

how de we even begin to explain ourselves

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how de we even begin to explain ourselves

by [iittaliia](#)

Summary

"Ilya!" Shane was lying in a hospital bed, the sun from the open blinds making him glow almost as much as the smile on his face did. "Mom, dad, it's Ilya!"

"We can see that", Mr. Hollander said.

"For whatever reason", Mrs. Hollander said.

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Or, Shane had no inhibitions and multiple visitors.

Notes

These two took over all my waking hours, and after binging through the series and reading both books in two days I came out with this. I hope you enjoy!

I don't have a beta and English is not my first language, so if there's anything that really stands out please let me know!

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

Being able to get to the hospital to see Shane was not easy.

First Ilya had to finish one of the worst games of his life, his mind racing and whole body itching to leave the ice and make sure Shane was okay. When he was finally able to leave, he had to sit through a team debrief and fucking ridiculous press conference and no one would fucking *tell* him anything! When a reporter asked how he was feeling and in turn he asked how Shane was, they had the nerve to laugh at him. Ilya bit his tongue so he wouldn't scream that how he was feeling depended on how Shane was.

Afterwards he bugged everyone who would listen to tell him where they'd taken Shane, and no one fucking would. Carmichael even had the nerve to ask if he'd go over to finish the job, and Ilya had growled at him. Granted, most of the people he asked would not have had any idea where Shane was anyway, but *someone* had to know, right?

That someone turned out to be Marlow in the end. Ilya didn't bother asking how he knew, figuring that could wait until after he'd visited Shane and would know how angry to still be was with Marlow.

When he was finally able to get to the hospital the staff kept bugging him, even though Shane had allowed all visitors - fucking *Marlow* had been there, and he was the one who hit him! And yet the staff was both starstruck and suspicious of Ilya showing up.

Finally Ilya had enough. "I am Russian. If I wanted stupid Hollander off the ice I would not do it here like an idiot", he exclaimed before briskly walking to room 410.

One thing the staff had declined to mention was that Shane already had visitors. Ilya barged in like he owned the place, the need to see Shane overriding any manners, and was suddenly face to face with Mr. and Mrs. Hollander.

Mrs. Hollander sobered up first from the surprise and Ilya could see her face hardening, but there was no time to say anything when there was a sudden happy yell.

"Ilya!" Shane was lying in a hospital bed, the sun from the open blinds making him glow almost as much as the smile on his face did. "Mom, dad, it's Ilya!"

"We can see that", Mr. Hollander said.

"For whatever reason", Mrs. Hollander said.

Ilya ignored both, figuring being rude was what they expected anyway. He walked to Shane's bed, itching to touch him but not yet daring.

"Are you okay?" Ilya asked and Shane beamed in reply.

"Better now", he replied, clumsily reaching out to take Ilya's hand in his. Ilya let him for enough time to be able to squeeze his fingers before somberly letting go.

"Your parents are here."

"Oh! Right." Shane turned to look at them. "Mom, dad, this is Ilya", Shane repeated. "He's my -"

"Nice to meet you", Ilya interrupted quickly, moving his gaze from Shane to his parent. Part of him wanted to know how Shane would have finished that sentence, but a bigger part of him was scared of the answer.

"Nice?" Mrs. Hollander challenged. "Shane is injured because -"

"I did not hit him", Ilya said the same time as Mr. Hollander said "He didn't mean it like that." After a moment of tense silence where Shane just looked between them with a confused frown on his face, Ilya took a deep breath and tried again.

"I did not hit him, but I am very sorry he got hurt." He turned to look at Shane again, not fighting the way his face immediately softened. "I am sorry."

Shane blew a raspberry like the whole idea of being sorry he was in a hospital bed was ludicrous. "Come here", he said while staring at Ilya.

"I am here."

"No, *here!*" Shane insisted and waved his hand around nonsensically before - to Ilya's horror - pursing his lips.

"No", Ilya tried. "That is not good idea."

"But I'm hurt", Shane complained

"I know, but your parents -" Ilya tried again, knowing every word was incriminating.

"Who cares", Shane dismissed, not even looking at his parents who Ilya didn't dare to even glance at anymore.

"You care", he explained. "You care very much."

"I don't", Shane insisted back with a stubborn look. "And I am hurt so kiss me better."

The silence that followed was heavy as Ilya closed his eyes and took a deep breath, knowing he'd already lost the battle. Shane would be angry with him later, but right now he was looking at Ilya with eyes full of emotions they hadn't dared name, but were mirrored in Ilya's.

"Please", Shane added softly and Ilya cursed in Russian before nodding. "Okay, дорогой, okay."

Ilya leaned forward, placing his hand softly on Shane's chest the moment he tried to reach up to meet him. Who knew how he'd injure himself in the current state, but Ilya wasn't willing to take any chances. He gently held him down, keeping Shane in place as he held his cheek and pressed their lips together in a kiss nothing like their usual ones. He didn't dare hold it

for more than a few seconds before leaning back, only for Shane to whine and grab the hand that was still on his chest.

”Shh мой любимый, it’s okay”, Ilya whispered, brushing his thumb on Shane’s freckles tenderly before straightening up. Shane made another noise of displeasure before smiling.

”Say that again?”

”мой любимый.”

”Mm. I like that one. It’s a good word?”

Ilya swallowed around the tightness in his throat and squeezed Shane’s hand. ”The best.”

The moment felt fragile with Shane beaming at Ilya with no care in the word, and Ilya wanted to live in it forever.

Unfortunately the rest of the world didn’t feel the same way. Someone cleared their throat very pointedly, and Ilya was just about to face whatever looks were on Mr. and Mrs. Hollander’s face when there was a sudden knock at the door, followed by a doctor.

”Hello everyone!”

Ilya idly noted that she had not been part of the group that interrogated him, but considering her lack of reaction had still been informed of his presence.

”I have some results to go over and routine tests. Immediate family can stay if the patient agrees, but unfortunately I must ask Mr. Rozanov to leave for the time being.” She smiled apologetically which Ilya appreciated. He didn’t want to leave, didn’t want to let go of Shane’s hand when he’d only just gotten to hold it, but he wasn’t immediate family, no matter how badly he wanted to be.

Ilya gave Shane’s hand a final squeeze before mouthing goodbye and letting it go. Ilya braced himself and turned to look at Shane’s parents straight on. He could see they, especially Mrs. Hollander, were fighting between staying with the doctor and leaving the room to probably curse him out. Part of Ilya wanted to take the opportunity and get out as quickly as he could and leave Shane to deal with the consequences, but he couldn’t do that.

”Mrs. Hollander, can I have a word?” The words felt foreign in his mouth. Too polite and weird, but he’d heard them in some fancy and boring show where everyone was polite and spoke proper English, so he figured it’s be a good place to start.

”I hope you have more than one”, Mrs. Hollander mumbled and followed him.

Ilya led them to another room two doors down, walking straight in. On his way to Shane he’d seen the staff rolling someone out the room, so he figured it was a safe bet, but Mrs. Hollander didn’t know that and just raised her eyebrows when the door closed behind them.

”Is it a habit of yours to just walk into hospital rooms?”

Ilya raised his hands and looked around. "I do not see anyone complain."

Mrs. Hollander didn't reply with words, choosing instead to cross her arms and stare at Ilya like she dared him to start some of his usual bullshit. She looked fierce and beautiful and so much like Shane that Ilya somewhat irrationally hoped she wouldn't hate him after this.

They'd seen each other is passing multiple times, but the only time they'd exchanged anything other than acknowledging nods had been at the elevator that very first time. At the time Ilya remembered feeling giddy at the naughtiness of it, seeing the mother of the man he was on his way to deflower. Now he was praying that she would never make that connection.

They stared at each other, Ilya unsure on how to start the conversation. He'd asked her here, but he also didn't want to do any more damage to his relationship with Shane or Shane's relationship with his parents, so he stayed silent, waiting to follow Mrs. Hollander's lead. He didn't have to wait long.

"He is on drugs", she started. Ilya nodded because at least that was something they could agree on and he could not deny.

"You are not", she continued, squinting her eyes like she dared Ilya to confess to being high like that was the only explanation.

"No, I am not", Ilya agreed again.

"You kissed him", Mrs. Hollander challenged, and Ilya felt his defenses rise up.

"He asked."

"As we established, he is on drugs."

"He would have asked anyway", Ilya argued, opting to leave out the fact that Shane definitely would not have asked in front of his parents or anyone under any other circumstances.

Mrs. Hollander was quiet for a moment, clearly thinking this over before she looked at Ilya with uncertainty.

"Are you two together?"

Ilya wanted to ask where the uncertainty came from - her conclusion was only logical considering the little she knew.

"No", he replied instead. He could see her face change like Shane's did when he didn't understand something or got impatient, so he raised his hand to stop whatever she was about to say. "But I would like to be."

Mrs. Hollander squinted at him like she was trying to figure out if she could trust him. Ilya understood where she was coming from, but it still annoyed him. He sighed.

"Look, it is compli-"

"Is this a game?" she interrupted. "Are you trying to... distract him or -"

Ilya's whole body tensed. How dare she - "I love your son, Mrs. Hollander", he stated, voice stern and calm even while his heart was beating out of his chest. "I have for long time. I do not know how he feels but I have *never* and would never do anything to hurt him or his stupid team on purpose."

Mrs. Hollander looked surprised. Ilya didn't know if it was because of his words or his tone of voice, but he also didn't care.

"When I win it is because I was better than him. When he wins it is because he was better than me. What we have has nothing to do with that."

There was a beat of silence before Mrs. Hollander suddenly seemed to deflate. Her arms dropped down as she took a deep breath while looking at the ceiling.

"Okay", she said to the ceiling. "Okay. So what do we do?"

The question took Ilya by surprise. He didn't think there was anything *to* do, really. Not anything she could really help with anyway. Except -

"Do not tell him that I..." the words got caught in his throat, one confession to the wrong person being more than enough for the day. She lowered her gaze back to him and he knew she understood from the sad look she gave him. Still, he added "Please."

"Why?" she asked. She sounded confused but not judgemental, which Ilya was grateful for. He didn't want pity.

"I have not told him."

"Because it is complicated?" Mrs. Hollander guessed.

Ilya nodded automatically, but then slowly shook his head. "Because I am terrified."

He shrugged like it was no big deal, wanting to move on from this particular topic. Mrs. Hollander looked like she wanted to say more, but ended up just smiling gently in understanding. It made Ilya remember all the times Shane had talked highly of his mom, which made him realize there was another thing for them to do.

"One more thing", Ilya said, and Mrs. Hollander took a breath as if she was preparing for another confession. "If he does not remember or pretends he does not, do not bring this up."

Mrs. Hollander furrowed her brow. "I think I know how to handle -" she started, the fierce protectiveness lifting its head to the notion that she wouldn't know what to do with Shane. It was sweet yet misplaced and Ilya had no time for it.

"He is terrified", he interrupted. "He does not want to disappoint you. He would be -" Ilya thought through the words "- mortified if he knew you knew like this."

Mrs. Hollander didn't answer straight away. She looked at Ilya like she was trying to figure something out, and Ilya hoped she would see that this was not up for debate - when it came to this, he knew better.

Finally Mrs. Hollander looked away. "Is he really scared of our reaction? Does he think we won't accept him?" she asked quietly, not meeting Ilya's eyes like she was afraid of the answer.

"He knows you love him", Ilya replied. Of that he was sure of. "But it is complicated, and I don't want to say wrong thing."

Mrs. Hollander took a shaky breath and closed her eyes, and Ilya hated it. He wanted her to not look like that anymore.

"But I do not think it is really about you. It is... me, that is the problem. I think", he tried, not really sure how he was supposed to comfort the mother of his non-boyfriend over the fact that he wasn't someone the non-boyfriend wanted the mother to know about.

"I mean, I usually am the problem. At least that's what ESPN says."

Mrs. Hollander let out a noise that was hopefully more of a laugh than a sob, and turned to look at Ilya again. Her eyes were a bit wet but she was smiling, which made Ilya let out a relieved breath he hadn't realize he was holding.

"I'm sorry", Mrs. Hollander suddenly said. "I might not really know what is going on, but I shouldn't have assumed you have some ulterior motive, earlier."

It took a moment for Ilya to piece together what she meant, not having expected an apology.

"I can see that you care for him very much, and that is all I care about." Mrs. Hollander gave him a genuine smile before it shifted to a slightly sterner version.

"Even though you need to get your team in check."

"Do not worry, Marlow will be dealt with", Ilya replied darkly, making her laugh. He didn't really know what to say to her apology, so he didn't say anything. That seemed to be okay if the warm look in Mrs. Hollander's face was anything to go by.

"I can see why he likes you", she teased gently, and didn't give Ilya any time to process whatever that meant before continuing. "Would you like to say goodbye to him before you go?"

Ilya's heart skipped a beat. "Please."

This time he followed her out of the room and to Shane's room, where she gave him a pointed look before knocking softly on the door before opening it. Ilya was glad she didn't see the roll of his eyes, not wanting to disturb the odd peace they'd found themselves in.

"Is everything okay here?" Mrs. Hollander asked her husband, walking to stand next to him. Ilya kept a respectful distance while they had a silent conversation, and he just gazed at

Shane. He was fast asleep even though they couldn't have been gone more than ten minutes, and Ilya was a bit sad he couldn't say a proper goodbye.

He slowly walked to the other side of the bed and dared to carefully take Shane's hand in his, raising it slowly to kiss his knuckles.

"He is the most important thing to me", Mrs. Hollander said softly from the other side of the bed. Ilya stared at the way she gently brushed Shane's hair from his face, and felt something crawl in his throat at the motherly sight.

"Yeah", Ilya croaked. "I know the feeling."

End Notes

Note that I would have loved to call Yuna and David by their first names as I did with the other two dumbasses, but that didn't really fit the tone. I saw Ilya and Shane being in first name basis at this point (even if they made a whole Thing about it), but Ilya doesn't yet have a proper relationship with Shane's parents so Mr. and Mrs. it is, even though I hate the terms Mrs.

Also, Ilya calls Shane sweetheart and my love. Or at least that's what Google Translate told me.

Also also, let's hope I can keep this inspiration going because I am itching to write part two with Shane and Yuna confession, and part three with Shane and Ilya confession.

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