

Soup Taste Test

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Soup Taste Test

by [OkieRedSheep](#)

Summary

Shane is sick. Ilya orders him soup.

Notes

thank you to [notwritinganovel](#) for allowing me to use their fic as inspiration for this! i really recommend reading their fic before you read this for context and for the pure joy it gave me while reading :)

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

- Inspired by [is it the same for you?](#) by [notwritinganovel](#)

After ploughing through the most recent game, the Voyageurs winning 4-3, Shane Hollander was back in Montreal. The rest of the Voyageurs' games would be smooth sailing, all different stops across a few states. He was ready for a fun playoffs season, spent with his team in their bus.

And yet here he was, curled into himself on his bed, pushing a thermometer into his own mouth. He was going to miss the next few games, and his team was spending the road time together without him. Despite not feeling bitter at all, Shane's mind jumped to: *screw Rozanov*. Well, it *was* Ilya's fault for getting him sick.

Shane hated being sick. It threw a serious wrench into his routine— meals meant to be consumed and used for fuel were thrown up, time that should've been spent jogging or working out were used for endless moping, and most importantly, days that could be used calling, texting, or meeting Ilya were spent on coughing up a storm or sleeping. He hadn't gotten sick much over the course of his hockey career, but he still remembers being young, his mother and grandmother stuffing him under blankets despite being drenched in sweat .

He took the thermometer out of his mouth— his temperature was inching towards 38 degrees Celsius. He didn't even feel that hot, just uneasy. He wanted to crawl out of his skin and sit under a cold shower or the fan and... okay, yeah. Maybe he was feeling warmer than usual. He pressed a hand to his forehead, remembering his grandmother's way of gauging how sick he was when he was little. His hand fell into his lap, uncomfortably tacky with sweat.

Then, as Shane flopped back into his pillows, the doorbell rang. He twisted around and reached for his phone, which was tangled somewhere in his bedsheets, to see who was at his door through his Ring app. The live camera footage showed a delivery driver taking a photo of multiple bags at his door. The green insulated bag that hung off of his shoulder was adorned with an UberEats logo, and it swung from side to side as the man hopped down off the porch and onto the motorbike that was just barely in view of the doorbell camera.

"What..?" Shane heaved himself up. He hadn't ordered anything, and the guy was clearly from Uber Eats. By the time he reached the door, unlocked it, and pulled it open with sluggish limbs, the driver was long gone. He didn't order it himself, nor did he even have a food delivery app on his phone, so there was nothing he could do at this point.

After a moment and a half of deliberation, Shane shrugged to himself: *might as well*. He picked up the bags and dragged them inside to the kitchen island. Untying the knots on the three plastic bags, his stuffy nose picked up a scent of many rich smells and aromas. Shane had just reached into the first bag to pull out whatever mystery food was in it when his phone beeped with the specific ringtone for Ilya. He pulled his phone out of his hoodie pocket immediately, abandoning the bags.

Lily: did you get it?

Shane tilted his head to the side, confused.

Jane: What?

Lily: soup delivery.

Jane: Wait, you ordered this food? UberEats?

Lily: yes. call me?

Shane put his phone down and pulled out a container of still-hot soup from the first bag. It was in a thick paper container, and he couldn't help smile at the care Ilya put into choosing the paper option instead of the default plastic. He must have remembered Shane lecturing him about microplastics the first time they had ordered hot food together after a game.

Shane laughed to himself when he saw his phone light up. Ilya had gotten impatient and called him through Skype instead of waiting for him to call first.

"Hi, Lily," Shane said into his phone, turning on speakerphone.

"Hi Jane," Ilya's voice crooned back. "Let me see your face."

Shane smiled and clicked the Skype video button as he opened a drawer and pulled out a spoon. Ilya smiled at him, his video feed clearly showing him sitting up in bed under a mountain of blankets.

"Why'd you order me all this food?" Shane asked. "Is it all soup?"

"Yes. Is only fair— you made me borscht, I order you food." Ilya nodded. "Taste. I ordered many kinds."

And so Shane set his phone against one of the bags, camera capturing him opening the bags and rifling through. He opened the first container and was met with a bright orange butternut squash soup. He dipped his spoon in and tasted it. Flavor absolutely bursted in Shane's mouth, the creamy mixture of onion, gourd, and spices coating his tongue delightfully, distracting him from his sickness.

When he looked up, Shane saw Ilya looking at him, enraptured. His chin rested on his hand, other hand holding his phone stretched out and resting on his headboard, which he sat against.

Shane nodded, taking another mouthful of soup. "Good. Strong on the cinnamon, though. Is squash soup even supposed to have cinnamon?"

Ilya hummed, shrugging a shoulder. "Next one. Lots to try."

Shane closed the container with a grin and looked into the bag. "Jesus, Ilya, how many soups did you fucking *order*?"

"Whatever looked good. Maybe, like, ten. Twelve?"

Shane scoffed, disbelieving. "Gosh. Okay, this one looks like... beef something?"

"Ah, yes. Beef soup from that Monty's place. Very good, I had last time we had Montreal game. Try it."

Shane, after washing and drying his spoon ("there's no need to get another one dirty. I'll just reuse this one," met with a snort from Ilya) fed himself a spoon of warm beef broth. He hummed into the bite, the heat from chili and spices swirling in his mouth. He blew his nose after the third bite, the heat making his already-running nose go haywire.

"This is *good*."

Ilya nodded. "Is better? Rank for me. Rate?"

"Either works. I rate this, like, at least an eight out of ten." Shane automatically closed the container after taking another bite and opened the next one. "The squash was... a six point five."

Ilya hummed, shifting around on his side. Shane smiled at him. "Thank you for the soups."

"Is no problem. Try next one. The green one from other bag, the Arev Soups place."

"What's this?" Shane asked, pulling forward the next bag and opening the first soup. "Bean?"

"Mm, kind of. Lentil stew," Ilya mused. "The Armenians in Russia growing up called it *vosprovabur*."

"It's really good. Needs salt, though."

"Yes, you crack and put in salted crackers. Tradition."

Shane, after finding some salty pita chips in the pantry and sprinkling some in, rated the stew a 9/10. The rest of the soups— a fragrant fishy curry, a hearty minestrone, a tangy Tom Yum soup, a tame chicken noodle, and a variety of different vegetable soups— all got scores around a 7, 8, or 9.

"I would have liked to make you soup myself." Ilya frowned when Shane rated the last soup an 8. "You gave none a ten. Did I not get your favorite sick soup?"

"I don't really have a favorite soup," Shane said, smiling sideways at Ilya, who looked like he was about to order him ten more soups. "Usually, when I got sick as a kid, my grandma would make me congee."

"*What?*" Ilya frowned. "What is that? I do not know of this, why didn't you lead with that?"

Shane laughed. "I had no clue you were going to order me a ton of food, idiot. Congee is like a rice porridge. You can put meat and onion and sauce on it, it stays hot for a long time and it's simple enough to not make someone sick throw it up."

"Is at restaurants, usually? Asian places?"

"I don't know about Montreal, but I know in Ottawa there were a few local Asian places that had it, but we never ordered it from other places because my grandma could just make it for us. I haven't had it in a while."

"Mm." Ilya shifted to sit up in his bed, and his Skype camera feed paused.

"What're you doing? I can't see you anymore," Shane said, taking another bite of the lentil stew. He balled up a used tissue in his hand, peering closer at his phone to see Ilya's camera.

"Mm, nothing. Don't worry." Ilya's screen remained paused for a minute more before he returned to the screen.

They talked for a few more minutes, Shane doubling over and coughing every so often, then had to hang up. Shane, trying hard to ignore his sickness (and failing), talked to his mom about the next few games he was about to miss and then sat down to rewatch some of his gameplay from his sick game. A few minutes into the second period, the doorbell rang for the second time this afternoon.

What the hell, Shane thought.

When he opened the door, a single plastic bag was resting on his porch.

He picked it up, brought it inside, and looked inside. A tub, about the size of his palm, marked with the logo of an Asian fusion restaurant he'd passed by a few times. Inside, was unseasoned congee, ready to be prepared however Shane liked.

Shane's face morphed into a dopey grin. His phone pinged.

Lily: did you get it

Jane: You fucking sap.

End Notes

thank you for reading! :D

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