shane had no idea what the ultrasound might even begin to find. Isn't that the thing they used on pregnant people? Which, once again, Shane needed to remind himself that he was most likely probably not pregnant.

“Yes. It's a pretty effective way to see if something is going on in there. So we know what to eliminate and how we can treat you going forward.”

As the doctor moved the wand around his abdomen Shane suddenly felt like he couldn't breathe. He was so scared of what they might find.

“There it is.” Said the doctor. “Your baby.”

Shane couldn't look at the screen. He didn't want to accept what he just heard the doctor say. Deniability seemed like Shane's only option as he fought back a wail from the intense pressure growing in him again.

The doctor's face contorted into something unreadable before he continued trying to calmly explain what was happening. Shane felt everything blur around him again. He only heard a few things the doctor was telling him. Something about a head in a canal or – he wasn't sure – his brain was too fuzzy, too panicked to be retaining any of this.

The pain didn't allow himself time to relax before he was feeling another cramp come on. Contractions? No, Shane was still letting himself believe he wasn't having a baby. Surely he had misheard that as well through all the buzzing in his ears.

He felt another fiery sensation low in his pelvis. “Fuuuuck...” Shane groaned. Whatever this pain was he needed to push it out himself. He considered bearing down on the pain right then.

“Mr. Hollander, we need to get you up to labor and delivery asap.”

“But I'm not pregnant.” Is all Shane could get out.

Once again in another whirring rush medical professionals were around him. He had a nurse ask him if it was alright to inspect his dilation. Shane let them do whatever they needed to.

“Ten centimeters.”

Ten centimeters? Ten centimeters of what? No, surely not! That was not what was happening!

“I'm not pregnant.” Shane repeated, more desperately this time.

His bed was being unlocked and he was being pushed out of his room. The nurse was trying her best to explain to Shane what was going on. “We're going to get you prepped and ready for delivery.”

“I'm not pregnant!” He shouted it this time, hopefully getting it through to someone. Perhaps the deniability would make that sentence a reality.

Someone from behind Shane was trying their best to comfort him. Validating his current fears of giving birth to a baby that Shane was probably not really certain he wasn't currently in labor with.

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

More fic!

I'm moving to try and get these out weekly. We'll see how committed I am to that soon, I guess.

Anyways... enjoy a more Ilya-centric chapter

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

Ilya knew everyone could tell how off his game he was. He wasn't trying his best to hide it. Nothing could subdue the panic that was rising in him as he watched his boyfriend get removed from the ice earlier in the game.

He couldn't stop thinking about the conversation he had with Shane earlier that day. The way he flinched and rubbed at his stomach. Ilya knew all too quickly that something was wrong with him. But he didn't press him for further details, choosing to blindly accept whatever Shane had told him that morning. Something about constipation?

Surely if that were the actual case Shane would be on the ice with him right now. That it would be Shane's beautiful eyes staring back at Ilya as he crouched down for the face-off. That he wouldn't have been so distracted as to let Montreal win this puck.

Ilya should've listened to his gut that morning. He should've pressed Shane for more details. Maybe he could've figured out exactly what to do to prevent all this from happening? Even if it meant getting his stubborn boyfriend to a hospital sooner. Ilya could've done more to support Shane. He didn't.

All Ilya wanted to do right now was get off this ice, run away from this arena, and get himself to Shane as quickly as possible. He had to. The thought of Shane in pain and all alone sickened Ilya. It took everything in him to keep himself just barely focused enough on the game.

He had to fight through. Shane will be okay. Ilya had to remind himself of that. Shane was strong, he could get through anything. He was going to be okay. *Shane was going to be okay.*

Ilya kept repeating that to himself as he ripped off his gear after the game was finished. He heard the concerned voices of a few of his teammates asking him what was wrong. Ilya ignored them all as he hastily tried to put himself back together. He needed to get to Shane as soon as possible.

The second he was free from the restraints of his team, and his hockey gear, and the dressing room, and this whole fucking arena, Ilya was pulling out his phone to get in touch with Yuna and David.

They would've had to be contacted by Shane's coach or someone for Montreal. They would have some kind of information all the way back in Canada that Ilya didn't know. He also needed the comfort and the companionship of Shane's parents. They were the only other people who were truly feeling what Ilya was feeling at that moment.

Their conversation was nice, or as good as it could be. Yuna had given Ilya the hospital Shane was being sent to, but she didn't know anything else more than him. He could tell from her voice that she must've been crying. Ilya felt so bad for her and David. They were stuck in another country not knowing what sort of state their son was in.

"We're trying to book tickets to fly out to Boston asap." She had told Ilya. "I'm so relieved that you're there for him now. Please call us as soon as you can so we know he's okay."

Ilya made one more frantic phone call to the hospital Yuna had given him to get Shane's room information before setting off.

He couldn't even remember the car drive to the hospital. Ilya wasn't sure how he got there in one piece, he was only certain that he needed to get to Shane. To see Shane. To make sure for himself that his boyfriend was okay.

Adrenaline pumped through Ilya's veins as he rushed through the hospital. He only half-heartedly paid attention to the directories helping him find the wing he needed to get to. Not really paying attention to where he was going, only focusing on where he needed to be.

He found Shane's room pretty easily, all things considered. Maybe he had some sort of intuition, like an internal gps that told him Shane's location at all times? Whatever the case, he was relieved to be standing outside his door.

He didn't notice just how bad he was shaking until now. Ilya had to take a deep breath in and allow himself time to calm down a little and shake out his nerves more before entering the room. Shane was going to be okay. Ilya told himself one last time before pushing open the door.

Shane was laying in the bed. He looked rather exhausted, his eyes glazed and distant, but he was awake. Ilya finally let himself breathe out when he saw Shane. He was alive which was all he could ask for at that moment.

"Ilya..." Shane whispered breathlessly as they locked eyes. Shane's features softened a little which made Ilya's heart melt.

Ilya wasn't only focused on Shane. There was another presence in the room, one that Ilya couldn't ignore. His eyes drifted from Shane to a bassinet parked up next to Shane's bed. Was that? It couldn't be...

"Shane, that's a baby." Ilya blurted out a little too suddenly.

Shane looked down at the sleeping infant in the bassinet like he just realized they were there for the first time too. "Couldn't even wait until after the game was over to make an entrance." he mumbled.

Ilya crossed the room to get a closer look at the newborn. It didn't take much for Ilya to understand what this all meant. He took in the sweet scene of this little infant sleeping peacefully in their bassinet. Shane had a baby. His baby. Ilya was now a father. His heart swelled.

He only watched the infant for a second before turning back to the man he was originally here for. From up close Ilya could see just how disheveled and worn out Shane was. No doubt everything Shane had gone through had taken a toll on him.

Ilya couldn't help but feel a rise of guilt build in his chest. He wasn't there for Shane in his time of need. He missed being there to witness his child be brought into this world. Shane was in pain, scared, and alone, and Ilya was playing that stupid game not there for him. He wasn't there to hold Shane, to help him through all of this. He wasn't there to reassure Shane that he was strong, and amazing, and so very brave. He wasn't there.

Ilya had to shake down those thoughts. He had no idea that Shane was pregnant, he was certain Shane hadn't known about it either. It also wasn't like he didn't want to be here. He desperately wanted off that ice as soon as Shane was whisked away from him. He wanted to support Shane in whatever way he could have through all the pain and uncertainty.

Of course, Ilya wasn't expecting the end result to be a baby. That fact alone made Ilya feel even worse. Shane had to unknowingly bring a whole new life into this world all by himself.

But none of those feelings mattered as much to Ilya right now than his concern for Shane. "Are you okay?" He asked. Ilya already knew the answer to his own question. He could read it all over Shane's body.

Shane nodded his head a little. "I'm okay." He replied lightly. It was the most obvious lie Ilya had ever heard come out of Shane's mouth. Yes, perhaps he was mostly okay physically, or that he was going to be. But that's not what Ilya had meant at that moment.

Ilya sat himself down on the hospital bed. Shane tried to shift himself a little to make more room for Ilya but Ilya just shook his head, taking Shane in his arms.

As soon as Shane felt Ilya's arms around him he began to break down. Shane sobbed. A cry so painful, so deep. It was one of those cries that shook his chest and took his breath leaving him gasping for air in-between. He hadn't wept like this since he was a little kid, but in that moment with Ilya by his side the full reality of what had just happened to him had hit Shane like a ton of bricks.

The last couple hours were some of the scariest and most painful moments in Shane's life. Shane couldn't understand anything that was happening to him. He didn't want to believe it, at least. He tried so hard to convince himself that everything that was being said to him, that was happening to him was all some kind of dream or big game of make-believe. That it

would all come to an end and he'd wake up back in Ilya's bed and be able to restart his day like none of this ever happened.

In the end, after he felt that sweet release from his final push, Shane only felt numb. He still didn't feel like any of this was real as that screaming, squirming living being was placed down on his chest. He couldn't accept it. Not any of it. Not yet.

Shane resented that baby. Or, no, he didn't resent that baby, not even a little bit. It was simply impossible for Shane to allow himself to accept that the baby was real and that he had just given birth to it. That this baby was his.

He more so resented the timing. Shane was not ready to become a dad, he didn't think. He wanted kids, sure, and he wanted them with Ilya, he was certain, but this was all so fast. He and Ilya had only just come to labeling their relationship this past summer. They were still keeping their relationship a secret and Shane was still focused on his career. He had some good hockey left in him, he was at the height of his career, and the playoffs were just around the corner. Shane wasn't ready for this quite yet, and because of that he wasn't able to fully accept that this was really happening to him. That any of those moments between arriving at the hospital and finding out he was pregnant and in labor to Ilya arriving actually happened.

But now as he allowed himself to cry so painful and so ugly against Ilya's chest that the world finally caught up to him and he was beginning to realize not a single moment of the day was fake. That he indeed just gave birth to a baby he didn't know existed a few hours ago. That he was going to have to abandon his team for the remainder of the season right as the playoffs were about to begin. That he now had a new secret in his life that he had to balance. That this was all very very real. And that he was incredibly overwhelmed by it all.

Ilya combed through Shane's hair. This was a rare occasion where Ilya was at a loss for words. There was nothing he could say in English or in Russian to make this better for Shane. He only knew that he had to stay by his side. He was going to hold Shane just like this for as long as the other man needed him to. Ilya would continue to stroke Shane's hair and rock him gently back and forth on the hospital bed and let Shane feel. It was all he could do.

He had no idea how long they sat like that for. Shane's sobbing began to die out and Ilya felt his boyfriend shift in his arms. Ilya loosened his grip on Shane and let the man break free from his grasp.

Shane wiped the tears from his eyes and looked at Ilya. Ilya could see the appreciation in Shane's sad, wet eyes and god Ilya wanted to lean in and kiss his boyfriend so badly. Would that be appropriate right now?

Ilya had to distract himself from Shane's beautiful, kissable face. The only other thing in the room worth Ilya's attention though was the newborn still very much asleep right next to him.

It killed Ilya inside what little information he had about this baby. He wanted to feel them and cradle them. He wanted to get to know his child.

Would it hurt to - "Boy or girl?" Ilya asked so suddenly that he hadn't fully realized he had said anything at all until it was already out of his mouth.

The question was now hanging in the air as Ilya turned back to Shane. Shane, who was looking a little better after a good cry gave Ilya his best attempt at a small smile. "A healthy baby girl." He said a little too quietly, Ilya had almost missed it.

Ilya looked back down at the infant. A girl. Ilya rolled that thought around in his head a little. Shane had given birth to a baby girl. Their daughter. Ilya couldn't stop the beaming smiling from growing on his face as he leaned in a little closer to her.

"*Moya dochka*" he whispered to her in Russian. He very tentatively reached a hand out towards her. He stroked a finger along her tiny face. She was so soft. So absolutely beautiful. The most perfect little thing in Ilya's eyes.

This time it was Ilya's turn to cry. Just a little. He couldn't avoid the few tears that had managed to escape his eyes. He didn't want to. Because here, in this hospital room, Ilya had fallen in love for a second time.

"I regret being so careless." Shane's words pulled Ilya out of his trance as he trained his focus once again back onto his boyfriend. "I wish I could've done more to keep her safe." Ilya could hear the tears begin to build back up in Shane's quivering voice.

Ilya couldn't believe what he was hearing. "*Moya lyubov.*" He scooped Shane back into his arms. "Don't say such a thing. You were doing as best as you could with the knowledge you had."

"I didn't have any knowledge." Shane said matter-of-factly, the fresh tears falling from his eyes. "I didn't-" he took in a shaky breath. "I even ate raw fish this morning. I drank on the occasion. If only I'd known. I should've known." Shane rubbed at his eyes. "I played hockey all throughout this fucking pregnancy. I did everything wrong. I could've hurt her! I should've-"

"Okay. Okay." Ilya stopped Shane's spiraling. He pulled Shane away from him so they could be eye to eye. "But you didn't know. And that is alright. We cannot turn back time, yes? So no more of these what-ifs, okay?"

Shane swallowed then nodded. "I just wished it could be different."

"I know. But she is healthy, you said?" Shane nodded his head again. Ilya shook his own, but the smile evident on his face told a much different story. "Then I think you did the best job. Look at how perfect she is."

Ilya got Shane to turn his own attention to their daughter. She stirred slightly in her tight swaddle but didn't yet wake. Shane had already known it wasn't going to be much longer before she did though. He was dreading it.

Shane felt a small but genuine smile build on his face. This was the first time he felt happy to be looking at the tiny newborn that laid next to him.

Ilya made a hesitant movement next to Shane and Shane knew what he was thinking. "You can pick her up." He said.

Ilya didn't need a second more to consider. He was bending down and carefully scooping her up into his arms before Shane could finish his sentence. His heart leapt in his chest as he pulled his daughter in close to him. She wasn't heavy by any means, but Ilya felt like he was holding his whole world in his arms.

"You are perfect." He told her in Russian before gently placing a tiny kiss to her forehead.
"Absolutely perfect."

It was like time stopped for Ilya as he was transfixed on this tiny baby girl. He was so focused on her as he tried to take in every little feature.

There wasn't much of anything very discernible on her yet that would clue Ilya in to what she may grow up looking like, so he used his imagination. As he tried to think about it, only one image came to his head: a little girl with a mess of curls and the most gorgeous freckles peppered across her cheeks. The idea made his chest tighten full of love. Ilya smiled a soft crooked smile.

"And you?" Shane asked Ilya suddenly, pulling the other man back to reality. Ilya looked back at Shane as he continued. "This is all so sudden for you too. Will you be okay?"

"I will be okay." Ilya said as truthfully as possible as he cradled their daughter closer to his chest.

His real truth was that he was terrified. Out of all the circumstances he had made up in his head earlier today about Shane's health, having a baby never crossed his mind. It was far from the ideal time for the two of them to start a family. Ilya had no idea what he was doing. He thought about kids. Thought about them all the time. He wanted them for certain. He wanted to be the dad he needed in his youth.

Ilya was scared to think about that. What if he was no better than his own father was? What if he failed this little girl? Ilya would never forgive himself for that.

So no, Ilya wasn't okay. Not really. Not at that moment. But he was going to be just fine. For Shane. For their baby girl. For his new family.

He wasn't going to let Shane down at that moment. Ilya fought back his own fears and concerns to focus on the right now. Right now he was ecstatic. Seeing his boyfriend safe, meeting his surprise daughter for the first time. All that was still worth something to Ilya. This happiness is all he wanted to think about at this moment in time. It's all that mattered to him.

Ilya felt the newborn squirm a little in his arms. She made a tiny noise and he could see an instant reaction from Shane out of the corner of his eye. Suddenly the quiet of the room was filled with the fussing of their daughter stirring awake for the first time since Ilya's been here.

Ilya felt his heart sink to his stomach at the sound. He knew this was normal, or he thought it was normal. But that knowledge didn't help. He was nervous too. He looked over to Shane, not knowing what to do.

Shane had a similar look of panic on his face which made Ilya feel a little guilty. He wanted to help right now, but how?

Shane let Ilya hand their daughter over to him. "I think it's time for another feeding." He told Ilya absently.

As if on cue, a nurse walks in. Ilya unconsciously moved himself from the bed and awkwardly hovered himself to the side.

"Ah, perfect timing. Do you want to try and see if she latches on this time?" The nurse didn't seem to acknowledge or care that Ilya was there. She was focused entirely on Shane and the baby.

"Uh, yeah... yeah. We can give it a go."

Ilya stood awkwardly in the room for a moment as he watched the nurse help Shane maneuver their daughter to try and breastfeed. He had no idea what he could even be doing to help. He wanted to so badly, but he was worried about raising too many alarm bells. It shouldn't have mattered too much. This nurse was sworn to secrecy - thank you HIPPA - and it was painfully obvious why Ilya would be hanging around so closely to a person who had just given birth. It wouldn't take a rocket scientist to figure them out.

Still, Ilya felt so useless in that room. Ilya excused himself to the hall as the nurse pattered around the room to check up on all of Shane's vitals. "I promised to call your parents when I got here." He had told him. It wasn't a lie at all, but he was mostly trying to find something to keep himself occupied right now.

Ilya slipped out of the room as he pulled up Yuna's contact and pressed the call button.

Ilya had lingered out in the hall for a little while longer after getting off the phone with Yuna and David. He tried his best to withhold information without worrying the two of them more. He wanted to share the good news with them, to shout it from the rooftops, He and Shane were parents to the most precious little girl in the whole world. However, he had no idea how much Shane wanted them to know right now, so he gave them the basics.

Shane was okay. They're keeping him an extra night for monitoring. He's probably going to be sore for a little while. He's out for the playoffs again this year, but he should recover just fine.

The nurse was long gone by the time Ilya returned to Shane. Their little girl was back in her bassinet and Shane had that distant look back on his face from when Ilya had first arrived.

Ilya crawled back into the tiny hospital bed and wrapped himself back around Shane.

"Your parents should be coming in tomorrow morning." He told Shane.

"Shit." Shane breathed out. "They're going to freak out."

“Maybe...” Ilya started rubbing soothing circles against Shane's side as he thought about their reactions for a second. “But I think they will be excited that they are grandparents now.”

Ilya felt Shane tense in his arms. Shane was silent for a long moment. Anxiety began bubbling its way up into Ilya's chest and he stopped his mindless circles. He held Shane a little tighter as he waited for what Shane was about to say next. Ilya was dreading what he might be thinking.

Each beat of silence felt like a whole eternity as he waited on Shane. Ilya was trying to form words himself just in case. Finally, Ilya felt Shane try to wriggle himself out of Ilya's grasp. Ilya loosened his grip on his boyfriend so they could look at one another.

“Ilya,”

Ilya felt his heart pounding out of control in his chest and his stomach tighten as he emotionally prepared himself for what he knew Shane was about to tell him. He should've been ready for it the moment he saw that little girl, but Ilya had some hope. Hope that maybe, just maybe Shane was ready for this too.

“I don't think I can do this.”

Ilya's heart instantly shattered as the words escaped Shane's mouth. There it was, the thing that Ilya had dreaded the most.

“It's-” Shane went on, “I mean, it's not right. We still have our careers and... and this is all too sudden for- fuck! I'm not prepared to be a dad! I can't ask you to pause your life either. This is unfair to both of us.”

He knew it was almost wishful thinking to believe that Shane was just as thrilled about their daughter as he was. In fact, Ilya knew he was only being delusional. It was written all over Shane. It didn't stop the pain he was feeling inside him though.

Ilya wanted this an insane amount. He may not have known her for very long, but Ilya was certain he wanted that little girl more than he wanted most anything else. He was already thinking up ways to make this all work. She may not have been part of their plan. She was far from their script, but Ilya was willing to put in the work to fit her into their private little world. He was hoping Shane would be just as willing to work through this as he was.

It didn't matter what Ilya wanted, though. It wasn't going to matter and he wasn't going to let Shane know how absolutely devastated he was over this. How much it hurt Ilya over the possibility that he wasn't going to ever see their baby girl again after they left this hospital. His stomach twisted in a knot as he tried to swallow down all his heartache.

This was ultimately going to be Shane's decision, and if Shane wasn't ready to be a father yet, then Ilya was going to have to be okay with waiting until he was.

I feel like if I had a lot more time with this fic I would want to explore Ilya's fears more. He's got a lot of family trauma that I know I'm not gonna have time to get to based on my tentative plans. I'm trying to be more Shane focused, even if the pov isn't on Shane.

I've considered some fun spin-offs and alternate pov stuff for this fic that I may do eventually as a part of a little series. Idk 🙄 I gotta finish this one first.

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

I'm gonna be honest. I hate this chapter.

I had most of it written up and decided I didn't like it. I stepped back from it for a couple days then came back and still didn't like it. I took it apart and rewrote a good chunk of it. I only hated it a little less. I took another few days away from writing it and when I came back I just decided to keep it short and move on.

I present to you... whatever this is.

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

Shane couldn't sleep that night.

It could've been because he was lying in the most uncomfortable hospital bed. It could've been because his boyfriend was awkwardly lying right up against him in the same tiny bed. It could've been because of the nurse who had kept coming in every hour to check on him. It could've been because of the aching in his body that had lingered so shortly after giving birth. It could've been because a little infant laid next to his bed. It could've been because that infant relied so heavily on Shane in these moments that she too kept disturbing his attempts at sleep every few hours.

It could've been all those things. But what really kept Shane awake were the racing thoughts running through his head. The day hadn't lent itself any time for Shane to really reflect on what had happened to him. He had only just barely gotten over the initial shock of giving birth when Ilya finally arrived at the hospital and took him in his arms. He couldn't have been more thankful for his boyfriend at that moment.

There was a sort of nothingness in Shane after the birth. There were no thoughts, no feelings, only a pit in his stomach and radio silence in his head. The world around him continued to move while he laid in the bed feeling catatonic. He was so empty inside. Shane had to let go of himself and block it all out.

He hadn't known how much time had actually passed by the time Ilya had arrived. He didn't remember it. But Ilya was too good at reading Shane and Shane needed Ilya so desperately that their first contact completely broke Shane out of the hole he was spiraling down and brought him back to earth.

And now Shane needed to actually take his time to consider what his current reality looked like.

He had a baby. That was... well... It was. There was really no undoing that fact. The baby will continue to exist. Shane was still so frightened to look at her too long. He tried not to hold her more than he had to, choosing to keep her primarily in her bassinet and at an arms length away from him. It didn't feel right.

He had the option to let her stay in the nursery, and as much as Shane struggled with having her by his side, he also didn't want her too far away either. His mind battled over these conflicting feelings. He wanted nothing to do with that little girl, but oh... If he did let his eyes linger over to her a little too long his chest would tighten. It was a similar sensation from when he first started denying that he could have feelings for Ilya (and look where that got him.)

Shane hated the fact that he didn't hate this baby. That's what hurt the most. He saw himself as a father one day. Shane enjoyed children and he knew Ilya enjoyed children as well. Sometimes when Shane saw his future he imagined a couple kids alongside himself and Ilya. This should've been a dream come true. But for her to show up so suddenly and unexpectedly... It wasn't the right time.

He knew Ilya was excited for all of this. That also upset Shane a little. Ilya was so goddamn ecstatic and Shane couldn't bear the idea of crushing Ilya's dreams. Ilya wanted to be a father so intensely that he was so ready to accept that baby almost instantly.

Shane felt so selfish as he struggled to watch Ilya with that baby knowing that there was no way they could keep her. They simply didn't have the time or ability to raise a child in their current lives. Ilya should know that just as well as Shane did. He had thought he made up his mind after it all sank in. They could have a baby someday, but today wasn't that day.

Shane wanted Ilya to feel the same way. He needed Ilya on the same page. Maybe the two of them could have her discreetly adopted by a loving couple that would have the time for her? They could close this chapter of their lives and continue on as normal. The two of them would try again later on down the line, perhaps after their retirement and—

There was no way the two of them could go on pretending like this small moment in their lives didn't happen. What other choice did they have, though?

Ilya would understand. It's what's best for all three of them, after all.

A part of Shane would be a little broken-hearted at giving up this opportunity. However, he really didn't want to believe that to be true. Shane can't get attached. Nope! He had to shut out his thoughts again. They were too scary, too much, too real.

Instead Shane focused his attention onto Ilya asleep against his side. He couldn't believe how well his boyfriend slept in the hospital bed like this. He was even still wearing his post-game suit. It was all crumpled up now but it surely wasn't all that comfortable. What a silly little sight to see. It made Shane smile a little.

Ilya could have gone home to change and get some rest. Shane had even asked him if he wanted to. Ilya was adamant that he stayed by Shane's side though. Shane was grateful for that right now.

Shane leaned in and pressed a kiss to Ilya's forehead. Ilya stirred awake a little. He looked back at Shane with groggy eyes as a crooked smile crept across his face. Ilya pulled Shane in impossibly closer to him on the tiny bed. Shane kissed Ilya again, this time on the lips. It was sweet, it was soft, it was familiar.

"Ya teb-ya lyu-blyu." Shane tried his hardest to say it in Russian. He knew his pronunciation was way off, but Ilya wasn't going to care.

Ilya giggled that adoring little giggle whenever he was admiring how cute Shane was. He appreciated every attempt Shane made at speaking and understanding his language. "*Ya tebya lyublyu.*" He leaned back in for another kiss. Ilya carefully maneuvered a hand up to stroke Shane's face as Shane leaned further into Ilya's lips.

Shane needed this. He needed Ilya's lips on him, needed Ilya by his side, needed this fuzzy feeling he felt right now. It was the most normal Shane had felt all day. They had to be careful though. As Shane moved feverishly into Ilya he was also becoming way too aware of just how not normal he was.

Shane still ached, he was going to be sore for some time after giving birth. He couldn't allow himself to think about sex, no matter how badly he wanted Ilya. That was going to be a no-go so he could let his body recover. Shane had to fight down all of his thoughts about Ilya so he wouldn't get hard in the hospital bed.

It wasn't too difficult to fight his urges this time around as he let that reminder of where they were sink in. The sound of the newborn stirring awake next to them was also quite helpful in washing away those desires.

Shane pulled away from Ilya's lips. The two of them looked over at the crying infant in her bassinet. Shane sighed and maneuvered himself to try and get out of the bed. Ilya rested a hand on his shoulder to stop him.

"No, don't worry. I'll get it." Shane relaxed while Ilya pulled himself out of the bed instead.

He kept his eyes on Ilya as he approached the bassinet and lifted the baby girl up into his arms. Ilya cradled the infant so effortlessly. Ilya lightly bounced and shushed the baby to try and calm her down. It made Shane's heart skip a beat and his stomach filled with butterflies.

Ilya was so good with kids. Shane admired that. He would make such a good father. Someday... and suddenly that warm feeling in Shane's chest was gone.

He quickly looked away and up at the ceiling. Watching the way Ilya cared for the baby made Shane consider the possibility that he and Ilya could keep her. They couldn't. Someday – Shane reminded himself – is not the same as today.

"I should probably take her." Shane said after a moment. The infant's tears were not easing up, and he knew she was well due for another feed.

"No, is okay. I got her. You rest." Ilya said in response.

“But it's time for her to eat again.”

“You don't have to... What is it?” Ilya tried to rack his still groggy mind. “Feed her from chest.”

“Breastfeed?”

“Yes. Take care of yourself first.” Ilya picked up the call system next to Shane's bed. “I'll call nurse and have her bring in bottle. You will relax now.”

Shane felt a little sense of relief wash over him over his boyfriend's sentiments. He really disliked breastfeeding this baby. He hated the sensation, the awkward pain when she latched on, the whole damn experience. It put her too close to him as well. It was impossible to keep his distance when she literally had her mouth on his nipple.

Ilya made his way across the room to the armchair in the corner. He laid the baby on his chest and began rubbing soothing circles into her back while he waited for the nurse to come in.

Shane turned himself away from his boyfriend and the baby. He closed his eyes and pretended to fall asleep.

This was going to be one long night.

Ilya had decided to leave early the next morning to prepare himself to pick up Shane's parents.

“Do you want me to get anything for you while I am gone?” Ilya asked Shane while he tried to smooth down a few wrinkles in his suit.

“Some pants.” Replied Shane. “I've not enjoyed having my butt exposed this whole time.”

Ilya smirked before leaning down and kissing Shane real quick. His lips trailed across Shane's neck and up to his ear. “Such a shame. I always enjoy the view.” He whispered to Shane.

That sent a shiver down Shane's spine. If he wasn't so laid up and sore he would still be so hot for his boyfriend. This was the one time he really couldn't be. “Fuck off.” Shane breathed back.

Ilya hummed and placed one more kiss onto Shane's lips before leaving.

Once Shane was alone again the empty feeling in him had returned. He laid back in the bed and stared absently at the ceiling.

How were his parents going to react to this? Ilya was optimistic they were going to be so good with the news. He reminded Shane how fast they took a liking to him. Shane knew that once the initial shock wore off, that they would be just fine too. But, that still didn't stop the anxiety bubbling in his stomach that they weren't going to take this news well.

He really needed Ilya again. Ilya made him feel okay. Ilya made him feel almost normal.

But Ilya wasn't by his side anymore. Ilya had left Shane alone while he was feeling so useless, and stupid, and miserable. Here he was stuck in a hospital bed feeling sorry for himself because his boyfriend had to run a few errands. Pathetic!

He looked around for a distraction and found his phone that had long been forgotten on his table. Somewhere through all of the chaos of yesterday one of the medics had managed to grab his phone for him. It'd been left untouched. Shane had been intentionally avoiding it.

No doubt there were a bunch of news articles already written up speculating what had happened to him that he didn't want to read. Montreal would be waiting to draft up a statement. The entire hockey world was left in suspense.

There were also definitely about a million texts from Hayden and almost just as many phone calls from JJ checking in on him. Shane knew his best friends were worried for him, and if it wasn't because of the flight Montreal had to catch, they would probably also be here right now.

Shane didn't want them here right now. He didn't want them knowing. Hayden and JJ would only need to find out if Shane decided to keep the baby he was determined to be rid of.

But he needed the comfort of somebody else right now. He picked it up and actively avoided the pile of notifications waiting for him. Shane opened up Rose's contact and pressed the call button.

Rose was quick with the pickup. "Hey."

"I just had a baby." Shane blurted out to her. It was the first time he was able to say those words. Rose was the first person in Shane's life he was able to come out to, it only made sense that she was also the first person he could talk to about this. And it felt a little good being able to tell someone else.

There was a moment of silence on the other end. Shane felt his nerves twist in his gut as he waited for Rose to say anything else. Each second was agonizing. It only took a few seconds to get a reply, but it might as well have been a whole eternity to Shane.

"Is that what happened at the game last night?" She asked, and then with more urgency. "Shane! Did you play hockey while you were pregnant?"

"I had no idea." Shane felt a few tears starting to prickle at his eyes. He rubbed them away with more force than was necessary. "I wouldn't have let any of this happen had I known."

"Are you alright?"

Shane had been able to process this whole experience a little more since Ilya had shown up for him. He was still far from okay and he knew that. It was going to take a long time for him to feel okay again. He couldn't deny that anymore, but he wasn't quite sure how to answer that question still.

“I—” he glanced over at the bassinet for a split second but quickly snapped his eyes away. Nope, he can't look at her. “I don't know.” He said a little more truthfully than when Ilya had asked him last night.

“Shit.” She breathed. “Does Ilya know? Is he with you right now?”

“He just left, actually. He's picking up my parents right now.” Shane felt some tears run down his cheeks, but he smiled. “Ilya has been wonderful about the whole thing.”

“That's good! You deserve to have someone so supportive in your corner right now.” Shane loved Rose's earnestness. It's what made Shane believe that he was falling for her at one point. She had a genuine personality that always brought Shane some comfort. “Ilya is going to take such good care of you while you recover.”

He sat on the phone with Rose for a little while longer. She was a good distraction and she didn't press Shane for any details that he really didn't feel like talking about at this moment. Rose always seemed to understand exactly what topics to avoid with Shane and what he needed from her at any moment.

She didn't bother him too much with questions about what happened and switched gears into talking about the new movie she was filming – what she could legally share with him, at least.

“It's this really terrible period drama. I don't think anyone on this writing team did any historical research.” That got a laugh out of Shane. It was warm and genuine. Rose made Shane feel a little bit better.

It didn't last. Of course the second they got off the phone with each other the nothingness would reappear once again. It was an endless cycle for Shane.

When Shane hung up the phone his eyes found their fixed distant stare looking at nothing in particular. Then the baby started crying. Shane started crying again too.

Chapter End Notes

You might've noticed I have a planned end in sight now!

I can safely say this fic is gonna be an easy 5 chapters. 4 + an Epilogue to be exact

We're officially over halfway there! Thank you so much for sticking with me so far.

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

Hi!

Sorry I didn't upload last week 😊 I was away and didn't really have the time to get my final draft for this chapter ready for posting.

But now that I'm back home and could lock back in, I knew I was on track to get it out this week.

Enjoy!!!

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

Yuna and David weren't flying in until a little later that morning. Ilya took himself home real quick to eat, shower, change into something more comfortable, and pick out a pair of sweatpants from the drawer reserved for Shane's small collection of clothes he kept here.

He really had no idea what he was allowed to even tell them. Ilya was sure there were still a number of questions on their mind, but he really needed to leave these answers up to Shane. He was hoping he could keep them distracted just long enough to get to the hospital.

Ilya waited in his car at the pick up line. He wore his sunglasses and a cap and kept his face low. He was determined to make sure no one saw Ilya Rozanov picking up the parents of Shane Hollander at the airport. He needed the two of them to hurry up so he could speed right out of there.

Ilya could suddenly see Yuna approaching from his rearview mirror. She was jogging towards his car in a frenzy. David was not too far behind her walking a little more carefully. Both of them looked like they hadn't slept all night. Ilya could understand why.

He popped his trunk for them to throw their light carry on bags in when they approached the car. Yuna slipped into the passenger seat which left David squeezed into the small backseat.

"How is he?" Yuna asked frantically before Ilya could even put the car into drive to get themselves out of the airport.

"He is fine." Is the best answer Ilya could give her.

"Do the doctors know what had happened?" David leaned in close so he could chime into the conversation.

Ilya tried not to hesitate. "Let's wait until we get to hospital. Probably Shane should tell you."

Yuna turned herself away from Ilya and stared out the window. He could tell from the reflection that she had started to cry again. David kept himself composed and tried to extract more from Ilya.

“You know we're both really worried for Shane. We don't want to be in the dark like this. Can't you give us something, Ilya?”

“I want to.” Ilya said honestly. “But is not my story to tell... Not really.” He really couldn't imagine Shane would like him sharing this news without him there, especially considering how difficult it had been on him. “It is okay, though. I think so.”

“It's nothing...” David paused to try and find the right words, “life-threatening?”

Ilya didn't even try to repress the smile that had grown on his face. It was small and earnest, but it also was trying to hide a laugh. Yuna caught it too and smiled a little through the reflection as well. That was enough reassurance for her.

Still, Ilya gave David a reply. “Maybe the opposite?”

David's brows knit together as he leaned back in his seat in thought. There were a few beats of silence as Ilya's words hung in the air for consideration. “I'm confused.” David finally admitted.

Ilya's smile grew a little more.

The rest of the drive back to the hospital was pretty quiet after that. The only sound filling the space was the radio humming some popular billboard-charting songs at a low volume. All three people in the car were antsy to get to the hospital, not really caring what noise filled the air around them, just wanting something as a distraction.

Ilya helped guide Yuna and David through the corridors back to Shane's room. Once they were approaching Shane's room the pieces of the puzzle clicked for Yuna instantly. She noted her surroundings in a way that Ilya was too frantic to clue in on last night.

“Is this the maternity ward?” Yuna asked Ilya who was biting down a smirk. She knew. In a comedic timing the rock-a-bye-baby jingle that played after another delivery started chiming through the ward. If the situation wasn't so tense, Ilya probably would've laughed. Instead, he suppressed himself and pushed open Shane's door.

Shane had that same glazed thousand yard stare plastered back on his face like every time Ilya had entered the room or taken his attention away too long. It didn't become less painful to see. His eyes had a red puffiness to them that suggested he had just been crying as well.

When Yuna caught sight of her son she ran right towards him. She dropped herself into his bed and pulled Shane into a hug. Shane buried his face into her shoulder and wrapped himself around his mom.

“Oh Shane...” her words sounded wet, clearly she was crying again. Yuna pressed a kiss to the top of his head. “I'm here for you now.”

David lingered at the doorway a little bit longer. His eyes were fixed on his son and wife for a moment. He watched over his family protectively, but let Yuna take the reins of supporting their son.

He would be ready to step in if he felt Shane needed it, but right now David felt secure enough to turn his attention suddenly to Ilya and the other presence in the room. He let himself cross the room over to stand by Ilya at the bassinet.

Ilya studied David's features as the man caught a glimpse of the little baby girl for the first time. His expression was a mix bag of shock and awe as he was beginning to register what this all meant for himself. His face finally settled on a look of pure adoration.

"I think I understand what you meant now." David choked out, referring back to their earlier conversation in the car. His eyes started glistening as fresh tears fought to spill out.

"Would you like to hold your granddaughter?" Ilya asked David, already leaning down into the bassinet to lift her up.

David looked down at the baby cradled in Ilya's arms, then to Ilya, then he turned to look over at Shane and Yuna still in their embrace.

Yuna was looking back at them now watching David and Ilya with some interest. Ilya could assume that the two of them were having their own silent conversation, probably trying to decide if now was the best time to engage with the infant. Maybe they were still considering Shane? That was what they flew down here for, and it wasn't like Shane was in the best mental state right now, anyone could see that. Should David allow himself to prioritize the baby, even just for a little bit?

It appeared they had come to an agreement. David turned himself back to Ilya who now had the baby in his arms. He swallowed down a lump that formed in his throat and finally nodded his head.

Ilya very gently transferred his daughter to David. David held the baby girl so carefully, like he hadn't ever held a baby before. Ilya considered that it may have been a long while since he did.

Yuna and Shane had finally pulled themselves apart. Yuna was wiping the tears from her face. She finally got a good look at her granddaughter and her breath was stolen away from her. Ilya could tell she was trying to fight down a new wave of tears.

Shane had fallen back against the pillows. His expression remained forlorn, but he seemed a little calmer now. His eyes no longer had that vacant stare, but he continued to avoid eye contact with anyone in the room.

The other three adults in the room all had their attention set on the newborn in David's arms.

"This is quite the surprise." Yuna chuckled a little. It was one that was awkward. It held an uncertainty to it, like she wasn't quite sure what exactly her reaction should've been.

“She is not even day old yet and already causing trouble.” Ilya had told her.

He was trying to lighten the mood in the room. He wanted to enjoy this, even just for a little bit. There needed to be some kind of positivity filling out over them. He wanted it to reach Shane; needed it to touch him just a little bit. If even an ounce of this sort of joy could reach his boyfriend, maybe things would be a little bit better.

The opposite effect happens instead. Shane turned away from the rest of his family and curled up on himself. The tension rises in the room again, stronger than it ever was before. Everyone's attention was now on him.

“Shane?”

Ilya was around by Shane's side of the bed in an instant. He laid a hand on Shane's bicep and started stroking it soothingly.

“Shane, honey?” Yuna was still on the bed. She let Ilya do the comforting, but hovered herself just a little. She was prepared to leap back into holding her son had he needed “Are you alright?”

Shane only hummed in response and buried his face more. Ilya crouched down to be at Shane's current eye level. Or, it would be had Ilya been able to see Shane's eyes. “Are you having panic attack?” He asked gently.

“M'fine.” Shane eventually mumbled out, still keeping his face hidden from the world.

Ilya moved his other hand up and tucked it under Shane's face. He lifted Shane's head up and got his boyfriend to look at him. Shane's eyes were glossed over with a fresh wave of tears. Ilya's heart shattered staring at him.

No matter how much Ilya knew Shane was suffering right now, it never stopped hurting him to see his boyfriend so broken up. He couldn't figure out how to help him. Not this time.

They stare into each other's eyes. Ilya tried to read Shane's thoughts. He tried to understand what could be going on. Which moment had elicited that reaction?

“It's all so much.” Shane finally admitted, answering Ilya's silent questions.

Shane's eyes pointedly turned their attention to the little baby in David's arms. There was a pain in them Ilya could see. It was both suffering and longing. Ilya saw that look every time Shane caught a glimpse of their daughter. So many emotions were running through Shane right now, and Ilya could only understand it on a surface level.

He knew deep down that Shane cared for the baby. But Ilya also knew that Shane was fighting himself on that. Ilya wished he could take that pain away from Shane. He wished he could let Shane enjoy this. It must've been so hard.

David seemed to understand what Shane's gaze was trying to say. He decided to put his granddaughter back down in her bassinet. The infant did not like the sudden loss of warmth

of being in someone's arms and she began to stir herself awake. Very quickly the quiet of the room was filled with the loud wails of the newborn girl.

Shane's whole body freezes. He threw his head back down onto the bed and covered his face with the blanket. He whined. "Shut up. Shut up. Shut up." He kept repeating it. "Shutupshutupshutup."

Ilya had to keep himself composed. No matter how much it was killing him to see Shane so scared and desperate and pleading, Ilya was going to remain strong. He kept one hand firmly on Shane as a reminder to his boyfriend that he was always going to be there to support him. Always. Even in this fragile state, Ilya will remain.

But their daughter's crying also had Ilya torn. He wanted to pick her up and hold her and shush her and bounce her to calm her down. He remained next to Shane, but his eyes were staring at his little girl through the bassinet.

Ilya missed the birth. He had no clue what could've happened to Shane in those moments. He couldn't imagine how genuinely terrified Shane must've been and now he was forced to be stuck with the living end results of something that must've been quite traumatizing for him.

No, Ilya couldn't fully grasp the range of emotions Shane was feeling, but he tried to understand the conflict. Shane was scared of a baby that he also desperately wanted to love.

Yuna hastily called for the nurse. It didn't take long for a response. The nurse came running in quickly. She seemed a little alarmed by the scene before her, but she didn't say anything. She shook it off and put her face back into a neutral, professional position.

"How can I help you?"

Yuna stood from the bed and guided the nurse towards the bassinet with the screaming infant. "I don't suppose you can take her away for a little while? I think Shane needs some time to recover."

The nurse kept her face steady as she glanced over to the body hidden in the bed. Any emotion she may have been feeling was locked away.

She made one quick nod and began unlocking the bassinet. "We can absolutely take care of Baby Hollander for a little while. We understand that sometimes new parents need a little space." Her eyes burned into Shane's figure. "Is there anything else you may need?"

Yuna hummed, but didn't say anything more. No one dared to open their mouth. The silence in the room felt heavy, the nurse could feel it just as well. Deciding that the uncomfortable silence was answer enough, she began rolling the bassinet out of the room. She left with a final "Just let someone from the nurses station know when you're ready."

Ilya tried his best to avoid the empty feeling in his heart as the sight and sound of his daughter faded away down the hallway. He needed to focus back on Shane now.

Shane took an extra second before finally un hiding himself. He sat upright in bed, but continued to avoid looking at his family. He kept his eyes down, finding his lap to be the most interesting thing in the room right now.

They all let Shane have his moment to recover. The new silence in the room stretched around them. It was uncomfortable and had a twinge of loneliness now that the baby was gone. But Ilya, David, and Yuna waited. They would continue to wait for Shane for however long Shane needed to calm himself down.

The silence carried on for several minutes before Shane finally chose to make eye contact. His eyes desperately found Ilya's and they were filled with unshed tears. There was still sadness there, but he had finally found his way back to reality. The distance was gone.

Ilya gave him a small, reassuring smile. He reached down for Shane's hand and laced their fingers together. Ilya squeezed Shane's hand as a way to silently check in on him. Shane squeezed back, a response that confirmed to Ilya that he was doing a little bit better now.

Yuna broke the silence. She stroked a finger along Shane's cheek. Her eyes were full of concern and love for her son as she asked him: "How are you feeling?"

Shane had been asked a variant of that same question over and over again across the last 24 hours. He either only knew to lie or not be able to give a response each time. How was he really feeling?

"I don't know." And suddenly it all clicked into place. He was feeling so many different things. He was all over the place. How was he supposed to answer that question when no one word told the whole truth? "A lot. There's so much to process still."

"You've got a lot on your mind, I'm sure." Said David. "We care about you a lot, Shane. You shouldn't have to go through all of this alone, you know."

Shane nodded. He did know. But he couldn't drag everyone else down with him. This was a lot to shoulder and he shouldn't put this weight on the ones he loved.

"Have you two considered what your next plans are?" Yuna asked carefully. Making plans was her love language. Shane took after her in so many ways. He appreciated the sentiment and now was probably the best time to have this discussion.

"I think..." Shane took a deep breath to steady his voice. "I think we're going to put her up for adoption."

Yuna gave Shane a look. Her face is left with a neutral expression, intense, unreadable, almost full managerial. She tightens her jaw, nods once, moves to glance up at Ilya, then she realizes something. "And is that what you both want?"

Her eyes are locked onto Ilya. He's staring back at her just as intensely.

Shane wasn't quite sure exactly if the question was directed at him, but he answered anyway. "Sure. Of course. Ilya knows—"

“Is it what Ilya wants?” Yuna rephrases her question slightly, eyes piercing into Ilya.

Ilya felt like she was burning right into his soul. It broke down Ilya's walls. He swallowed hard and cleared his throat. “No.” he answered truthfully. “I want to keep my daughter.”

The words that tumbled out of Ilya's mouth had shocked him just as much as he could tell it surprised Shane. He hadn't meant to admit the truth, he was planning on just letting Shane have this. It's what Shane said he wanted from the start, after all. But something about the way Yuna's eyes seared into him made it impossible for Ilya to hold back his truth now.

“What?” Shane was shocked to hear Ilya tell him that. Sure, he knew his boyfriend cared for the baby, but he should've also been rational enough to know this wasn't a good idea. “Ilya this is not a part of our plan. We—”

“Fuck the plan!” Ilya didn't mean to raise his voice so suddenly. He saw Shane flinch a little. He even scared himself, but if he was laying out how he really felt right now, then Ilya supposed he might as well admit it all.

Except the second it escaped his mouth, Ilya immediately regretted those words. The plan is what kept them safe. It made things possible for the two of them to be a couple and still have their careers, their lives, everything they've been working for. The baby was a hiccup in that plan.

Ilya took a step back from Shane and turned away a little bit. “I'm sorry.” Ilya apologized softly. He was. His emotions had taken over and he lashed out on his boyfriend who was already having a hard enough time as it is. Ilya took a deep, shaky breath and tried again. “Shane... I want...” He swallowed, unable to finish his sentence.

David and Yuna turned to each other. They had another silent conversation between themselves before glancing back over at Shane and Ilya. Then David spoke up. “I think your mom and I are gonna step out and leave you boys to discuss this amongst yourselves.”

Yuna leaned down and squeezed Shane's shoulder. She forced a smile to both him and Ilya. Then they disappeared out to the hallway.

Shane and Ilya were now alone. Usually Shane enjoyed these moments, but right now the tension in the room was sharp and unnerving.

Shane felt a little piece of his stability crumble just a little. He didn't really understand where Ilya was coming from with this – or he did. He did understand exactly how Ilya landed here and he had completely ignored it. In the same way he pressed down all the positive thoughts and feelings he had for this baby, he also chose to ignore Ilya's feelings. Shane should've seen this coming, he knew Ilya cared for the newborn, but he was so caught up in his own feelings he didn't allow Ilya to express his own.

Yes, this was difficult for Shane in so many ways, but Ilya was also a player involved in all of this. He wanted Ilya to just blindly agree with all these decisions, but that shouldn't really be how it goes. This was a decision that they needed to really talk about together.

Shane carefully pulled himself out of bed. He approached Ilya and rested a hand on his shoulder. Ilya stole a glance back at him. There was something in his expression. It wasn't quite anger and it wasn't quite sadness either. It disheartened Shane to see Ilya so upset about this.

Ilya's expression softened just a little. He moved himself to engulf Shane into a hug. Shane held Ilya back. He rested his head against the crook of Ilya's neck and took in his comforting scent.

They've been through so much over their years. So many times they've had their relationship tested, but the two of them always made it out on the other side. They were built for every obstacle life could throw at them. Shane knew that.

They just needed to communicate.

"I should apologize too." Said Shane.

"No, you don't have to." Ilya told him.

"Yes, I think I do." Shane pulled himself away so they could look at each other. "I've been irrational. We should've discussed this together." He felt a few hot tears drip down his cheek. Shane was a little bit afraid of what he needed to say next, but he was going to get it out. He was finally ready for that honesty with himself. "She's your daughter too."

So far Shane had refused to acknowledge that baby as really his. He took the time to process that he had given birth, but not that she was his daughter. It was an idea he had avoided altogether. Because acknowledging that she was his daughter meant letting him get attached. Shane didn't want to get attached.

Except yes he did. Despite all of his emotions and repression and fears and desire to avoid this whole reality, he wanted to love his newborn daughter.

He was still very afraid. Shane was spiraling down a deep, dark pit on the inside. There was going to be a long road ahead of him as he tries to cope with this trauma, but he shouldn't continue to give his daughter that grief. He had ignored all the signs that told him she was there along the way over the last (approximately) nine months. It wasn't her fault.

Shane was ready to make peace with her. Even though acknowledging her was going to be painful, he needed to do it. Shane Hollander has a daughter.

But there was still the question of what they could actually do with her. Having her adopted would be the most stable option, but it was an option that Ilya had now presented he didn't want to do. And Shane knew in his heart that over time he would probably regret that decision too.

"I know it is very hard for you right now." Ilya had spoken up.

Hearing his boyfriend's voice startled Shane out of his thoughts. He hadn't realized that he was even in his head, or knew how long he was in there for. But now he had to respond.

“Ilya, I'm fucking terrified.” Shane admitted. “And I don't know how long it'll be until I feel fine again.”

“Is okay.” Ilya nodded. He braced both of his hands onto Shane's shoulders. “You can take all the time you need, okay?”

Shane smiled. It was small and soft and genuine. It was the most a smile had felt real on him since yesterday. “Okay.” He croaked out as the tears started to take over.

“Okay.” Ilya gave Shane one of his beautiful lopsided smiles back. “I won't force you to be involved if you don't want to. You can jump in whenever you are ready. But I want to do this.”

“Ilya, I don't want you to give up your life to raise our baby by yourself.”

“What am I giving up?” Ilya looked surprised. “I can make it work. We always make it work.” One of his hands came up to brush a few tears from Shane's cheeks. Shane leaned into the touch. “And I won't be alone. Not for very long. When I am moved to Ottawa I will have your parents there. They will want to help, I know they will. And you can be there too, when you want to be. When you are ready. It will be okay.”

Shane hadn't fully considered his parents' part of the equation. Earlier, he wouldn't even let himself believe they would accept this reality, but now that they've been opened up into it he should've realized just how perfectly they fit into the puzzle. Ilya was right, they would be more than willing to support them as they navigated this new chapter in their lives. They would be the best grandparents.

Shane took Ilya's hand from his face into his own and held it tight. “I am going to need a little bit of time. But I think maybe you're right. I think we can do this.”

There was a strange sort of relief that washed over Shane. He felt lighter. His worries weren't exactly gone, there was a long bumpy road they still had to navigate. Bumpy roads were always a part of the thrill in their relationship, however. If any two people could figure out how to navigate this it would be them. They really were going to be just fine.

Shane pulled himself in closer to Ilya again. Ilya met him in the middle, their lips locking in a tender kiss.

When they pulled away Ilya smirked. “Is now a good time to give you the sweatpants I brought for you?”

Shane fell back into Ilya's arms as laughter erupted from him. The type of laugh that he could feel in his chest, caused his stomach to ache, and tears to pool at his eyes. It wasn't that funny, but Shane needed that lightheartedness from his boyfriend right now. It made him feel the tiniest bit better.

After that, the two sat alone in Shane's hospital room for some time just talking. They had so much to discuss. They had a plan when they first got together. That plan now needed to be rearranged as they tried to figure out how to fit their new addition to it. There was going to be

a lot of work to get things back on track, but having some clue of what the future might look with a baby involved made Shane feel a little bit better about it all.

At one point Shane had let himself glance over to the empty spot where the bassinet used to sit. Shane still didn't feel alright, but he let himself feel the tight longing sensation in his chest he earlier would've ignored. Shane realized he was missing his daughter.

"Maybe we shouldn't be talking so much about her behind her back." Said Ilya, when he realized what Shane wasn't looking at.

"I think I'm ready to have her back."

Ilya was already on his way to flag down a nurse.

When the nurse returned with their daughter in tow she had a few pamphlets in hand. After locking the wheels of the bassinet she gently placed the pamphlets on Shane's side table.

"In case you need any more help." She smiled softly at Shane before leaving the new little family alone in the room.

Shane shuffled through the pile of pamphlets. Each one had some variant of "Navigating Postpartum" and "Dealing with PPD" on them. He absently skimmed through a couple. Silently he began to understand that these were to help him put a name to his emotions. The nurse was giving him a stepping stone towards his recovery.

When Shane's parents finally returned they found Shane sitting in the chair cradling his daughter in his arms. He was watching her curiously, a hint of a smile on his face.

Ilya was crouched down beside them. The infant had one of his fingers in her tiny grasp and he was using that finger to bounce her tiny fists back and forth. He was quietly singing to her something in Russian.

David cleared his throat to get their attention. They both glanced up at him and Yuna and were immediately shocked to see the two of them bearing some shopping. Yuna held a couple bags full of baby clothes and blankets in one hand, and a pack of diapers in the other. David was carrying an unboxed carseat.

"You kept yourselves a little busy." Ilya said to them.

"We wanted to make sure our granddaughter had something to go home in. We took a little uber to the closest Target to pick up a couple items." Yuna said.

"The carseat wasn't going to fit in the uber back unless I had it out and assembled." added David as he set it down on the floor to his side.

Shane chuckled a little. "Were you working on the assumption that we were going to keep the baby?"

Yuna smiled knowingly at them. “It's always good to plan ahead.” She then nodded down at the baby girl. “And I can assume we're not going to have to return these items?” She put her stuff next to the carseat.

“No. I don't think you will.” Shane answered genuinely.

Yuna and David crossed the room to hover next to the new little family at the chair. The four adults stayed like that for a moment. They all wanted to enjoy the peaceful scene of this little newborn girl. It was an acceptance they all felt together. She was a part of all their lives now. They were sure a stranger passing by could feel the love radiating all around the room. It filled the space that was once full of so much fear, tension, and uncertainty. The silence that lingered was different. It felt nice.

Eventually, a new thought came to Yuna and she broke the silence. “Have you two decided any names for her?”

Shane and Ilya both looked at each other. Huge grins spread across both their faces. Ilya nodded towards Shane to answer.

“Well, we had bounced around a few ideas to one another. We played around with Russian names, Canadian names, and we eventually landed on Ilene.”

David and Yuna both smiled a little bit themselves. Yuna could feel a sting of tears wanting to form in her eyes. David put an arm around his wife's shoulder and pulled her in closer. “I think that's a beautiful name.” Yuna nodded her agreement against David's side.

“Ilene Hollander-Rozanov.” Ilya more formally introduced their daughter to Shane's parents.

Ilya and Shane stole one more glance at each other, then they both tilted their heads back down to their little girl. Their Ilene.

They weren't sure what to expect next in this chapter of their lives. Ilya was anxious to take their daughter home with him. Shane still had some figuring out to do for himself. But – as they watched their little girl, who was currently wide awake, take in her new world – they both decided that no matter what challenges lay ahead of them it was all going to be okay.

Chapter End Notes

Team Hollander-Rozanov!

Chapter 5: Epilogue

Chapter Notes

Coming out a day later than planned, but it's finally here!

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

1 year later

“Happy birthday toooo yooooouuu.” The chorus of voices finished the final line of the song.

Ilya and Shane helped their daughter blow out her little birthday candle. They placed the cupcake they had been hovering in front of Ilene down on her tray. The 12 month old immediately went to town. Her hands slammed themselves into the frosting. She smooshed the cupcake into her own work of art more than she actually put any of it in her mouth.

“She's all dirty now.” Shane commented to Ilya from where he stood next to Ilene's highchair.

Ilya scooped up some frosting from the tray onto his finger and lifted it up to his daughter's face to try and get some of the little treat into her mouth instead of around it.

“Is her birthday, Shane. Let her get a little messy.”

Ilene took her papa's finger into her mouth and sucked off the icing. Her face lit up. When Ilya pulled his finger out, she smiled up at him with her few little teeth and giggled.

Ilene tried her best to copy her papa and scooped some more of the mess off her tray with a few of her fingers and attempted to shove it into her mouth. Most of the food had ended up everywhere but in her mouth.

“*Let's get you cleaned up.*” Ilya spoke to Ilene in Russian. He pulled her up out of her highchair.

He tried to rest Ilene on his hip, but the defiant new toddler kept trying to squirm her way out. She reached a sticky, chocolate covered hand out towards Shane. “Da!” She exclaimed.

Ilya looked over to Shane and tried to read the other man's expression. Over the last couple months of Ilene's life Shane had begun expressing more interest in taking care of their daughter. He was around more often, he helped Ilya with her wherever he could, and he had even begun managing a few nights alone with her every month. Shane had gotten better, yes, but Ilya still always checked.

Shane didn't say anything. He reached out for Ilene back. Ilya handed their daughter over with ease. She settled right up against Shane's side and nestled her face against her dad's chest. Shane wasn't going to like being covered in chocolate cake and baby slobber later, but he was going to endure it right now. Seeing his daughter so content in his arms like this warmed his heart.

"Is not fair." Ilya put on a fake pout. "She spends whole time with me but when she sees her 'da' I mean nothing to her. I'm supposed to be fun parent!"

"Looks like you lost the favorite parent award already." Shane teased back as he wiped some smeared cake off of Ilene's face with her bib.

"No, I will win her back. She just gets excited to see you come over. Once she learns how boring you are she will change her mind."

"You're an a—" Shane stopped himself quickly, "a very mean person."

Ilya opened his mouth, ready to chirp something back, but Hayden came up behind them and interrupted.

"Is this guy causing you trouble?" He made a show of leaning towards Shane when he asked the question.

"Shut it, Pike. I don't even know why you're here." Ilya retorted.

Hayden pointed in the direction towards where his wife, Jackie was sitting and laughing at something Rose had just said. In her arms she was holding the youngest Pike, Amber. Arthur was at her feet nibbling at a plate of chips. As if to solidify his point, Ruby and Jade came running past them.

"Who else do you know that has a gaggle of kids like this to play with your daughter?"

"Exactly! The kids are fine here. But why you?"

Hayden rolled his eyes, and then to Shane he said. "Just once. I would like to punch him once."

"Okay, that's enough." Shane scolded. He looked between both his best friend and his boyfriend. "There will be no fighting on Ilene's birthday." His eyes stayed locked onto Ilya. "You promised."

Ilya huffed, but he was grinning. He reached over and covered Ilene's eyes with a hand, which elicited another giggle from the 12 month old. "Yeah, Pike. It'd be a bad influence on our baby."

Hayden sighed. "I'm sure you're already a bad enough influence on her."

Ilya feigned shock. "I am wonderful papa! Best papa!" He ruffled a hand through his daughter's mess of curls. "Isn't that right, *moya solnyshko*?"

Ruby and Jade made another lap around them. Hayden turned his attention to them. He gave Shane a swift pat on the back. "I'll catch up with you later." He began jogging carefully after his twin daughters.

"Daddy!" Screamed one of the girls – Ruby, probably – when they realized they were now being chased by Hayden.

Shane shook his head at Ilya, but he had a fond smile on his face. "I gotta get us both changed." He planted a quick kiss on Ilya's cheek before disappearing with Ilene up the stairs.

Ilya lingered by the empty high chair. Yuna came up behind him with some wipes. "Need a hand cleaning up?"

Ilya thanked her and took a couple wipes from her hands. The two wiped down the chair and the tray to get it all ready for Ilene's next inevitable mess.

"He's getting better." Yuna remarked as she scooped up the remains of the smooshed up cupcake. "He's been doing a lot more with her."

She was talking about Shane. Ilya could agree with her. He enjoyed getting to watch Shane step into his role in Ilene's life. Ilya was still Ilene's primary caretaker, but Shane had slowly managed to warm up to being a dad. He was a mighty good one at that.

"Yes." Said Ilya as he brought over the trash can so Yuna could throw away the mess in her hands. "I think he probably will be a more stable role in her life soon." He smiled a little to himself. The image of the three of them being altogether as a family crossed Ilya's mind and warmed his heart.

The two of them finished cleaning up Ilene's little mess. Ilya glanced over to the stairs. Shane still hadn't returned. Yuna had moved to busy herself in rearranging the spread of food laid out on the island counters. Everyone else at the party seemed too preoccupied with their own little activities and conversation. Ilya decided it wouldn't hurt to slip away for a little while as well.

He found Shane in Ilene's nursery. He was just finishing up buttoning up the little onesie he was slipping her into. Ilya was more fond of the fact that Shane had slipped off his own shirt.

Ilya approached his boyfriend from behind and wrapped his arms around Shane's bare chest. Shane startled a little but relaxed at the familiar touch of Ilya's hands. Ilya nuzzled his face in-between the crook of Shane's neck and started placing gentle kisses to it.

"This looks good on you." He hummed, giving his chest a squeeze.

Shane took in a sharp breath of satisfaction. He threw his head back against Ilya. "Don't do this to me right now." He whispered breathlessly.

"Your fault for looking this beautiful right in front of me." Ilya teased. He trailed his mouth up and along Shane's jawline, to his chin, and finding his mouth. Ilya nipped at Shane's lower

lip. He was hungry for his man right now.

Shane let himself indulge a little. He pulled in closer to Ilya and their lips met for a brief second before Shane had to pull himself off.

“We're not going to show our daughter how she was made tonight.”

Ilya almost laughed at that statement as a smirk settled onto his face. He brought his attention to the little girl in question. Shane had a firm grasp on her as she lay on the changing table. Her eyes darted back and forth between her two parents. A large smile showing all of her 4 teeth was evident on her face. Ilya felt his heart flutter. He loved that little girl so much.

Shane wrapped his arms around Ilene and lifted her up. He spun around and transferred Ilene into Ilya's arms. “I'm gonna go get a new shirt on to shut your mind up.”

“You know I'll still find you sexy in whatever shirt you wear.”

Shane rolled his eyes. “You're incorrigible!”

“I have no idea what that word means. I don't care either. As long as I get to rip shirt off you later tonight.”

Shane grinned mischievously back at him. “I'll meet you back downstairs.”

There was an unspoken agreement between them. The best part of Ilya's evening was yet to come. He just needed to get through this little social gathering.

Ilya brought Ilene back downstairs. Rose squealed when she spotted them. “Oh my god! Let me see the baby girl! Bring her over here!”

Ilya brought Ilene towards the living room and sat her down on the floor across from where Rose sat on the couch. “Let her decide where she wants to go.” Ilya moved off to the side and crossed his arms. His eyes were glued to his daughter in observation.

Ilene sat on the rug. There were faces all around her. Most of the people in the room were tuned into her. A few, like Rose in particular, were trying to animatedly get her attention and were begging Ilene to come to them. Ilene decided that her hands were far more interesting than anybody in that room. She looked down at her left one, then shoved it in her mouth.

Ilya shook his head as he stifled a laugh. He heard the sound of Shane's footsteps coming up from behind and stopped next to him.

“What are you all doing?” Shane asked.

“We are watching our baby make decisions.” Ilya responded like it was the most obvious thing in the world.

“But why?”

Ilene's head turned up to find her dad. She pulled her hand out of her mouth, her wide grin back on full display. She got down and started crawling towards parents.

Ilya nudged Shane a little before squatting to get down to his daughter's level. "Do you want papa?"

Shane came down next to him. A cheeky grin plastered on his face. "I think she actually wants her dad."

Ilya side-eyed him, his own devilish grin on. So now it was a competition? Expected.

Ilene stopped suddenly, briefly. She hoisted herself up into a standing position and took a few shaky steps. Faces lit up around the room as she closed the gap on her feet. She fell into Shane's arms.

Shane and Ilya glanced at each other briefly. There was a spark of excitement and disbelief in both of their eyes. "Ilya, did she just take her first steps?" Shane asked all giddy. She had been cruising against the couch for a little while now, but this was the first time either one of them caught her walking unassisted, even if it was just a few little wobbly steps.

"Yes!" Ilya exclaimed in shock, a sense of pride bubbling in his chest as with every single one of her milestones he got to witness. He cheered something enthusiastically in Russian. He leaned in to smack a kiss on top of Ilene's forehead. "Oh, I am so proud! Even though you chose your boring dad over your cool papa!" Ilya squished his daughter's face to get a giggle out of her.

Shane shook his head. "Really? Our daughter just walked for the first time, and you're too focused on her choosing me over you?"

"I can be both proud and hurt."

"You're the worst."

The small party had ended in the late afternoon. Yuna and David were the last to leave. They stayed behind to help clean up a little bit and have some time to play with their grandchild.

Now that Ilene had taken her first steps, Yuna was trying to find ways to motivate her into doing more walking.

"You'll be chasing her everywhere she goes before you know it." David had leaned in towards Ilya as they watched Yuna trying to get Ilene stand up on her own.

Shane had to convince his mom to let Ilene have a break. "We can work on it with her after her nap." He glanced back at Ilya at that last word.

"Ah, it is about nap time, *da*." Ilya came over and scooped Ilene up into his arms, eliciting a loud giggle from his daughter. She didn't seem overly tired or fussy yet which was rather unusual for this time of day and all the interaction she had, but they were trying to kindly usher the two stragglers out the door. Ilya was certain a small bottle would settle her and she'll go down in no time.

The two must've gotten the hint and they finally said their goodbyes. Not before Yuna reminded them of that one parenting book she gifted Ilya shortly after his move to Ottawa.

“It has the best information for teaching her how to walk. Don't forget.”

Finally, everyone out the door. Ilene went down with only a little fight. Ilya and Shane worked together to get her ready for her nap, and now they both stood over her crib watching as her breathing evened out. It was a sure sign that she was fast asleep.

Shane's eyes sparkled as he watched his little girl sleep. Ilene was so sweet and precious and perfect. He couldn't imagine her not in his life. How only a year ago she hadn't existed to him yet.

In the end, Shane had no regrets. He was happy. He was so very in love with his little family. He was grateful for Ilya standing his ground and helping him make this decision. Ilya was an amazing father. Shane couldn't have gotten so lucky to have a partner like Ilya.

“You've done a good job.” Shane whispered to Ilya. He leaned into his boyfriend's side and rested his head on his shoulder. “Raising her, I mean.”

Ilya wrapped an arm around Shane's waist and pulled him in closer to his side. “We did a good job in raising her.”

“I can hardly take the credit. You've done most of the work so far.”

Ilya hummed. “Maybe, but when you are here I think you do the best job at taking care of her.”

He placed a kiss on top of Shane's head. A soft smile grew on Shane's lips. He lifted his head and leaned in to place a tender kiss on Ilya's mouth.

Ilya accepted the kiss, but he was hungry for more. He moved his hands to cup Shane's face and push himself in further. Shane melted into Ilya, his hands sliding up Ilya's shirt to feel his abs as they deepened the kiss. Ilya moaned into Shane's mouth. He sucked in a breath and nibbled a little at Shane's lip. Shane's grip tightened as Ilya's mouth began to move down in search of his neck.

Shane breathed out Ilya's name, his head swinging back in pleasure as Ilya began sucking and nipping at Shane's neck. “Fuck— we need to—”

Ilya pulled away from Shane. His smiling lips were red and swollen. His hands moved down to the hem of Shane's shirt. He began to tug at it. “I believe you promised me something.” Whispered Ilya before biting at Shane's earlobe.

Shane shuddered at the feeling of his boyfriend's mouth on him. He stifled a noise from erupting out of his throat as he felt his cock hardening in his pants. “Bedroom.” He demanded breathlessly.

They stumbled out of their daughter's room in a rush, unable to keep their hands off each other. Ilya was forcing Shane's shirt off of him before they could even make it to Ilya's room.

They barely make it in when Ilya gets Shane pinned up against the wall. He felt up Shane's bare torso, admiring his boyfriend's sexy body. Fuck this man couldn't have been more fine! Ilya pressed his body against Shane and went back in for another kiss, his hands firmly planted to Shane's chest, their hard cocks rubbing against each other from inside their pants. They needed each other. Ilya couldn't wait to get himself inside Shane any longer.

They ripped the rest of their clothes off each other and moved to the bed. Ilya had to endure a whole day with Hayden Pike and Rose fucking Landry at his home just to give his daughter a good birthday party. Now that they were alone again Ilya was damned if they didn't do this. He fucking earned it!

And fuck! Shane did too! Shane deserved to get fucked hard tonight. To be reminded of how amazing he was. How far he had come over the last year. How he was the perfect dad to their precious Ilene. Ilya took good care to make sure that Shane would remember all of it that night.

Their world was far from ideal, but they've managed to make it work. The two of them could always rely on each other to make it through. And now they had Ilene, a constant reminder of how their love could endure any obstacle life was willing to throw at them. They made each other stronger. They were better together. As long as they had each other, then it was all okay.

Chapter End Notes

And... fade to black smut!

Thank you so much everyone who tagged along for the ride! I have more fics planned for the future, including plans to continue this universe as a little series. So if you're willing to, keep your eyes out for more from me.

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!