

Funny How It Found Us

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Funny How It Found Us

by [tippitytap](#)

Summary

The 5 times Shane and Ilya share a domestically boring task together for the first time.

Notes

Hi!

This is something silly and quick because I'm an absolute sucker for domestic moments and finding footing as a couple and I couldn't stop thinking about Shane and Ilya doing laundry together for the first time. It is also not that greatly proof-read in honour of Ilya Rozanov.

Also, I put this as explicit but I'm not a smut writer at all. The first part turned more explicit than I had planned it, but don't read this for the smut because it's really not the focus of the story in any way.

Please enjoy!

1 — Everyone Fear, Laundry Day Is Here

July 2017, *The Cottage*

Shane had noticed. Granted, it wasn't particularly hard to notice the ever-growing bag lying on top of Ilya's suitcase. Still, Shane had *noticed* how Ilya's clean clothes were getting lesser with each day he spent at the cottage longer than anticipated and now it was bothering Shane too much to ignore it.

How much had Ilya packed? Was he still wearing clean underwear? Was he wearing Shane's hoodie to sit at the fire pit at night because he liked wearing Shane's clothes or because he didn't have a clean one himself? Had he packed a warm hoodie in the first place?

It shouldn't occupy Shane's mind so much. Ilya was a grown man with functioning eyes and the knowledge of a washing machine and enough life experience to know that clean clothes needed to be maintained by washing the dirty ones from time to time.

Shane *shouldn't* worry about it, and yet it was on the forefront of his mind so much that when Ilya asked at breakfast what the plan for the day was, the only reply slipping (loudly and weirdly articulated) out of Shane's mouth was "Laundry".

Ilya raised both of his eyebrows, waiting for a moment whether Shane was going to add anything to his one-word answer.

"Laundry?"

"I, uh, I have to do laundry," Shane replied, mentally going over his own pile of dirty clothes in his hamper and thinking about what he could wash later.

Ilya was still watching him with wide eyes, a hint of amused smile slowly creeping onto his lips.

"Ok," he finally said, "And laundry takes you whole day?"

Shane shook his head, his head spinning a little. Why was he thinking so much about laundry? And why was it so damn hard for him to just outright ask whether Ilya wanted to use his washing machine?

Now that they had muttered their first *I love yous* to each other and Ilya had called himself Shane's boyfriend in front of his parents, their first time doing laundry together shouldn't be so hard. Realistically, Shane knew that they eventually would have to work out a system if they truly were now in a committed romantic relationship with each other. One conversation deciding on whether to do laundry together or separately, and then it would be over.

How did anyone have this conversation? What words did they use to bring it up?

For one reason or another, Shane would rather go through another fifty first *I love yous* than bring up the horrifying question on laundry schedules.

Apparently, he had taken too long to reply. Under the table, Ilya tapped his foot against Shane's shin teasingly.

"We could do it together," he said casually, grinning a little and wiggling his eyebrows in a suggestive tone.

Shane spluttered. "You do know what laundry means, right? Putting dirty clothes in the washing machine, hanging them up to dry, folding them and putting them back in the closet?"

Ilya kicked his shin again, harder this time.

"You think I'm the stupid one for not knowing the word, but you are the one not knowing what doing laundry together means."

Shane furrowed his brows. "I don't think you're stupid. And what else does laundry mean besides washing clothes? There's no double meaning here."

They stared at each other for several long moments. Shane panicked a little, feeling like he was on the outside of a universally known joke yet again.

Was there a double meaning to doing laundry together? Had Shane lived his entire life in oblivion?

"Ok," Ilya said, standing up and holding a hand out for Shane to take, "I show you. Come."

Shane went with him, a confused furrow deep on his forehead. Ilya squeezed his hand while he led them up the little stairs and right into Shane's bedroom.

"You have laundry basket?" Ilya asked.

Shane nodded, sliding open the big closet doors to take out an empty basket he stored there.

"Good. Now we put dirty clothes inside."

"Ilya," Shane chuckled, but it was laced with a hint of frustration, "I know how to do laundry. What are you doing?"

"Fill with clothes," Ilya said again, pressing the basket into Shane's hands, "Darks, 40 degrees, yes? Go on."

Shane was too confused — and still a little panicked about missing out on an essential meaning of laundry — to protest, walking into his ensuite to sort the clothes in his hamper for everything dark and washable at 40 degrees.

How had his own apprehension and worry about Ilya's laundry schedule led to Ilya teaching Shane something he had been doing perfectly fine on his own for years?

When he came back to the bedroom, laundry basket half-filled, Ilya added his own pile of clothes to it, his laundry bag on his suitcase significantly reduced in size. Then, Ilya picked up the basket and put it against his hips, somehow turning Shane on a little.

Jesus Christ, what was wrong with him? He started to get hard now because his boyfriend proved that he had the know-how of *laundry*?

“Come,” Ilya said again, taking Shane’s hand and leading them both to the utility room with the washing machine and some miscellaneous supplies to uphold a household.

Horried, Shane stood as he watched Ilya fill the machine with their combined clothes, listening to Ilya’s explanations on how to do laundry. Did he seriously think Shane didn’t know all of this?

Then, once the laundry basket was empty again, Ilya stood and turned around with a smirk.

“Now,” he began, gripping onto Shane’s black t-shirt and dragging him forward until they were pressed closely together, “This t-shirt is dirty too, yes? Needs washing.”

“It really doesn’t-“ Shane tried, but Ilya was already dragging it up his torso and bunching it under Shane’s armpits. Without warning, he leaned down and took one of Shane’s nipples into his mouth, rolling the other one between his fingers. Shane was immediately too far gone to protest any longer, willingly putting up his arms so Ilya could take off his shirt and toss it into the washing machine as well.

“Hm, and these shorts,” Ilya muttered while trailing kisses along Shane’s collarbone and up his neck, “You wore them yesterday as well. They need washing too, yes?”

Somewhere in his mind, Shane wanted to tell Ilya that his shorts were perfectly fine to be worn a couple more times before they needed to be cleaned again, but he didn’t say any of it. Instead, he nodded and let out a small whimper when Ilya’s hand traced lightly over the outline of Shane’s cock, still trapped beneath his shorts and underpants.

Ilya teased him some more, kissing him on the mouth this time but not letting up in letting his hand trail over where Shane wanted him most, never giving enough to bring any sort of relief.

“Let’s do laundry then,” Ilya muttered finally, pulling down Shane’s shorts along with his pants and then turning around to put them in the machine. Slowly, incredibly slowly, Ilya started to reach for the laundry detergent, taking his time to read through the different bottles and finding out which one to use.

“Ilya,” Shane complained, not believing that Ilya would leave him stand buttnaked except for his socks in the middle of the laundry room while Ilya actually put on a load of washing, still fully clothed himself.

“Shh,” Ilya answered, “Is time for laundry now.”

Suddenly embarrassed, Shane put his hands in front of his crotch. Ilya, perceptive as always, immediately noticed and tutted.

“No need to be modest, yes? Come on, let me see.”

“Ilya.”

“Shane.”

With his hands hanging loosely at his side and his cock already leaking against his stomach by how weirdly hot he found the entire situation, Shane watched as Ilya finally decided on laundry detergent, turned the knob on the machine on the right setting and happily hummed when it started turning. Ilya turned around with a smirk, putting both of his hands on Shane’s naked hips so he could spin them around, pressing Shane against the humming and vibrating washing machine.

“Oh,” he let out in a surprised and blissed-out whimper.

“Enjoy,” Ilya winked before he dropped to his knees, took Shane in his mouth, and gave him the best blowjob Shane had ever experienced. It didn’t take long for him to finish at all, Ilya sitting back on his haunches after and grinning stupidly up at him while Shane was still breathing heavily and recovering.

“We should do this more often,” Ilya finally said when he stood up, slapping Shane at the side of his thigh.

“Yeah,” Shane chuckled, “But we don’t have to call it doing laundry together.”

“No, is a real thing,” Ilya argued back, “I saw it on American TV show.”

He leaned forward, Shane still pressed against the washing machine, and captured Shane’s lips in a soft kiss. After a couple of moments of kissing, Ilya lifted Shane’s thighs so he could sit properly on the washer, wrapping his legs around Ilya’s hips. The vibration from the machine underneath him and the stark reminder of his naked skin against Ilya’s fully clothed body made his dick perk up in interest again already.

“Round two in the bedroom?” Ilya asked when he noticed, trailing kisses along Shane’s jawline.

“Only if you carry me there.”

2 — The Great Canadian Bake Off

March 2018, Montreal

The rain was coming down heavily outside, painting the windows of Shane’s new house in a blur of raindrops. Ilya had put on the side lamps and across the big living room space that led into the dining room and kitchen, making it all feel extra comforting and cosy.

Shane was almost too exhausted to appreciate it.

The past two months had been spent coordinating the move to his new house, all while captaining a hockey team, roadtrips and away games, and working with Ilya on the Irina foundation. Then, these past three days had been spent marathon-fucking in each room of the

house while Ilya was visiting on his days off. Although he probably wouldn't admit it out loud, Shane had reached a point where no matter what Ilya could do to him, he wouldn't be in the mood for sex again for at least a week.

He was *exhausted*.

Ilya crept up on him when he was simply standing in the living room, looking outside and watching the rain as it got darker and darker. Tomorrow morning, Ilya would go back to Boston, back to practicing with his team for one last go in the playoffs before Ilya would leave them for good. Shane didn't know whether he should wish the Bears another Cup win as a departing gift or whether Ilya leaving would be easier on everyone if they didn't play until June together to hoist the Cup in the air.

"What are you thinking about?" Ilya murmured into Shane's ear, hugging him tightly from behind and swinging them from side to side a little.

"How exhausted I am," Shane told him flatly, closing his eyes and putting his full weight against Ilya. His boyfriend was strong enough to hold him for a while.

Ilya hummed and pressed a kiss to the side of Shane's head. "But not exhausted enough to bake with me?"

It took Shane a couple of moments to fully register the words.

"Bake with you? Since when do you bake?"

"Since today," Ilya said cheerfully, pressing another kiss to Shane's head. "Come help me, I already put out all the ingredients."

"I don't own baking ingredients," Shane complained, but let himself be dragged to the kitchen anyway.

"You do now."

On his kitchen island, Shane found three incredibly ripe bananas, a pack of brown sugar, flour, milk, nuts, cinnamon, and a baking tin he surely hadn't owned before this weekend.

"When did you buy all this?"

"Yesterday," Ilya shrugged easily, starting to sort everything and pulling out a mixing bowl from Shane's cupboard that he *had* already owned.

"I thought you went for a run yesterday."

"Yes, a run to the store. No more questions now, is time for baking."

Shane eyed the ingredients warily, unsure where this was coming from. Why was Ilya suddenly interested in baking of all things?

"Is this a sex thing?"

“What?”

“Is this another sex thing? Like doing laundry together, we now bake together?”

Ilya shook his head, carefully peeling the overly ripe bananas and breaking them into smaller pieces.

“Is not a sex thing. We make banana bread. Here,” he said, pushing over the mixing bowl with the bananas and a fork, “mush them.”

“Mush them?”

“Mush them, yes.”

Shane took the fork, deciding to play along for now, even though he was still confused about the change in their shared activities. They cooked together sometimes, yes, and they’ve done their fair share of laundry together over the past few months. Baking, however, was entirely new and also not on the list of things Shane thought he would ever do with Ilya.

He watched as Ilya carefully measured out each ingredient, taking his time so that the number on the scale would be *exactly* the one written down in the recipe. He figured out how to preheat the oven without Shane’s help on what the symbols meant, he instructed Shane what to mix into his mashed bananas first, and he made a lot of crinkling noise while trying to fit a sheet of baking paper into the baking tin so the banana bread wouldn’t stick to it.

“You really know what you’re doing,” Shane slipped once they were staring at the banana bread in the oven, an impressed tone in his voice.

“Yes, Hollander, I know how to read recipe. Shame they don’t teach you reading in Canada. Is important skill to have.”

Shane bumped his shoulder into him. “Asshole.”

In retaliation, instead of trying to wrestle him or tease him further, Ilya simply pulled him into a hug, beginning to swing them back and forth again. He pressed soft kisses wherever he could, making Shane’s knees a little weak by so much affection at once.

“I’m going to miss you,” Ilya mumbled eventually, so quietly that Shane almost didn’t hear it.

“Me too,” he admitted and pressed a kiss back into Ilya’s neck. “Three more months if you make it to the final. So, realistically, less than that.”

Ilya’s chest rumbled. “And you call me the asshole.”

Shane kissed Ilya again. “You’ll make it all the way, don’t worry. You’ll be so busy winning the Cup that there won’t be any time to miss me, and sooner than you can blink we’ll be at the cottage.”

Ilya leaned back in their embrace, making a point of staring at Shane and blinking rapidly.

Shane chuckled and hit him in the shoulder a little, “Child.”

“Let’s not spend any time separate tonight,” Ilya suggested while pulling Shane back into a tight embrace, “I want to cuddle on the couch and eat banana bread for dinner.”

There was a part inside Shane that twisted painfully at the sound of that, a part that wanted to scream and lecture about the nutritional value of banana bread and how it could never replace a properly balanced meal. With a heavy sigh, Shane pushed that part aside for the moment. Tonight, Ilya was more important.

Once Ilya’s bag was packed and ready to go first thing tomorrow morning, their banana bread was out of the oven and two cups of tea were made, they shared a big blanket on the couch with *When Harry Met Sally* on the TV. The more he thought about it, the clearer it became to Shane that this was their first proper slice of a shared life outside the cottage. Not just spending time together to fuck, but working together in the kitchen and ending the day cuddled up on the sofa enjoying what they had created.

The more he thought about it, the clearer it became to Shane that he wanted to end every day like this for the rest of his life.

3 — Pivot!

August 2018, Ottawa

Ilya’s new house in Ottawa was different than the one he had in Boston. For one, it was on a quiet street and a fenced in property for maximum privacy. Where there were modern edges and white walls in Boston, the centre of the Ottawa living room was a big fireplace embedded in a warm brick wall and most of the furniture he had purchased across the house was made out of beautiful, matching wood.

Shane huffed, trying to manoeuvre one of those beautiful wood pieces up the stairs. Ilya had bought a ginormous dresser for his bedroom on Facebook marketplace of all places, having read up on carbon footprints and now wanting to combat their constant flying with the team by being more environmentally conscious in his free time.

Shane was all for environmentalism, but did Ilya truly need to buy a dresser that couldn’t be taken apart and had to be carried in its entirety up the stairs?

“Pivot!”

“Ilya, if you say pivot one more time, I am going to scream.”

“Shane, tilt it to the right more and then up,” his dad provided from somewhere behind him, not having to do any of the heavy lifting but trying to help anyway.

“Next time we’re hiring movers,” Shane grunted as he tilted it to the side and they finally were able to turn around the corner and up the stairs fully.

“Ah, but is more fun like this, no?” Ilya exclaimed, seemingly not annoyed in the slightest by their moving weekend so far.

Ilya had been officially in Canada since July, living in between the cottage and Shane’s parents place until now when all of his furniture had arrived and they had decided to do a big moving weekend at once instead of doing it bit by bit. They had done it this way so Ilya and Shane had more time at the cottage, but Shane slightly regretted it now. He was ready to be done with moving.

“I think I get a point for that,” Ilya said when they reached the bedroom and placed the dresser down where he wanted it to go.

“If anything, we both get a point,” Shane grumbled.

In typical Ilya and Shane fashion, moving weekend had pretty soon turned into an undefined competition between them.

Who carried in more boxes? Who could assemble a piece of furniture better? Who could come up with the more efficient way to store things away?

The competition was something familiar to Shane, calming his nerves a little every time his mind was threatening to spill over when he thought too hard on all of the changes that he had had to endure over the past year. He *loved* that Ilya was only living a two-hour drive away from now on, but change had never come easy to Shane and he was prone to panicking about the smallest of things sometimes.

Ilya tutted slightly, noticing Shane’s mood as he always did. He sauntered over from the dresser, wrapping his arms slowly around Shane as if he was testing whether Shane would accept his hug. When Shane melted into him, Ilya pulled tight and pressed a kiss to his temple.

“Thank you for helping me this weekend.”

“Of course,” Shane replied, instantly feeling bad that he came across as so stand-offish and annoyed when he was supposed to help his boyfriend move *countries*. If anything, Ilya should be the one freaking out a bit.

Trying to redeem himself a little bit, Shane added, “I’m really glad you’ll be here from now on.”

Ilya smiled at him. “Me too. And is okay, if you feel overwhelmed right now. One day, it will feel normal to you too, yes?”

Shane’s mouth twisted and he wasn’t sure whether he was about to smile or cry. Of course, Ilya knew how he was feeling and of course, Ilya didn’t judge him for it. Of course Ilya was

the most understanding, loving boyfriend and of course, there was nothing that Shane ever had to worry about.

“I love you.”

“I love you too, *mon pomme d’amour*.”

Shane rolled his eyes and clawed his way out of Ilya’s arm. “I’m never telling you anything about French ever again.”

Downstairs, Yuna and David were busying themselves with smaller, miscellaneous tasks like wiping dust and getting the wifi to finally connect. Since the dresser was the last thing that needed to be carried inside and every last box and piece of furniture was at least in the right room, Shane started to unpack the boxes in the kitchen. Yuna had wiped down all of the cupboards earlier so that Ilya’s kitchen, which he had taken over from the previous owner of the house, was ready to be organised and filled with the random assortment of mugs that Ilya was so proud of.

Eventually, after sorting clothes into his closet, Ilya joined Shane, impressed by the system Shane had come up with. Tea and coffee close to the mugs, water glasses near the fridge, pots and pans neatly organised so they were all easy to reach, and two entire cupboards filled with all of the different baking tins and utensils Ilya had acquired over the past few months.

“We should make cinnamon rolls in this kitchen,” Ilya said after admiring all of it, thanking Shane with a kiss to his lips.

“Not today,” Shane laughed, although the sound of cinnamon rolls under a blanket on the couch with Ilya made his mouth water a little. When he looked over to the living room, however, he saw that the couch was still overloaded with different bags — mostly containing Ilya’s winter jackets and bed sheets and shoes — that needed to be sorted. Definitely not today.

“I like us like this,” Ilya said, making Shane turn towards him with a clear question mark on his face. “Like ... went from only fucking to you sorting baking things in my kitchen. Is very sexy of you.”

Shane smiled, feeling his cheeks grow hot a little bit. Ilya didn’t need to explain any further. There was intimacy and vulnerability in having sex, of course, but there was something trusting and loving in the way Ilya let Shane help him move. In the way he was okay with Shane’s parents opening boxes to see where they needed to go, in the way David was on the phone with Ilya’s wifi company when it still refused to work.

With hockey season and Ilya still living in Boston at the time, he hadn’t been able to actually support Shane in his own move a couple of months ago. This was their first time carrying boxes for each other, and if Shane had anything to say about it, he would never let Ilya move anywhere in the future if it didn’t mean they were moving in together.

“Let’s order pizza, yes?” Ilya interrupted his thoughts, “I think warm pizza will calm down David after he gets off the phone with the wifi.”

4 — Sir, I'm Just a Farm Boy

June 2019, Ottawa

“What is this?” Ilya asked with a disgusted face.

“Chicory.”

Ilya eyed him warily as Shane bagged the chicory and put it in their cart.

“And what do we need it for?”

“To eat, asshole. It’s good for your stomach. Can you grab some spring onions, please?”

Shane loved and hated the supermarket. Loved, because he got to make a list and a plan and could go through the supermarket ticking off one item after the other. Hated, because supermarket was just another word for sensory hell.

He had been surprised when Ilya showed him an ad for the quiet hour at a Farm Boy near Ilya’s house in Ottawa. Every Thursday, from 5 to 7, the supermarket dimmed its lights, played no music over the speakers, and asked of people to do their shopping in relative quiet. In all their years together, Shane and Ilya had never been to a supermarket together before, and still, Ilya somehow had known that the quiet hour would be something Shane thoroughly enjoyed.

“Sweet potatoes, yes?” Shane asked, but didn’t wait for Ilya’s response before putting them into the cart as well.

It was the end of June and tomorrow morning, they would get in the packed car and head to the cottage for some weeks alone before their first ever hockey camp in July. They were stocking up on most of the food now that could survive the two-hour car journey without melting or defrosting, so the shopping near the cottage wouldn’t have to be too overwhelming. Mostly, Shane wanted to stock up on some fruits and vegetables which meant for every plant he put in their cart, Ilya would later find some sort of chocolate or gummy worms to add.

“You like these ones, yes?” Ilya suddenly asked, holding up the types of apples Shane liked best. With warm cheeks, Shane nodded and watched as Ilya brought them over and laid them gently in the cart. No matter how many times it happened, Shane always felt flustered all over when Ilya proved just how perceptive and caring he could be.

The flustered feelings made way to laughter when Ilya’s face almost turned as green as the kale Shane was pulling from the shelf, his lips turned upwards in disgust.

“It’ll be great for breakfast smoothies,” Shane teased, making Ilya shake his head.

“Where are the eggs? They sell bacon here, yes? Bread?”

They needed a couple of more minutes in the fresh produce section until Shane had gone through his entire list, Ilya waiting patiently and only making minimally disgusted faces at the too healthy products. They stocked up on some bread, marmalade, and coffee which made Ilya visibly relieved at knowing he would have other options for breakfast than *kale smoothies*.

They bickered in the canned food aisle on which pickles were the best, ultimately buying two different ones so they were both satisfied.

“Is weird,” Ilya contemplated seriously.

“Your pickles? Yeah, they are.”

“No, that we both like pickles.” Instead of a reply, Shane simply raised his eyebrows in questions. “Normally,” Ilya continued, “one person in the relationship doesn’t like pickles so the other person eats them off their burgers and stuff.”

“What do you mean normally? Who says that?”

“Everyone,” Ilya shrugged. Then, more quietly, he added, “The internet.”

“Well, if we ever break apart, I’m sure it will be because of your horrible decision on pickles, not the fact that we both like pickles in general.”

It was a little weird being so out and about with Ilya, although the supermarket was relatively empty and Shane didn’t feel like they were about to be recognised by anyone in here.

It was okay to do this, he reminded himself. Friends went to the grocery store together all the time. One big reason why they started to tell the media they were friends was so that they could publicly spend time together without rousing suspicion.

This was *fine*.

Ilya put some canned tuna in the cart, waiting until Shane looked him in the eyes so he could wink at him. Shane made a mental note to get extra cheese when they went shopping at the cottage again, and the nice baguette from the small bakery they always passed on their way to the cottage.

“One ginger ale for you,” Ilya said when they came close to the drinks, “Many, many coca colas for me.”

Shane giggled, watching as Ilya hunted down an entire pack of ginger ale cans before he went anywhere near the cokes. Then, they both giggled when they found themselves once again bickering on which toilet paper and kitchen roll to buy.

“Snackies!” Ilya finally exclaimed when they were coming to the end of the store. He had picked up the term on a video online, laughing so much the first time he had heard it that he

slid off the couch to lie on the floor and calm himself down. Since then, Ilya refused to use any other word than *snackies* to refer to anything that wasn't a full meal.

"Behave," Shane warned, but he wasn't sure Ilya actually heard him over the rush that was probably flowing in his ears at the sight of his favourite chips, of which they apparently needed three packs. As well as four different types of gummy bears, salt pretzels, and a limited edition on chocolate covered peanuts.

Shane had to rein himself in with his comments. On the one hand, he wanted to tell Ilya off for buying so much unhealthy shit. On the other hand, he didn't want to be the type of person to give his own boyfriend a guilty feeling for the things he enjoyed eating.

"Okay," Ilya said when the balance between vegetables and snacks in their cart reached an equilibrium, "Your turn."

"My turn for what?"

"Your turn to pick out snackies."

"I'm good, Ilya. If you're done, we can go pay. I think we have everything on the list."

Ilya stood in front of the cart, grabbing onto it so Shane couldn't move.

"We're going to the cottage for three weeks and you don't want to bring a single snackie? No, not acceptable."

For a moment, it felt like the moment could explode into a fully blown argument right then and there. Taking a big breath, not wanting to destroy the happy atmosphere they had going between them, Shane decided to give in before making any more of a fuss.

"You go pick something for me then."

Ilya beamed, already turning around to go back to his beloved snackies.

"Ilya," Shane said seriously, waiting till Ilya stopped and looked at him, "One."

Just as Shane had taken a breath and let go, Ilya did the same now, nodding along even though he probably wanted to protest that Shane needed more than just one snack over the course of multiple weeks.

When he came back, he held a five-pack of snickers proudly in his hands.

"I feel like that's cheating," Shane mumbled to himself, but he thanked Ilya anyway and led them to the cash register, happy that they were done and it was the best supermarket experience he had probably ever had.

When they were in the car again, on the way back to the house and Ilya felt safe again to put a hand on Shane's thigh, Shane sighed happily and said, "We should go to the store together more often. It's way more fun with you."

5 — Calvin and Hugo Sittin In a Tree

September 2020, Ottawa

“What are you doing?”

Shane looked up, his heart skipping a beat at being caught. Ilya leaned casually against the doorframe to his bedroom in Ottawa, watching as Shane went through his underwear drawer. For a moment, Shane thought about casually coming up with a lie, but then he decided to be honest.

“I am looking for the underwear you stole from me.”

“I would never do such thing,” Ilya replied immediately.

Unimpressed, Shane held up one of the pairs of underpants he had already found.

“This is mine. So is the rest of half this drawer.”

Ilya shrugged. “You mind if we share underwear?”

Shane breathed out heavily. “I don’t mind sharing, no. I mind if my boyfriend steals more than half of mine, leaving me with barely any. Or do you want me to have to share with Hayden on the next roadtrip because I didn’t have enough anymore?”

Ilya stepped into the room fully, “Fuck no. Do not put on Hayden’s fucking underwear.”

“Then don’t steal all of mine.”

“Was not all of them,” Ilya muttered, “I left you ugly ones.”

The statement was so ridiculous and surprisingly honest that Shane couldn’t help but chuckle too loudly into the room.

“Oh, you left me the ugly ones? Well, thank you for extending that much grace. Why did you steal them in the first place?”

Ilya shrugged sheepishly, walking over so he could wrap his arms around Shane’s torso and put his chin on Shane’s shoulder from behind.

“Mine had holes in them, needed new ones.”

Shane scuffed. “And have you heard of this thing called *buying new underwear*?”

“I did,” Ilya said innocently, “I went to your dresser to shop for new underwear.”

“You are ridiculous,” Shane stated determinedly, grabbing the stack of pants he had found in Ilya’s dresser to put them in his weekend bag. Ilya followed him like a lost puppy. “We are buying you new underwear. Come on.”

In the living room, Shane let himself fall on the sofa with Ilya’s laptop in hands. Ilya joined him, snuggling up right to his side and resting his head sideways on Shane’s shoulders.

“For the record, I know you’re using me to buy you new underwear even though you’re perfectly capable of doing it on your own. This will be the first, and only time, understood?”

Ilya grinned. “Sure.”

“I mean it.”

Buying underwear together was, as it turned out, not as easy as it sounded. Ilya, at first telling him that he wanted the same ones he had, then was flabbergasted at how expensively Shane was apparently shopping for his underwear and refused to spend that much on underpants alone. After that, they spent ten minutes discussing which shapes and materials tended to chafe — a new vocabulary word for Ilya — and then they cried laughing tears when they discovered a matching SpongeBob and Patrick the Star boxer set.

Once they were done with painstakingly choosing underpants, they spent another fifteen minutes finding funny socks for Ilya and *boring* (Ilya’s words) white ones for Shane. Then, it turned into anything that Ilya spotted.

“Oh, look, little Snoopy pants. Put them in the cart.”

Shane furrowed his brows. “Do you even wear pyjama pants to bed? Ever?”

“I will if they have little Snoopys on them.”

And.

“This is nice beanie, it will match with yours. Add it, please.”

“Don’t you have enough beanies?”

“Add the beanie, Hollander. I want to match with you.”

The package Ilya would receive in three to four business days was going to be much larger than just a handful of new underpants.

Once Shane went through with the order and closed the laptop again, Ilya cuddled closer and let his head rest on Shane’s chest. Shane sniffed in the scent of his shampoo a little bit, scratching his fingernails on Ilya’s scalp and tugging lightly at his curls.

Ilya hummed.

“I like this,” he mumbled.

“Cuddling on the couch?”

“No,” Ilya shook his head a little, “Being boring with you. Ordering new pants.”

“And socks. And pyjama pants. And beanies. And-“

Ilya hit him lightly in the chest. “Oh, shut up.”

Shane kissed the top of his head. “I like it too, sharing life with you. I don’t care how boring it is.”

Ilya tilted his head up so they could look at each other, a big, dopey grin on his lips. Shane looked over his face, categorising the way Ilya looked in the moment and committing it to memory. He hoped Ilya would stay this happy forever.

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