

Wants and Needs

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by [DistantStorm](#)

Summary

During Ilya's first season in Ottawa, Shane asks his dad to pick Ilya up from the hospital after a mild injury.

Or: Ilya doesn't realize that the Hollanders are a package deal. David, in his way, tries to remedy that.

It's late when his phone buzzes. Not so late that he's asleep, though he probably should be, because it's been a very long evening and he's never been able to switch off when a game doesn't go well. It used to be just Shane that he'd be up late worrying over. He's seen plenty of injuries, Shane's been skating since he was two years old, but it doesn't get easier when it's your kid.

And now, there's two of them. It was different last year when Ilya played for Boston. He and Shane were so new—to them, at least—so they'd just text. Yuna would ask how he's feeling in the family group chat and Ilya would always reply that he's fine, make some comment about an opposing player he'd get back next time, always put on that brave front or direct attention back to Shane.

But now, two summers and then some, not to mention the foundation, it's different. They *know* Ilya now.

He comes over for dinner every other week—once a month with Shane when their schedules match, once a month alone—and always insists upon doing the dishes with Yuna, trying very hard to follow her rapid-fire stream of consciousness and well-intended micromanagement of his career, the occasional yet accidentally painful questions she blurts with no filter. It takes nearly six months of regular dinners for the man to relax when Shane isn't present, something that troubles Yuna but Shane (and David) insist isn't to do with something they've done wrong.

They know that he's good at cards but prefers playing *Yahtzee* and he refuses to play *Sorry!* on principle. (“Why call it Sorry? I am not sorry you are losing.”)

They know he's quiet sometimes, that there's a shadow in his eyes. Especially when Shane is gone. When that happens, they share a glance, save doing dishes for the morning, and turn on old reruns of game shows he saves on the DVR to drone on in the background. Yuna can't stand them, so she watches for five minutes before growing bored, wandering off. She always throws the fluffy pink blanket from the hallway closet over Ilya before she retreats to her office or the bedroom, only coming out if Shane calls.

Speaking of: David reaches for his phone, slides his finger across the screen to answer. “Hey, Shane.”

“Hi Dad,” Shane sounds tired. Montreal played tonight too, but this kind of tired, this weight, it's different.

“You talk to Ilya? That was a nasty tumble into the boards.”

Shane sounds far away. It's quiet though, so he must be back home. “Doctors just read the scan. Looks okay, thankfully. They want him to stay overnight for observation since he doesn't have anybody at home, but,” Shane trails off. “Is, um,” he pauses again, sounding a little nervous. “Is Mom asleep?”

Ah, he thinks, knowing where this conversation is headed. “Yeah, she turned in about an hour ago when Ilya texted the group chat. Did you tell him to—“

“He doesn’t want to be a burden,” Shane blurts, honest to a fault, then “Fuck. He’d be so mad that I said that.”

“You *are* calling me to pick him up, right?” David’s already grabbing his keys from the bowl at the edge of the kitchen counter, has one foot shoved into his boots. It’s freezing this time of year, but the garage is warm enough that he won’t need to wait for the car to warm up before he hops in.

”I—yeah,” he agrees.

“Okay,” He answers, easy, pointedly ignoring Shane’s sigh of relief. “We’ll pretend the other part didn’t happen. Your game go alright? Saw you got three assists, not bad. Mom was screaming at Tampa like they’d personally insulted her when you got hooked, though.”

”Yeah, game was good,” Shane is totally tuned out, but he usually crashes hard on the second night of a back-to-back and this game went to a shootout. He’s supposed to drive out to Ottawa in the morning. He’d make the drive tonight, even though he shouldn’t, which means Ilya has probably talked him down. “Just tired. Worried.”

David hits the button for the ignition and the car comes to life as the garage door opens. He can hear the subtle beep as the call switches to Bluetooth. “I’m in the Audi, and there’s no snow on the roads so I’ll be there in forty. Want me to call him when I get close? You sound like you’re going to conk out any second.”

”Would you?”

“”Course, kiddo.”

“Thanks, Dad. I’ll text him that you’re already on your way so he can ask for the discharge paperwork.”

And so that Ilya can’t try to call and stop him, Shane doesn’t say.



It’s just after one in the morning when Ilya puts his bag in the trunk. He’s quiet, squinting against the bright white of snow flurries and yellowy parking lot lighting. David hands him a pair of sunglasses when he throws himself into the passenger seat, in lieu of a greeting, the extra pair he kept in the glovebox from two seasons ago when Shane had his most recent concussion.

“Is mild,” Ilya insists, staring straight ahead. He takes the glasses, holds them loosely in his fingers, but refuses to put them on. “Three days rest, team medic clears me, back on ice in a

week. Should have kept my head up.”

David doesn't answer him. He doesn't blame Ilya for being in a bad mood or his criticism of himself. Yuna had said the same when he'd been hit, but she says the same for Shane too, usually swearing at the television in some combination of panic, terror, and relief. Tonight was mostly panic because he'd gotten up quickly, but with the air of a drunk: wobbly, unsteady.

“Told Shane not to disturb you or Yuna,” Ilya continues. “Is fine. I've had worse.”

It's dead empty this time of night, the Rideau River ink black to their right as they head south. The flurries begin to die back down as they get out of the city proper. David thinks about Shane's call, how he'd been timid, nervous that his mom would insert herself.

“I know,” David agrees, because he knows it's true. “Let an old man be selfish and worry about you.”

Ilya spins so quickly he swears, or at least David *thinks* he does given the language barrier, wincing at the instant headache the motion induces. “You drive to hospital in middle of night to collect stupid idiot who does not need coddling,” he says, pointing at himself, noticeably frustrated, “But say you are selfish? *You?* Is untrue.”

David tightens his grip on the steering wheel. Yuna has told him bits and pieces, information she gets from Ilya in the course of their conversations, those typically normal, safe questions she's asked Shane's teammates over the years that for Ilya are complicated. It's not... unexpected, exactly, but it makes David's blood boil, not that he says anything about it. He sets his jaw.

“I am sorry, David. I did not mean to be ungrateful.” Ilya looks over, more gingerly this time. He looks impossibly young, face illuminated by streetlights. “I appreciate the, um, pickup. And the—” he gestures ambiguously at what is presumably the very low maintenance monitoring his injury requires, like Yuna won't be up at the crack of dawn asking Shane for copies of his discharge paperwork, debating if she should make a grocery run since Ilya's housekeeper doesn't come back until Tuesday and he'll be home for the weekend, missing Saturday's road game in Vancouver. Like David won't message Shane on the side to check in, offer to talk Yuna down from overreacting. Like he won't inevitably sneak out to the garage to call Shane so he can try to process his emotions. Ilya tries to bury his hurts. He never wants anyone he cares for to worry about him, as if any of the Hollanders can help it.

For a moment, David wishes he was better with emotions, that he could figure out exactly what Ilya needs to hear, some magic words that could reframe this. It's rare that he actually *wants* to have a talk, much less a heart-to-heart, but right now is one of those times it's necessary. He needs to say *something*.

He lays his right hand on Ilya's shoulder. Squeezes. “I'm not mad at you,” he says slowly. Carefully.

“I—no?”

“No,” he confirms.

“But you are angry.”

David presses his lips together. Exhales. The words are... hard. Tangled. With Shane, it's so easy. He just knows his dad's got his back, that he'll be there, that he's got a place to stay when he shouldn't be on his own.

“Whatever happened... before,” he begins, pointedly, then sputters out, wondering if he's gone about this the right way, deciding the past really isn't any of his business, “It's—we aren't like that. If something happens and you want someone to be there for you but can't go to Shane—or even if you can,” he adds, because he thinks that might be important, “You can always call me. Yuna, too. We're always going to come for you.”

”But—”

“But nothing,” David interrupts, gentle yet firm. “That's what family does.”

Ilya nods shakily and turns his head to look out the window. Sniffs. David turns the radio on low and focuses his attention on the road. At some point, Ilya puts the sunglasses on. David pretends not to see the tear tracks he swipes away as they pull into the garage.

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