

they'll come around

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Summary

[Spoilers for Episode 6 of Heated Rivalry]

Ilya watched as Shane followed his Mom outside. Shane had left with a parting glance at Ilya that was probably trying to tell him something, but Ilya couldn't figure out what exactly. Was he supposed to stay put? Or should he go after Shane, just in case something went wrong after all?

He was about to get up, maybe just to check out of the window really quick that Shane was fine, but before he could move, he heard David clear his throat. Right, Shane's Dad was still here, sitting opposite him and looking at him expectantly.

Notes

Saw the episode. Had a breakdown. But there needed to be Ilya's POV of this scene, so... Bon appetit.

So this had gone... well? Ilya still wasn't really sure.

It certainly hadn't gone as badly as it could have, but Shane's parents hadn't exactly welcomed them with open arms. It was understandable, but Ilya was still on edge, waiting to defend Shane and fight for him any moment.

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David still hadn't said much. From what Ilya gathered, he didn't seem to be much of a talker. But, while he still appeared to be surprised and a little thrown aback by the sudden revelation, he didn't seem to be taking it as hard as his wife.

Although Ilya could be totally wrong here and thing might still go sideways. Shane knew his parents best, and he hadn't wanted to tell them yet. Knowing Shane, he would have made a foolproof plan beforehand, stressing about it for weeks, maybe even months. Now that stress had been taken away, but Ilya might have preferred it the other way around. Maybe there was a little relief that someone knew now, but there was also the other part of him that wished this hadn't been taken away from Shane.

Back at the All-Star-Game, when Shane had told him he was gay, Ilya had felt like it was important to him. He hadn't grasped it at first, too stuck in his own head to realize, but it had come to him later when he'd been replaying the moment in his head on his flight the next day. Even though Ilya knew, had technically known for years, Shane had needed to tell him. And now he'd missed the opportunity to tell his own parents.

Ilya took another sip of vodka. It was alright. Not as good as he'd pretended it was, but probably better than he would have assumed in this typically Canadian home. The house was every bit as boring as Ilya would have expected, with throw pillows and knickknacks and family photos on the wall. He tried to imagine little Shane running around in here, being so carefree before he knew all that the world would thrust upon him.

When he looked back at David, he found him studying him. Was he worried about his son? Appalled by what he'd witnessed? Ilya prided himself on being able to read people pretty well, but he was completely out of his depth here. He thought that David's eyes looked kind, though.

"This house is nice," he said, just to have something to talk about. He wanted to be nice to Shane's parents and he hadn't done a good job of that so far. Wearing the Boston Raiders shirt had probably been a bad idea, and nervously blurting out that they were lovers had made things even more tense. Maybe Shane should have come alone after all.

David didn't indulge in Ilya's bad attempt at smalltalk. Instead, he smiled warmly at Ilya. "She'll come around, you know."

Ilya found himself nodding. Maybe. He wanted Shane's Mom to be okay with them, but he couldn't be sure just yet. He didn't dare to voice his doubts out loud. It was a habit he'd grown used to over the years, always considering every possible outcome, but maybe he'd need to trust in David's kind eyes in this moment.

It was nice that Shane's Dad was talking to him at all, being reassuring in his own way, even if Ilya didn't really know how to handle it. "Okay."

"I suppose now I should ask you what your intentions are with my son."

Ilya felt like he'd made his intentions pretty clear already, but at least this question was easy to answer. "I love him."

David inclined his head slightly, not fully nodding, but also not dismissing him. "Love is hard sometimes."

"It is." Ilya had witnessed firsthand how hard it could be with his own parents, but he didn't want to think about his mother now. He'd told Shane she would have loved him and he'd been confident about it in that moment. However, this was different. There was no reason to compare two things that would never be the same.

He pushed his vodka glass away, folding his hands in front of him. He resisted the urge to reach for the cross on his chain. There were probably no right things to say in this moment, but Ilya didn't want to fuck this up either. There were a million options running through his head, like how it wasn't hard when you'd found the right person, or how he was fucking scared, but he refused to let fear stop him. None of these responses felt right.

Ilya knew it was going to be hard, but he was still here. He had come to the cottage. He wanted to be with Shane. "I think it is worth it."

"You might be right about that."

Ilya still wasn't sure if he'd done terribly or if he'd made his intentions clear enough, but before he could gauge David's reaction or ask any followup questions, he heard the front door open. He was on his feet in an instant, but even though Shane's face looked wet, he was smiling.

"How about you two stay for dinner?" Yuna said. "We were about to make pasta."

Ilya tried to catch Shane's gaze, but Shane was looking between his parents and nodding before Ilya could even get a word in. It was fine, though. If Shane wanted to stay for dinner, Ilya would be right here by his side.

They would need to talk about this later. What their plans were. How they were going to move forward. And also how Shane felt about the whole thing. But for now, Ilya would have

to do with conversation that still felt slightly awkward, but gave him hope that things might be different in the future.

Before Yuna began plating up their pasta, he felt Shane's hand reach for his own under the table. When he looked up, he found David's eyes on them, and now Ilya didn't doubt anymore that there was anything but kindness in them. He'd probably been right. Shane's Mom would come around eventually.

For as weird as this still was, Ilya felt that things had gone as well as they could have. And it would definitely be worth it in the long run.

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