

Good

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Good

by [ShanaStoryteller](#)

Summary

The second dinner goes better than the first.

(Shane is his mother's son.)

Notes

expanded from tumblr

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

The second dinner goes better than the first.

His mom texts before coming over and everything's as clean as it always is and there's no evidence of what him and Ilya are doing all over the cottage. Ilya had used his injured ribs as a reasoning for why he shouldn't have to do things like dust the baseboards, which Shane hadn't argued against, but he'd gotten fidgety about thirty seconds into watching Shane clean and gotten up to help. He suspects that Ilya hadn't thought he was being serious. Ilya had demanded a kiss every five minutes as motivation, but Shane hadn't exactly minded.

Shane keeps things clean as a rule. He didn't go through three different contractors to have his perfect home built to his exact specifications just to leave trash out or let it get covered in dust. Even in other places, he doesn't like a mess. Part of the reason he always shares rooms with Hayden when they're on the road is that he's neat too and Shane didn't feel the constant need to strangle him.

Their house growing up had always been neat and organized. His dad did a big top to bottom deep clean every Sunday and Shane wasn't allowed to get out of helping even with hockey practice, but most of the time he hadn't minded that much. Mom would blast disco music and Dad would shout at her to turn it down. She wouldn't, but she would slide over in her special cleaning socks and grab his hand, pulling him into a ridiculous dance and laughing at his grumpy face. It was mostly a show, though. Dad always danced with her.

When they step inside, his parents both give him a quick hug. His dad squeezes the back of his neck before letting go and his mom pauses to tweak the collar of his flannel and smooth it down against his neck so it lays flat.

"Ilya," Dad greets, clapping him on the back as he passes.

Mom's looking at yet another one of Ilya's Raiders shirts with faint disapproval. Shane can't even give him shit for bringing so many when over half of his own casual wardrobe is Metros branded. She reaches out to straighten it on his shoulders and Ilya freezes. Shane leans forward to pull his mom away, worried, but then a huge grin breaks out over Ilya's face. Mom hasn't even noticed, still glaring at his shirt. "Is this really necessary?"

"I thought you valued loyalty," Ilya says.

"Oh, good, he's a comedian," she says, glancing back at him, one hand still on Ilya's shoulder.

"You already knew that," he points out. She's complained about his glib answers in interviews enough times.

Mom scoffs, pats Ilya's chest, and continues on to the kitchen.

Shane tilts his head, not wanting to ask out loud with his parents so close. Ilya's tucks his fingers into his hand and whispers in his ear, "Is okay. Is nice."

Okay. Good.

He cooks while they all sit out of the way on the other side of island, beers in hand. “So,” Ilya says, rubbing his thumb along the rim of the beer bottle in a way that Shane can’t focus too hard on while his parents are here. “Do you have more hockey predictions? You did good with Admirals winning the cup.”

Dad groans comically and Mom hits him, but she’s animated and intense as she launches into it. Ilya raises an eyebrow then drops it, leaning forward and listening to her intently. Shane shifts his weight uncomfortably, but Mom figures out the problem almost immediately and speaks slower until Ilya’s face relaxes. When Mom really gets going and goes too fast for Dad to follow, he’ll mime clicking a button on a remote control like he’s slowing down a replay until she huffs and grudgingly speaks at a speed slightly below auctioneer. Shane’s never had that problem, but he grew up listening to her.

Even with the distraction, Mom only manages about five minutes of watching him cook before she’s budging into the kitchen next to him, tasting and setting out spices and washing dishes as he finishes with them even if he’s going to use them again in five minutes. They’re still talking about hockey, which is a nice safe topic that all of them can go on about until possibly the end of time, but he feels Ilya’s eyes on him and wonders if he’s categorizing the differences with his mom in the kitchen and what he thinks about them. He doesn’t like people getting in his way while he cooks. Ilya limits himself to being annoying or affectionate, or both, but didn’t try and help after Shane made it clear he didn’t want him to. But it doesn’t bother him when Mom does it. She knows how to do it right.

The food is about ready when Mom says, “David,” and his dad gets up to set the table. Ilya stands too, but Dad waves him off and he slowly sinks back into his seat.

Mom’s eyes flicker between them and she wipes her hands dry before going over to help Dad with the plates, which gets her a raised eyebrow but thankfully Dad doesn’t comment on it. Shane almost smiles before looking to Ilya and nodding to the food. “Help me bring this over?”

“Yes,” he says with poorly concealed relief.

They sit the same way they had at his parent’s house, with him next to Ilya and across from his mother. Hockey talk continues through dinner. Ilya might think it’s for his benefit, but honestly it’s just mostly what they talk about.

They finish eating and Dad collects everyone’s plates. Ilya pours them drinks and Shane thinks that everything is fine, that it’s all gone well and normal and good, something that he thought would be impossible but has instead been easy. Dinner with his parents and his boyfriend, with Ilya, who sits with a hand heavy on Shane’s thigh as he goes through different player stats with his dad. He’s probably staring too much and too long, getting distracted by the way Ilya’s curls fall against his face and the way his eyes light up before he baits Dad with a slightly incorrect stat, but it’s fine. No one here cares if he stares. He can relax.

Except then Mom squeezes Dad’s shoulder and says, “I’ll be right back, I just remembered I owe someone a call,” before stepping outside. Dad glances towards her, his brows pulling

together briefly, but he deliberately leans back into his seat and takes a long swallow of his drink.

Shane tries to pay attention to what his dad and Ilya are talking about, but his palms are sweating and his stomach is churning and he knows his mother. He pushes his chair back and gets to his feet, Ilya's hand sliding off his thigh.

He knows it's too abrupt by the way Ilya blinks and goes, "Shane?" but he can only force something close to a smile before waving him off and heading outside.

Mom is standing next to the unlit fire pit, arms crossed and gaze distant. It's not cold, but he pulls off his flannel and drapes it over her shoulders anyway. She startles, then smiles and tugs it closer around her. He has so many memories of being a little kid coming off the ice and shivering into her waiting arms. She'd take off her jacket and bundle him into it, her warmth seeping into him even as goosebumps raised on her skin.

"Mom," he starts then doesn't know what else to say. If there is anything else to say.

"Do you like your brand deals?" she asks.

He lets out a breath that's something between a sigh and a laugh. "What?"

They could have spoken about brand deals inside. Ilya wouldn't have cared. Actually, he could probably use some help with his. They're fine, obviously, he's very marketable. His managers aren't bad or anything, they're just not Mom.

"If you don't, we can change them," she continues. "Or get new ones, or just drop them. I know we keep a busy press schedule and that, I mean, I can reduce it. And – and you don't have to deal with them, if you don't want to, or you can, if you do. Whatever you want."

Her voice is high like she's going to cry and he feels out of his depth, confused and fumbling, which he doesn't like. He's used to knowing exactly what she's thinking. "Mom. What's this about? The sponsors are fine, the press is fine."

She nods, but she's not looking at him. She breathes in deeply, then again, and once he counts the third breath, she opens her mouth to speak, just like he knew she would. "I know you want to be a good son. And you are," she says quickly when he flinches, raising a hand to cup his cheek. He leans into it. He's never done anything else. "You are a good son. I love you so much and I'm so proud of you and I wouldn't change you for the world. You are the most perfect son I could ask for, alright?" He nods, throat tight as he tries to keep his jaw from trembling, knowing that she can feel it. "But I want to be a good mom too."

"You are," he says, panic and guilt hot in his stomach. What did he do to make her think she wasn't? "You are a good mom."

Shane learned to cook peering around his mother's waist, by grabbing the spices she asked for and licking the spoon she'd hold to his lips and listening to her explain pan searing and roux and simmering as he washed each dish she'd handed him.

He wants the people he loves to come to him shivering and know he'll keep them warm. He learned that from her too.

"You love him," she says, voice catching. "You love him and I didn't even notice."

How could she have? He didn't want her to.

Her lips twitch up at the corners but fall immediately back down. "I didn't know this big thing about you, and I know you said you forgive me for making you feel like you couldn't tell me, but I worry. I know I'm hard on you, but am I too hard? Do I manage you too much? You'd tell me if I was doing things in a way you didn't like, wouldn't you? Because you can. I'm great with constructive feedback." She rubs her thumb against his cheek. "I'll be better."

He recognizes the look on her face from the mirror, from every time he fucked up at practice or a game or made the crew work late during a photoshoot or messed up some social interaction he just couldn't figure out how to navigate. Determination and guilt and pain that he's never been able to explain to anyone else, but with his mom he's never had to.

Maybe not everything he's learned from her is a good thing. But there's so much more good than bad.

"This, Ilya and all of it, it's the only secret I've ever kept from you," he says, because it's true and because he's desperate to fix this. He wouldn't be where he is without her and wouldn't want to be either. "It's okay. I forgive you." He doesn't feel like there's that much to forgive. He'd told Ilya that his parents would be okay with him being gay, and he'd known that, he had, he'd just been scared. But he knows Mom won't accept him taking the blame for this, so he doesn't try. "You are a good mom, and a good manager, and I would tell you if I wanted something different, but I don't. You are exactly the mom I want. Not different, not better."

The parts of her he sometimes finds exasperating are still *her*. He likes her the way she is. He doesn't want to change her.

She nods, blinking, says, "Okay," and pulls him into her.

Shane drops his head onto her shoulder, eyes squeezed shut. A piece of him will always be that cold little kid looking for his mother to make him warm again. He doesn't want to change that either.

She rubs a hand up and down his back and counts each of his shaky breaths out loud until they steady, until he can pull himself together, but he keeps his arms around her even after that. Because he loves her, and she's his mom, and she loves him.

~

Ilya frowns as he looks out the window. Shane has curled into his mother in a way that makes him feel warmth and worry and longing all in one. He bites the inside of his cheek then asks David, "This happens often?"

He's watching them too and his face softens before he shrugs. "Yes and no. They're not often out of step. It upsets them both when they are." He glances towards Ilya, visibly hesitating before saying, "Yuna was up most of the night."

"Making plans and thinking too much," he nods, feeling a little steadier now that he's back on familiar ground. "Like Shane."

David's smile widens. "Ah. You're familiar with the process?"

"He woke me up at four in morning talking of Ottawa," he says. "I was not thinking in English yet. Very confusing."

And very wonderful. Shane was up all night thinking of him, of them, of how they can be together for real. Shane loves him.

"You're really okay with this plan of his?" David asks. "This has Shane's thinking all of over it. Ottawa isn't exactly a great team."

"Yes." He does not understand their confusion with this. Hockey is good. Shane is better. "Is a good plan. Why argue?"

Well, arguing a little about the specifics because riling Shane up is one of his favorite past times, but in general it's a solid plan. It means he gets to keep Shane.

David's sudden burst of laughter surprises him, but he's grinning when he clinks his glass against Ilya's. "Son, you've unlocked the secret to a happy marriage."

It's a joke, clearly, but it's a good thing Russians don't blush. The heat in his face is something else, of course.

He makes sure his smile is perfectly innocent when Shane and Yuna come back inside. By Shane's narrowed eyes, he doesn't buy it, but Shane's interrogation will have to wait until his parents are gone. And well out of hearing range.

End Notes

i saw shane put a blanket around ilya's shoulders and bring his mom her sweater and i took that personally

i hope you liked it!

feel free to follow / harass me at: shanastoryteller.tumblr.com

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