

I Will Hold You Up, I'll Be Right Beside You

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I Will Hold You Up, I'll Be Right Beside You

by [lucianowriter](#)

Summary

Ilya has a series of really bad days, so Shane plans an elaborate surprise to cheer him up.

Notes

Hello my lovelies,

The other day I was sad and grieving my grandmother (who passed a few years ago but I was really close to) so I turned on Heated Rivalry to distract myself. Instead, I ended up thinking about how once Ilya came out he could never return to Russia or visit his mom's grave ever again. Then, I started to think about writing a fic that possibly explored that.

Thus, this fic was born. I tried not to make it too sad, but in essence it is a sad concept. However, Shane comes to the rescue to make Ilya feel better.

I want to extend a big debt of gratitude to all of you who have been graciously reading my fics and supporting my ideas. It's been a long time since I've been this centered on a particular fandom when it comes to writing fanfiction. It's only been a few weeks of the show and I've been writing like crazy ever since. Thanks to you guys supporting me I am encouraged to keep going.

Hope you like this story.

Title comes from the song: Beside You by Marianas Trench

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

Shane stood in the kitchen of their new home in Ottawa. They'd chosen this place because it allowed them the level of privacy they wanted with the added warmth of it being a place they both loved. He stared out into their backyard where they'd gotten married last month. The late summer sun was just starting to come up over the horizon which gave the yard a beautiful glow.

Ilya was having an off day so he'd scheduled an emergency session with his therapist. Shane was trying not to worry too much about his husband. It wasn't often he got like this anymore. Not since he'd started therapy and gotten on some meds. But, something about today was throwing the man he loved off center. Shane wondered if there was anything he could do to help Ilya, but without knowing why he was feeling off, Shane couldn't even begin to plan.

He heard the soft padding of Ilya's socked feet coming into the kitchen. The man came up behind Shane and wrapped his arms around his torso. Ilya soon buried his face into the crook of Shane's neck, where it met his collar bone, and just let it rest there. No kisses. No nuzzling. Just existing in close proximity to Shane. Shane didn't dare say anything. He knew that this was Ilya's way of saying that he needed Shane, but he didn't want to talk to Shane. So, instead they stood there by the kitchen window. Shane's hand reached up and he buried his fingers in Ilya's hair. Ilya gave a contented sigh.

Some time later, Ilya pulled away and for the first time since before he'd escaped into the office for his session, Shane saw his husband's face. His eyes were puffy and red from crying. Shane's heart broke at the sight. He pulled Ilya against his chest into a bone crushing hug.

"Oh, Ilya. I'm sorry." He stroked his hand up and down Ilya's back in a soothing motion that he knew the Russian loved. "You don't have to talk about it. I'm here."

A choked sob erupted from Ilya's chest at Shane's words. Shane continued to run one hand through Ilya's hair while the other rubbed his back. He gave quiet, gentle shushs and whispered sweet nothings as Ilya worked through his emotions. This was how they were now. Instead of shutting down and hiding themselves from each other, they leaned on one another to get through the tough days. Shane was grateful that Ilya had finally reached a point where he was open and honest with Shane about his depression.

"She would've loved it here." Ilya finally whispered, his voice wet from the tears.

Shane went over the words in his head a few times before he felt he understood them enough to respond. When he did respond he pulled Ilya back so his hand could cup Ilya's cheek, and his thumb could catch stray tears.

"Your mom?"

Ilya jerked a nod. Then, his eyes drifted to the side, unable to continue looking at Shane.
"Can't stop thinking of her."

"I'm sorry Ilya." Shane rubbed his hands up and down Ilya's biceps. He wasn't going to force the man to look at him directly. When Ilya got like this he struggled to connect in all the ways they normally did. However, he didn't mind if Shane touched him, in fact he'd once said that he preferred Shane's touch and presence more than anything when he was feeling low.

"I can't..." Shane wasn't sure what Ilya was trying to say, but whatever it was was causing him some distress. He pulled completely away from Shane and started to pace the kitchen, his hands shaking.

"I can't..." Ilya tried again and failed once more.

"You can't what?" Shane asked, leaning back against the counter holding his body in an open position for Ilya's comfort should he need it.

Ilya stopped moving, but his hands were still shaking. "I can never see her again."

That's when it dawned on Shane what was causing Ilya so much heartbreak. Ever since they'd come out earlier that year, Ilya hadn't been allowed back in Russia. Which, on most days he was completely fine with. There had never been a super strong connection for Ilya and his homeland. Mostly because he'd always known it was never permanent should he ever come out publicly. However, on his lowest days he'd think of something tying him to the one place he could never return. Today it seemed to be his mom.

Shane didn't know what to say. So, he simply crossed the room and gathered Ilya up in his arms once more. He hugged his husband and rubbed his back. Shane might not have words, but he did have actions that could show Ilya that he wasn't alone. That Shane would always be there to hold him up and keep him going. If nothing else, Shane had unconditional love for Ilya Rozanov which was more valuable than any material thing their careers had afforded them.

A few days later, Shane was having lunch with his mom at a nice little restaurant that had tables in a garden setting. As they ate their salads, Shane hatched a plan.

"Hey, mom. What do you know about flowers?" Shane looked out at their surroundings and imagined having some of these flowers in their backyard at home.

Yuna looked up from the emails she was answering on her tablet and gave her son her full attention. "What's that?"

"Flowers. Do you know anything about planting them and maintaining them?" Shane asked again.

"I know a little. My mom was an avid gardener. Why do you ask?" She crossed her legs and gave Shane a soft, open expression.

Shane took a deep breath. "Ilya had a rough day on Wednesday. I don't think I've ever seen him that broken before. He was distraught because he'd realized that he can never see his mom again."

"Didn't she die some time ago?" It was clear to Shane his mother wasn't making the connection so he tried again.

“He can never return to Russia. His mother is buried there.”

Shane recognized the moment his mom understood. Her eyes got rounder and her hand covered her mouth. “Oh, I couldn’t imagine not being able to see my mom’s grave whenever I want.”

“Exactly. I love going to see grandma. Just sitting on the bench nearby and telling her about my latest games.” Shane smiled fondly. “I want Ilya to have that. He deserves it.”

“But how can we do that? It’s not like we can move her body here to Canada.” His mom, ever the pragmatist, pointed out.

“I know. Hence the flower question. I was thinking we could make a spot in our back yard by the big tree. We could make a flower garden and have a bench placed so he can go there and be with her.” Shane bit his lip, nervous that his mom would find his idea to be ridiculous and over the top.

“Shane.” His mom’s eyes grew fond and she reached her hand out to clasp his, “That is the most beautiful thing I’ve ever heard. Ilya will love it.”

“Really? It’s not too much?”

“No, it’s perfect. You could even add a placard with her name on it.”

Shane smiled at his mom. He loved that she was always ready to help him with whatever he asked. Even better she understood that even though she loved Ilya like a second son, Ilya would always want his mother above Yuna Hollander.

“Would you help me with it?” Shane asked his mom, tentatively.

“Of course! I’ll even drag your father along. Ever since he retired he’s been bouncing off the walls. It’s probably best we give him something to do.”

“Thank you mom. This means so much to me.” Shane could feel tears welling up in his eyes.

“Anything for my boys.”

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Over the next few weeks, Shane spent quite a few hours over at his parents’ house planning the logistics of the new Irina Rozanova garden. They could’ve easily hired a landscaper to design and create the space, but with how deeply meaningful the project was, Shane wanted to put his own personal touch on it and so did his parents.

So, Shane approached Ilya and gave him the keys to the cottage. When Ilya looked at him quizzically, Shane gave a small smile and replied.

“I figured you and I could go spend a few weeks there before the season starts and we get too busy. But, I can’t go right away because of that meeting I have for the foundation tomorrow.”

“So you want me to go alone?” Ilya looked thoroughly confused.

“Just for a day or so. I just figured you could get a few swims in and enjoy the peace and quiet. Get out of your head a bit.”

“It won’t be peaceful. Not with the stupid Canadian wolf bird.” Ilya grinned, “Also I would miss you.”

“I’ll call. You need this time alone. Get your head on straight. Do some yoga.”

Ilya rolled his eyes and scoffed. But, in the end he had relented. It all ended up being extremely easy to convince him. Which proved to Shane just how depressed Ilya was feeling these days. Which made him that much more determined to ensure this garden was finished quickly and looked perfect.

During the first day that Ilya was at the cottage, Shane went to the shop that he'd ordered the placard from. He wanted to view it before it became the final product. All so he could approve text and etchings. It was a simple black granite stone with white lettering that said:

Irina Rozanova

любимая мама

Shane had agonized over what to put on the stone, but had finally landed on beloved mother in Russian. Next to the text was an outline of the cross symbol on Ilya's necklace. On the other side was a simple white lily. Shane had done extensive research into Russian funeral traditions and had discovered that lilies are often used in funerals. He loved the idea and so he'd put one on the stone.

For the garden itself Shane and his parents had settled on lilies, chrysanthemums, gladiolus, and roses. They had even settled on a small patch of Russian sage close to the placard to symbolize enduring love and strength. They'd landed on muted colors with pops of red from the roses. So much research had gone into the message they wanted this garden to send. Shane was determined that this garden be a safe, happy, comforting space for his husband.

Once everything had been finalized, Shane went to the cottage while his parents completed the planting and arranging. He would've stayed to help, but he had promised Ilya he would arrive at the cottage not long after him and he was already pushing 2 days. So, Shane left his parents behind and trusted they'd bring his vision to life.

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Shane and Ilya were relaxing on the dock watching the sun set when he received a text from his mom.

From: Mom

The garden is ready.

To: Mom

Got it. We'll head back tomorrow.

Ilya turned to Shane and made grabby hands for Shane's phone. But, he dodged them and put his phone away completely.

"Don't worry. I'm done. No more texting." Shane smiled at Ilya and straddled his lap.

Ilya's hands traveled up to the center of his back to provide leverage and support. They came together and kissed passionately. When they needed to separate for air, Ilya leaned his head against Shane's forehead and gave a contented sigh.

"Thank you. I know these last few weeks haven't been easy."

"You never have to apologize. When we stood in our backyard and promised each other forever, it included the good and the bad." Shane placed a gentle peck on Ilya's lips.

"How'd I get so lucky?" Ilya murmured.

"You decided to be an asshole to a dumb, eager rookie from Ottawa 12 years ago."

"Is that so?" Ilya smirked and leaned in for another kiss.

"Speaking of which, I have a surprise for you. It's back at the house. We can head home tomorrow morning." Shane muttered against Ilya's lips.

Ilya leaned back, “A surprise? Why?”

Shane shrugged with a blush, “Just because.”

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The next day, they made excellent time arriving at their home by 11 in the morning. Shane had been texting with his parents as Ilya drove them home. So, he knew that they were at the house waiting for them in the backyard. Shane smiled to himself as he chanced a glance at his husband, whose focus was on the road. He reached out and placed his hand on the nape of Ilya’s neck. His husband gave a low moan and relaxed into the touch.

“My parents said they’d meet us at the house. They want to treat us to lunch.” Shane said, knowing it was best to inform Ilya that they’d be there than to hit him with two surprises in quick succession.

“Oh is your dad going to grill?” Ilya got a delighted look on his face at the thought.

“Yeah, I think so.” Shane replied, using his other hand to text his mom asking if dad could do some chicken and burgers on the grill.

When they arrived at their home, Ilya pulled the car into their garage and killed the engine. Shane rubbed his neck once more and then moved to get out of the car. He waited for Ilya to do the same and then he put out his arm, silently asking for Ilya’s hand. Ilya obliged, eagerly, and they walked through the backdoor of their garage which led directly into the backyard. Luckily, the garden wasn’t easily seen from the garage. So, Shane had time to ease him into what they were about to show him.

Ilya let go of Shane’s hand in order to quickly stride over to his mom and dad. Ilya loved Shane’s parents as much as they loved him. It warmed Shane’s heart every time he saw the three most important people in his life get along famously. He never could’ve imagined his life would turn out this way. All those years of being scared of his shadow because he was

secretly in love with his biggest rival seemed so unnecessary now. Seeing how well his parents accepted everything made Shane long for a redo so they could've had more time in those early years.

"Shane, do you want to show Ilya his surprise?" His mom's voice pulled him out of his thoughts.

Shane smiled, "Yes."

Then, he walked past Ilya, grabbing his hand as he went and directed his husband to the far side of the big tree in their backyard. When the garden came into view, Shane heard Ilya gasp. He turned and watched as his husband's hand covered his mouth and tears glistened in his eyes. Shane was worried he'd done the wrong thing.

"I'm sorry. I thought a memorial garden for your mom would be something you'd like. Since you can't go back to Russia. But, I can take it down if it's too much."

Ilya stopped Shane with a kiss. "No, is not too much. Is just right."

Ilya wrapped his arm around Shane's back and leaned down so his head could rest on Shane's shoulder. It couldn't have been a super comfortable position, so Shane pulled him toward the bench his mom and dad had bought and placed in the center of the garden.

"Let's sit."

They sat in silence for a while as the seasonal birds chirped in the midday air. Shane's hand found its way to Ilya's and they held on tight. Ilya leaned on Shane's shoulder once more.

"How'd you know what flowers to put?" Ilya asked quietly, not moving an inch.

“I did some research into Russian traditions. Then, I added some color to show the love amongst the remembrance. There is Russian sage, lilies, chrysanthemums, gladiolus, and roses. And for the placard I figured beloved mother in Russian was the best sentiment to go with, but if you want something else I can order a new one.” Shane knew he was rambling, but he was nervous that Ilya would find fault in his choices.

“Shane.” Ilya’s voice was loving, but sincere, “Shut up. Is perfect. She would’ve loved it. And I love it.”

“You’ve been so down, I figured with a garden you could still visit her anytime you like.” Shane felt his own tears start to build up in the corner of his eyes.

“Thank you, Shane. I love you.” Ilya murmured, his thumb caressing Shane’s cheek as they leaned in for another kiss. “I think she would’ve loved you.”

Shane nuzzled Ilya’s neck and kissed him on the spot where it met with his shoulders. “She would be so proud of you. Getting help. Not giving up.”

“I could never do that to you.”

“I know.”

“Shane.” Ilya paused as Shane murmured in recognition, “I know I say it a lot, but I do love you.”

Shane smiled and looked up at Ilya, “And I love you. More than hockey.”

—

Much later, they were all seated outside in the midday sun eating the food Shane’s dad had cooked on the grill. Ilya was quiet, but not a sad quiet, more like a thoughtful quiet. Shane

reached out and ran his fingers through Ilya's hair. Ilya looked up. His eyes locked on Shane and then moved to his parents.

"Mr. and Mrs. Hollander, thank you for my garden."

"It was all Shane. He just asked for help with getting it planted." Shane's mom smiled warmly at Ilya.

"We're more than happy to help, son." Shane's dad using the term of endearment, and giving Ilya a placeholder in the family was the perfect bookend to this day.

Based on Ilya's reaction to it, Shane would have to admit Ilya felt the same way.

"You didn't have to. Too much trouble." Ilya said, bashful.

"It was no trouble at all," Shane's dad exclaimed.

"Anything for our boys." His mom repeated the term she'd used previously in her conversations with Shane. It was something he knew she thought, but it was another thing entirely for her to say it directly to Ilya.

Ilya swiped at his eyes and sniffed. Shane wrapped an arm around his husband and kissed his cheek.

"You aren't alone. Your mom and dad might be gone, but you're a Hollander now." Shane hugged Ilya properly and the man buried his face in Shane's neck.

Shane looked out at the new garden and smiled. This was his family. His whole heart in the form of three people. He couldn't imagine a life any different than this. Every time Ilya told him he loved him it strengthened him that much more.

“I love you.” Ilya whispered into his chest.

Shane dropped his lips to the top of Ilya’s head and he repeated, “I love you, too.”

End Notes

Comments and Kudos are much appreciated if you feel so inclined. And if you want to continue the conversation with me or suggest fic ideas you can find me on Tumblr: @madsworld15 or Twitter: @dorothynyc89.

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