

Over for Dinner

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Over for Dinner

by [find_me_in_the_ivy](#).

Summary

"Please text!"

David and Yuna coming over for dinner after Shane and Ilya's visit. Ilya gets to know Shane's parents and realizes just how much he loves being a part of a family.

Notes

Babes I will admit to being down bad for this show.

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

“They’re gonna be here in ten minutes; put your clothes on.”

Shane threw a pair of shorts onto the bed from the floor where he scrounged around for his own underwear, hitting Ilya in the chest.

“Mm, but you like me with my clothes off,” the dozing man muttered. He sat up to look out at the lake through the plate glass windows and rub the sleep from his eyes, relishing in the feeling of waking up in the middle of the day. He couldn’t remember the last time he’d taken a proper nap. Childhood, maybe?

“Yeah, but I think we already made a first impression of you without them,” Shane smiled down at him. Ilya was taken aback by just how different Shane looked in the afternoon light. It shone in his eyes, the ones that were always so nervous, so guarded. They didn’t feel guarded any more.

This had already been one of the best days of Ilya’s life.

His heart had dropped out of his stomach when he saw the man standing in Shane’s kitchen. *Intruder* was the word that sprinted through his mind, but as soon as Shane turned and the recognition crossed his face, he knew it was much more serious. Someone had seen them. Someone who knew exactly what they were looking at.

The car ride there, the walk up to the house, Shane's confession to his parents, all of that had hollowed out a space inside Ilya. One that screamed *it's over. You can't be happy. You never could. You were just playing pretend.*

And then... then they were sitting around the kitchen table. They were drinking his father’s good Russian vodka and they were calling him by his first name. They were serving him lunch, *lots* of lunch, insisting he eat as much as he pleased. He was holding Shane as he panicked in front of them, soothing him, bringing his boyfriend back around. His *boyfriend*. Even the word made Ilya’s heart race.

They’d left in such high spirits, the two of them. Holding hands, making dinner plans, stopping to pick up beer in town. As they'd pulled into the driveway of the cottage, Ilya’s joy couldn't stay inside him for another moment.

Shane had ducked out of the car, rattling on about dinner plans and when they'd find time to eat their leftovers when Ilya had eased the six packs out of his hands and onto the porch.

“What?”

Without a word, Ilya had scooped his lover, his *boyfriend* up into his arms and hugged him tight to his chest. He’d buried his face in Shane’s shirt, inhaling the scent of detergent and lake water that lingered on it.

“I’m so proud of you,” he’d whispered. “I’m so, so proud of you.”

They'd fallen into bed, fully intending to fuck, but after twenty minutes of heavy kissing, they'd forgotten about it entirely, happy to bask in each other's joy. They'd laid in bed for an hour, talking in low voices about what was gonna happen now, how excited Shane was to be able to share Ilya with the most important people in his life, how surprising Ilya had found it to be in the presence of Shane's parents. They'd fallen asleep whispering about their future, and it was only when Shane's phone began pinging with texts from his father, that they woke.

"What're you looking at?" Shane grinned at him as he pulled on a tee shirt and gym shorts.

"My *boyfriend*," Ilya drawled for the tenth time that afternoon. The word never got old, never lost its shine. "He looks beautiful in this light. Never get tired of looking at him."

Shane's eyes softened and he sat down next to Ilya on the bed, leaning in to kiss him. "I love you," he whispered, just for him.

"I love you too," Ilya whispered back. It felt so new, so monumental, but so good to say. He wanted to shout it from the mountaintops. *I love Shane Hollander*.

"I'm gonna set the table; get the drinks out of the fridge when you get up, okay?" Shane rubbed his nose against Ilya's in an unconscious gesture that put butterflies in his stomach.

"Yes sir, Mister Waiter," Ilya teased him. He held onto his hand until Shane left the bedside, and then he was alone for the first time all day. What a fucking day.

He stared out onto the lake that meant so much to Shane and his family, and now him too. Where he'd finally felt safe to love and be loved. Where he'd talked about his mother, where he'd figured out his future. *Can a bunch of water really mean so much?* said the cynical voice that Ilya carried around wherever he went. *Why bother with memories of this place when you'll fuck this up too?* But this time he had something to combat that voice. He had people that loved him, and loved him hard.

He finally crawled out of the nest of blankets and dragged on the clothes he'd abandoned to the bedroom floor before ducking into the kitchen to help Shane get ready for dinner, taking direction on which way the placemats had to face and which side the silverware went on. Ilya couldn't imagine it mattering very much, but it made Shane happy, and so he was happy to do it.

When Yuna and David arrived a few minutes later with a casserole dish full of chicken, Ilya's cynical voice crawled even further into its hole, making way for the joy he could feel having a family dinner. *Two home cooked meals in one day!* His heart sang at the way the conversation felt light and easy, drifting from their relationship to how the teams were going to do next season to all of the Hollanders sitting around the picnic table trying to teach Ilya how to play some strange card game with teams and signalling and bluffing. He was surprisingly terrible at it, but Shane defended his ego by reasoning that Yuna and David had been a team since their college years. He had never had so much fun losing a game.

As the sun began to set, and David and Shane started a fire in the pit on the patio, Yuna and Ilya ducked inside to refresh everyone's drinks. She was chatting happily with him about the

local hockey clubs as they poured wine and grabbed beers, when she stopped in the middle of a sentence and looked hard at Ilya. Not angry or accusing, more like he was a bug under a microscope. He felt a little bit like one, alone with her in the dim kitchen.

“Can I ask you something?” she said frankly. Her wine glass clinked against the stone countertop as she set it down.

“Yes,” Ilya hesitated. “Unless it is about the Raiders’ starting lineup for next season; I can’t talk about that.”

Yuna laughed softly at the joke, and Ilya was shocked at just how much she looked like Shane. They both got the same scrunch in their nose when they smiled that wide. It must be genetic.

“No... no it isn’t about hockey. It’s just...” She quieted for a moment before looking out at her husband and son on the deck, prodding twigs and logs into place and willing a fire to life. “Do you make him happy?”

Ilya stopped in his tracks. *Do you make him happy?* Whispered the little voice in a mocking tone. *Do you make anyone happy?*

“I don’t know,” he answered honestly. “I don’t always know how he feels. He is sometimes...” He couldn’t find the English for it, but he gestured to his chest in a motion he hoped Yuna would understand.

“Closed off,” she offered. “Doesn’t say.”

“Yes. Closed off,” Ilya nodded. “But, I know that I love him. I know that I *want* to make him happy, and I know that I want to keep making him happy however I can.”

Yuna smiled warmly at him, and Ilya saw the sparkle of a tear in the corner of her eye. “That’s good enough for me,” she whispered, taking his hand and grabbing it tight. It was warm and comforting, and Ilya’s heart gave a lurch at the memory of his own mother holding his hand in exactly the same way. It had been over half his life since she’d taken his hand in hers, but here was that feeling again. The one that said *don’t worry. I’m here.*

Ilya’s heart beat faster as she dropped his hand and gathered up her wine and a beer for Shane. “Can you grab David a lager out of the fridge?” she asked easily.

Ilya nodded his head, snagging two of the long necked bottles and following her out onto the patio, blinking back memories of his own parents in matching graves in Russia.

They talked, all four of them, for hours as the sun went down. Ilya learned the story of Yuna and David meeting in college, their own romance and eventual marriage. Shane being born and all his accolades growing up. Shane told them just how much he had in common with Rose and their ongoing friendship, the movies that kept her busy, her summer plans to visit for a day or two. Ilya told them a brief history of his life back home. His parents both gone, his remaining brother and niece. Svetlana. Light on the details. But more than he’d told nearly anyone else.

In the dark of rapidly approaching midnight, Yuna pulled Shane down to the banks of the lake to look for crayfish, kicking off their shoes and descending into the grass barefoot. The beams from the flashlights they'd taken bobbed across the lawn, looking to Ilya like little patches of green weaving through the night. He tried to remember another time when Shane had willingly stepped on grass bare footed, and he couldn't find one within memory. He was left to stare into the fire with David, both of them sipping their beers quietly. Neither speaking.

"He's his mother's son, for sure," David said to the air, breaking the silence. Ilya looked over at him, but his eyes were fixed on his wife and child trudging around in the lower banks and crouching low to look for signs of life. "He's got plenty of me in him, of course, but those two... they're cut from the same cloth."

Ilya tried to parse the idiom in his head, but it wasn't clicking and must have shown on his face. David turned and smiled softly at him before explaining. "Means they're made of the same stuff. In here." He patted his chest.

"Oh," Ilya said limply. He still wasn't quite sure how to talk to Shane's parents when he wasn't around. But David didn't let him struggle for long.

"Shane's always had... difficulties with people. He was never a social kid, he never quite had the knack for talking to people. He's very... in his own head." He turned and looked at Ilya intentionally. "D'ya get what I'm saying, Ilya?"

"Yes..." Ilya hesitated, gesturing the same way he had with Yuna. "Closed off."

"Closed off," David repeated, turning his attention away. "That's a good way to put it. The doctors and the therapists had names for it, but I didn't give a damn about any of that, and neither did Yuna. He was our son, and that wasn't gonna change no matter what they told us."

Ilya stayed silent, unable to think of a single thing to say. He'd always known Shane operated differently than him, thought differently. But so did everyone else. It didn't matter how he thought, only that Ilya could love him the way he wanted to be loved.

"He's... he means a lot to us," David continued, finishing his beer and setting it down. "He's the only child we were able to have, and he never made many friends growing up, so... I think what I'm trying to say is that Yuna and I are both really grateful to know that all this time he hasn't been as lonely as it seemed." Ilya turned to look at the man in the light of the fire and saw his eyes were wet as he stared out at his family. "She would never admit it, but we were really worried he'd never find someone."

Ilya's heart broke a little at that. He'd always been lonely, but never alone. Since coming to the states, he'd always felt like the outsider, the one who didn't speak the language, didn't understand the culture. But he had people, friends to help him limp through. That Shane's parents were so worried their son would never find someone who loved him when he was so perfectly himself... he couldn't even think of it.

"Mr. Hollander..." he began, but stopped when Shane's father held up his hand.

“David.” He nodded respectfully, and Ilya nodded back. Level field.

“David...” he repeated, trying to speak slowly so that he didn’t stumble. “Shane is the only person in this world I’ve ever loved like this. I love him for the way he speaks. I love him for the way he moves. I love him for the way he recites all the teams Sillinger played for.”

“In order,” David laughed, wiping at his eyes.

Ilya smiled wide in the firelight. “Loving your son is... easy. Is a...” English failed him as he rummaged for the right translation. David glanced at him curiously, and Ilya felt the hot burn of shame at forgetting. He tried to find something, anything to say. “Is like a special gift only for some people, loving him.”

“Privilege,” David nodded, supplying the missing word.

“Privilege,” Ilya repeated, feeling the word roll in his mouth like it was made of glass marbles. “Loving your son is a privilege. Is one I’m grateful for every day.”

David didn’t say anything for several moments, simply looking out into the night where Shane and Yuna stood on the banks, yelling every time a leaf rattled. When he did, his voice was quiet and tight. “Thank you, Ilya,” he muttered, “for loving him how he is.”

Ilya felt his throat close. He loved Shane, every single part of him, and hearing his parents speak of him with such devotion solidified Ilya’s resentment of his own father. Parents could love their kids no matter what. It wasn’t impossible. Here they were.

“That being said, you’re screwed,” David said, clearing his throat.

“Huh?” Ilya asked, shocked out of his heartache.

“You’re so screwed, young man. I wasn’t kidding when I said he and Yuna are cut from the same cloth. She’s got me wrapped around her finger so tight, it’s not even funny. And I couldn’t be happier.”

“What does this mean?” Ilya asked, amused and concerned at the same time. David laughed with him and threw another chunk of wood on the fire.

“It means that your days of freedom are over, my friend. No allegiance to country nor religion nor hockey team. You belong to Shane and only Shane. No rivalry, no Raiders, no Canada or Russia, no nothing, you are *his* above anything else, and he will never let you forget it. And if he’s anything like Yuna, it’ll be the best thing that ever happened to you.”

“I can’t wait,” Ilya laughed to the night air. If he got to be Shane Hollander’s for the rest of his life, he’d die a happy man.

The day had been long, exhaustingly so, but when it came time to say good night, Ilya was still having a wonderful time. He’d helped Shane’s parents pack up their leftovers and promised to return their casserole dish in the next few days, everyone doing the friendly

shuffle of donning shoes, finding bags, reminders to get home safe. And then right before they left, something happened that Ilya could hardly believe.

“No, tell Rose that she needs to come up and see us some time, okay?” Yuna called to Shane as she gathered her things. She held onto David’s arm as she bent to put her shoes on, a simple gesture that made Ilya smile. He wondered fondly about growing to their ages with Shane some day.

“I will, Mom, I promise,” Shane swore. His parents stood to their full height, his father wrapping him up into a hug before his mother did the same, kissing their ‘I love you’s to their son. Ilya looked down, feeling like he was intruding on a private moment between family, and so he didn’t see it coming when David drew him into a tight hug of his own. It startled Ilya so much he didn’t even think to put his arms up and embrace the man until the last second.

“Thanks again, Ilya,” David said, releasing him. “It was really great to meet you after all this time.”

Before Ilya could process what was happening, Yuna had wrapped him up in a hug of her own, warm and inviting just like his own mother’s were. “It’s good to know Shane’s so well loved.” She leaned out, and gave him a peck on the cheek before patting his arm and taking her husband’s hand. They shouted further goodbyes as Shane led them out the door, but Ilya couldn’t speak. He wasn’t there.

He was twelve years old again, resting with his head on his mother’s chest as their father screamed at Alexei the next room over. Something about what being a man meant. About responsibility. As the shouting reached a pinnacle and something heavy got thrown, Ilya’s mother clapped her hand over his ear and pulled him tighter to her. *Don’t worry, Ilya*, she whispered. *Don’t worry, sweetheart; he won’t hurt us if we stay quiet.*

It was the last time his mother had held him.

“Ilya?”

He heard the voice, but couldn’t place it initially until his mind cleared. He felt the hand on his face and flinched, thinking it was his father’s words stinging him. But it wasn’t. It was Shane.

“Ilya, you okay?” His dark brown eyes were staring at him, flashing as the headlights of Yuna and David’s car pulled away. He could feel the wet sensation of tears running down his cheeks. Shane was wiping them away. When did he start crying?

“They...” he started weakly. “They hugged me.” The English felt like sand in his mouth.

“Yeah, they hugged you... Did it upset you? That they hugged you?” Shane asked gently.

“No! No...” Ilya denied quickly. “It’s... since my mother...”

Shane picked up his thread quickly. “Did your father not hug you after she died?”

“Not after... not... before, either...”

Fourteen years was much too long to go, it turns out. Ilya’s breath caught, and before he realized what was happening, he was crying in earnest, his throat making a little hitch from the surprise. “Oh, Ilya,” Shane realized, and wrapped his arms tight around his boyfriend. It only set Ilya’s heart on fire more, the way he hugged like his parents. Tight, fierce. An embrace that said *I won't let you go, I promise.*

Ilya wanted to apologize, wanted to tell his partner to look away, that he didn't want to be seen like this, but he couldn't get the words out. And he didn't want to. He wanted to be held like this. To cry like this.

They stood there in the middle of the foyer for the second time that day, one holding the other and weeping. Ilya wasn't sure for how long. He only knew that after several seconds of head-pounding sobbing, he and Shane ended up on the floor. He clawed at Shane’s arms, desperate to keep him here, not let him slip away like he had his mother. He couldn't bear it again. He begged him in Russian over and over. *Don't leave me. Don't leave me. Don't leave me.*

If he’d looked up, he would have seen Shane’s panicked face. The expression that said *no one has ever asked me to stay like this.* He had no idea what to do. He didn’t know what Ilya was saying. But he stayed. He stayed and he held Ilya and slipped a hand up the back of his shirt to soothe him and whisper away any little thing he thought could be wrong. *My parents loved you. They want you as part of their family. Your dad sucked for never showing you he loved you. You're safe. I'm not leaving. I love you.* All of it true.

“I love you,” Ilya wept in English into the flesh of Shane's shoulder. He’d made a mess out of his shirt, but he’d feel guilty about it later. “I love you so much.”

“I love you,” Shane whispered back. “I love you, and I'm pretty sure my parents love you too.”

That made Ilya burst out in joyous laughter within his tears. “Oh God, I hope so. They are so nice, Shane,” he cried. “Why are your parents so nice to me?”

“Your guess is as good as mine,” Shane laughed, pulling his tear-stained boyfriend to his feet. “I think they know that you love me, and they’re putting aside all their grievances for it. After all, we’re people before we’re hockey players, no matter what my mom might think.”

Ilya chuckled, smiling and looking into Shane’s deep eyes through his own blurry ones. “She’s kind. And like you in many ways. Driven. Caring. Both of them are. God, Shane, they love you so much.”

He watched tears gather in the corner of Shane’s eyes as he smiled. “I think you’re a lot like your mother too. Funny and beautiful.” He left off the final description, but Ilya filled it in in his own head. *Sad* it crooned. *So, so sad, just like your mother. A heartsick little boy with evil inside him.*

“You’re like your father, too, though,” Shane whispered, and Ilya was momentarily taken aback. What could he have in common with that old man, dead and buried? His mind gone

from him? “You’re too hard on yourself.”

Ilya looked at him again, the kind eyes of his mother and the gentle smile of his father. None of the guarded, flat expressions he used with his teammates or the media. The ones where he looked like he had something to hide, like he was pretending. And all the smart-ass remarks that Ilya could muster seemed to fall out the back of his mind as he realized he agreed with Shane. He *was* too hard on himself. He had been all day, berating himself for the smallest things. Just like his father.

“I think... I think maybe you’re right. I think I need to be gentle. I want to be gentle.” It was a confession he didn’t think he could make with anyone else in the world. Ilya Rozanov, one of the hardest working, most dedicated players in the league, wanted to take things easy and slow. Wanted to rest.

“Let’s be gentle.” Shane tugged him in the direction of the bedroom, not with lust in his eyes, but love. Love, and no small amount of exhaustion. It was well past one am, and after a full day of swimming, alcohol, and David Hollander’s cooking, there was nothing Ilya wanted to do more than crawl into bed with his lover and fall asleep to the sound of the wind rustling through the trees.

Ilya’s racing mind quieted in the cool dark as they laid down. Shane curled into his chest, his hand idly finding the hollow at the bottom of Ilya’s sternum and resting his two middle fingers on it. The excitement of the day faded to the background in favor of rest, and as he listened to Shane’s breathing grow slow and deep, he thought of everyone. His mother, his father, Alexei, Svetlana, Sasha, his coaches and teammates, everyone he’d ever tried to make into his family. He thought of them, and how none of them held a candle to how he felt about the man sleeping on his chest.

His heart ached with how much he loved Shane, ached with how much he wanted to give him a good life and be a good man for him. And that ache didn’t open into a hollow pit of shame. It instead burned like a muscle that had been pushed. Like the last five minutes of a five k run. Like the pain of love would build something rather than destroy it. Shane built him up. And that’s why he loved him so much.

The cynical voice didn’t visit Ilya that night as he drifted to sleep. It didn’t need to. Today was, and always would be, one of the best days of Ilya’s life.

End Notes

Really wanted to write a few of the conversations I imagined Ilya having with Shane's parents, and how he'd feel about being welcomed into their lives. Good chance I write some diabolical smut after this but I had to get all the mushy stuff on paper first :)

I've read and watched HR, but haven't gotten to read TLG yet, so idk exactly how canon compliant this is just vibe it out.

Edit: I've since read TLG and holy hell batman hell yeah

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