

It's a lonely thing.

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It's a lonely thing.

by [fucking_your_father](#)

Summary

Ilya is wary of Shane's dad, having a bad track record with fathers. David gives him some much needed reassurance. They hug it out.

Notes

A quick drabble, it is not beta read at all. I appreciate any constructive criticism or feedback. I love them :(

The light filtered through the wide windows untainted, casting the kitchen in the warm glow of late morning. Ilya stood in the Hollander's kitchen, meticulously plating dishes of food. Shane and Yuna were out for a meeting, taking longer than expected to arrive at the brunch that they'd planned. The old cottage had become a frequented place in their summers as Ilya grew closer to Shane's parents, especially after they'd been engaged. Yuna was ecstatic, David showing his excitement in a bit more of a shy way. Ilya had grown fond of David quickly, despite his reluctance and uncertainty on how to interact with the quiet man, wary of the father despite everything. Still, in these small moments, he found himself content and belonging.

They were assembling dishes on the island in a comfortable silence. He'd made a salad with every fixing that Shane liked, excluding tomatoes and cucumber because he knew Shane wouldn't even dare touch them. He'd even gone as far as to separate Shane's salmon fillet from the rest, smoking it with no butter and no sauce, the way he insisted on having it. Ilya placed it down on the ceramic carefully, mindful that it didn't touch the other food on the plate. He'd found his boyfriend's preferences bizarre at first, but now he found himself pleasing them without a second thought. Maybe it was the intense focus he had on plating Shane's perfectly, or the way he had gone hyper still and ceased his gentle attempts at conversation, but it was suddenly too quiet. He glanced up, finding David's eyes set on him in an unreadable expression. He laughed, straightening his posture. "What?"

David didn't respond for a few seconds. He opened his mouth and closed it again, glancing away. Ilya bristled. He stiffened defensively, his tone rigid as the joy fell from his face and the carefully crafted guard went up. "What?"

David sensed the shift, looking up again, a bit nervously. "Nothing. Nothing. You just know him so well." He pushed a dish back on the counter, no doubt searching for words. It was only then that Ilya realized all the other plates were finished and ready while he was still focused on perfecting everything for Shane. He pressed his lips together, unsure of how to respond as he pulled his hands back. He didn't have to think of it much longer, because David interrupted the small silence again. "You, um... I wanted to apologize."

Ilya's brows furrowed. He expected a sneer or a rude comment. Instead, he was met with softness. "For what? You have not done wrong."

"I did." He kept shifting his gaze between Ilya and the counter he was scrubbing with careful consideration. Ilya could see where Shane got it from now. "For when I barged in on you two, at the cottage. I didn't mean to, uh... to take that decision away from you guys. Of when you wanted us to know, I mean. If you did. I spoke to Shane, but I wanted to tell you too."

Ilya's defense dropped instantly. They didn't connect much, with David being quiet and Ilya being so boisterous and obnoxious, not to mention his concealed reservations he still had about interacting with him. He always expected the worst, and was always met with the best with David. He was trying to break himself of the cycle, though slowly. Moments like this warmed him. "It is okay. I worry for Shane, he was scared. I was too. But I was also... eh, happy to have someone know. Not happy, but... I cannot find the English to describe it."

“Relieved? Glad that the secret was out, even just to me?” David offered.

“Ah, yes, I think so. A little bit relieved. We hid for many years.” Ilya looked down again, fidgeting with the plate idly. It didn’t need adjusting. Ilya had perfected it to his lover’s standards, but he didn’t know where to go from here. They sat quiet for a moment. The summer breeze floated through the window, wrapping around Ilya like a cool hug. This had become his happy place, and it would be the utmost perfect, serene afternoon, if not for his uncertainty when it came to David. Before he could contemplate it more, he was whisked away by the sound of David speaking up again.

“I’m... I’m really glad it’s you. That he wants to spend the rest of his life with.” Ilya was taken aback, but he didn’t say anything. He could tell that David wasn’t finished. He’d stopped cleaning the counter, taking deep breaths across from Ilya. “Shane needs a lot of love. He’s always needed something more than we could give him. And I think you’re exactly that. He’s the happiest I’ve ever seen him, even beyond winning Stanley cups.” He shifted, his eyes darting up to Ilya once more. They held a world of vulnerability, and Ilya knew that it was hard for him. He never talked to Ilya this way, as if he was admitting his deepest weakness. “I worried, for a while. All his friends have wives and girlfriends, they party, they let loose. Shane wasn’t... he didn’t connect the same way. Hockey was only so good to him. And then you happened.”

“Did my pretty face make him happy?” Ilya smiled, a weak attempt at a deflection. David laughed and waved him off.

“I’m serious. I think he might love you for more than that.” David scrunched his nose, dragging his thumb and index over the top of it as if to reset himself. Ilya knew better. He did the same, when he didn’t want to break in front of Shane. He let himself, now, but it was an ongoing effort. He slid his hand over, slowly, to cover David’s on the counter. He didn’t grasp or move him, just gave a reassuring squeeze that made the old man look up to his eyes once more. He was misty, despite his efforts. “Don’t tell Shane I told you this.” He hesitated a moment, chewing his lip before deciding to give it up. “When you boys were fighting one night, he came to me. He was so upset, he was crying on my shoulder. He hasn’t done that since he was ten years old. I knew you were the one for him then, and that you two had to work it out. You look at him like... like he’s the sun. Like he’s your whole world. You don’t call him difficult, you don’t act like he’s a hassle. You just love him. You’ve made him so insanely happy, and the work you’re doing with the kids and the charity... I’m so proud to call you my son. I don’t say it, but I mean it.”

Ilya stared at him. David’s hand was shaking, and he was looking at Ilya with the smallest smile, but it meant the entire world to him. He didn’t realize he was crying until his vision was too blurry, snapping out of it. He could feel the hot trails down his cheeks now, the tremor in his lip that he couldn’t contain. He mustered up enough of his voice to mutter a hoarse apology, using his free hand to wipe one side of his cheek. And then David’s tears were falling too, frowning empathetically and melting. He motioned with his hand, stepping around the island and closer to Ilya. The Russian was enveloped in his warm, strong arms then, and his chest burst. The wave of emotions were so complex and indescribable, he couldn’t excuse himself as he sobbed into David’s shoulder. He didn’t seem to mind, though, stroking Ilya’s hair and holding him tight. He didn’t say anything; he didn’t need to. He’d said and done enough for Ilya to realize he was safe, that this was real. This was home.

They stood like that for several minutes as Ilya found the pieces to put himself back together. It wasn't easy. Something this monumental to him was a lot to take in. Soon enough, he was pulling back, a bit reluctant. He wiped his swollen eyes and sniffled, regaining most of his composure. Still, he didn't put on that confident, asshole-ish part of him. He allowed himself to be vulnerable, for now. His voice was hoarse and quiet, but he needed to say it. "Thank you. For everything. I promise I will take care of him. I will never hurt him."

David smiled at him, his own eyes wet. "I know you won't." He pulled his hands off Ilya's shoulders then, straightening up before adding, "I wouldn't mind if you let him get an advantage over you on the ice, though."

Ilya laughed, wiping the rest of his tears from his cheek. "That will never ever happen." The intense emotional state of the kitchen diffused a bit, both men beginning to move around and prepare brunch once more, far more relaxed and vulnerable this time. It was everything that Ilya needed, not knowing he did. David was not Grigori, he was coming to realize. He didn't need to be on edge with every second he spent with him.

Yuna and Shane pulled up within minutes as David and Ilya set the table on the deck. Yuna was a whirlwind in the kitchen, already finding her husband to tell her exciting news. Shane was second, more calm and subdued. He found Ilya as he patted his hands dry with a dish towel, stepping close behind him. He turned to face him, and Shane's face instantly fell. "What's wrong?"

Ilya shook his head, bringing one of Shane's hands up to kiss his knuckles. "Nothing. I mean it. I am just very happy." Shane seemed to relax, trusting him. He tugged him out on the deck to sit with his parents. And at that table, surrounded by all the people he loved more than anything in the entire world, he finally felt whole.

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