

keeping the faith in a place that we hope won't pass

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keeping the faith in a place that we hope won't pass

by [iittaliia](#)

Summary

"Mom, you know, right?"

"Know what?" Yuna replied distractedly.

"That I am -" Shane didn't get further, his voice cracking embarrassingly.

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Or, sober Shane finished what high Shane started.

Notes

Hello my lovelies!

The inspiration just kept going after [how do we even begin to explain ourselves](#), so I turned this into a (hopefully) three part series with this being the second part. This won't really make sense without the first one, so feel free to return after reading that one first!

I hope you enjoy!

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

Shane felt weird.

It wasn't just the fact that he was forced to change his carefully crafted routine of rehearsals, exercising and games. It wasn't just having to slowly doze off the pain medication and having to - or being able to, rather, spend more time with his parents. His mom was doing everything in her power to keep him busy enough not to spiral, and his dad kept ruffling his hair and giving encouraging pats on the back whenever he walked past.

It wasn't even the fact that his already irregular correspondence with Ilya felt odd and tilted. Shane had sent him a message after getting home from the hospital, secretly hoping the answer would be a request of the address or some other time and place. Instead he got a weirdly polite "*I hope you are doing well*", and barely nothing else since.

Shane kept bugging him though, sending a random text every now and then and Ilya always replied almost instantly, like he was keeping his phone uncharacteristically close by. But he hadn't called Shane boring even once, not even when Shane said he was doing a sudoku, and it was pissing Shane off that Ilya *wasn't* pissing him off.

But even after all these things, what made Shane feel the most weird was that he felt like he was missing something. All the people around him were acting weird but pretending they weren't, and Shane felt like there was an inside joke he was not part of.

The pieces started to lock in place when he had to go back to the hospital for a check up. The staff was happy to see him, and even though the feeling wasn't really reciprocated - because who was happy to be in a hospital - Shane appreciated having new people to talk to.

It was all just idle small talk until Shane was about to leave and asked the receptionist what entrance would be the best to request an Uber pick up.

"I thought someone would have driven you here with how popular you were during the stay", she said while clicking away on the computer to get the answer. "I felt like I was in a soap opera, just waiting for the next professional hunk to walk in. Oh, here it is! You can use entrance C for pick up."

Shane did use entrance C for pick up, and spend the whole drive home anxious. He hated not being in on things, it made him feel stupid and alone. He wanted to talk to his parents, and was annoyed with himself for having insisted that he was fine alone for one day. He really had thought so the day before when they'd offered to drive him to the check up, but now his mind was racing and he just needed not to think.

Do you know any Russian soap operas?

Yes, I am Russian.

Care to tell me one?

Five minutes later, just after Shane had changed into his comfortable home clothes and had burrowed into his sofa he received a link.

Here. It is not good.

Shane smiled.

Russians rarely are.

He wanted the reply to be something familiar, Ilya calling himself the best and God's gift on earth, but instead he got a thumbs down emoji. Shane sighed and opened the link, sending the video to play on his tv so he could shut his phone and himself off for the rest of the day.

He woke up hours later, feeling groggy and confused but with a racing heart.

дорогой, someone had said. *мой любимый.*

Shane flexed his hand and swallowed.

~*~*~

Yuna Hollander was doing the dishes when Shane walked in. That was a good sign, she liked doing the dishes, said the monotony made her relax.

"Hey mom, where's dad?"

"Oh who knows", Yuna waved her hand, splashing some soapy water on the counter. "I sent him out to get some packages and sponsorship things, I have a couple things in the works."

"When don't you", Shane deadpanned with a smile, his nerves dissipating a little. He was glad his dad wasn't there, because even though he loved him very much Shane felt like he would not be able to get through this alone, two against one.

He barely felt he could get through it now.

"Mom, you know, right?"

"Know what?" Yuna replied distractedly, picking up a pan.

"That I am -" Shane didn't get further, his voice cracking embarrassingly. Yuna immediately stopped scrubbing the pan, dropping it into the water with a splash before turning around.

"What makes you say that?" she asked, voice overly casual and gentle. Any doubt Shane had had about being wrong about this disappeared and his eyes filled with tears.

"Mom."

"Oh, sweetie", Yuna said and rushed to hug him, throwing the dish gloves on the floor before cradling his head against her neck. Shane went easily, wrapping his hands around her as the first sob escaped.

“Shh, you’re okay”, Yuna shushed. “It’s okay, everything’s okay.”

“It’s not”, Shane cried against her shoulder. “I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to.”

“You have nothing to apologize for, absolutely nothing.”

Shane felt a new set of tears coming, and he let her kiss his head and rub his back until he was able to take a proper breath again. He wanted to stay close against her, in the safety of her arms with his eyes closed and face pressed against the comforting scent of her, but he wasn’t a kid anymore and she didn’t deserve that like she hasn’t deserved this whole thing.

“I do”, Shane insisted with a sniff before taking a deep breath and a step back. Yuna let him go, but not before moving her hands to his cheeks as she wiped some of the snot and tears off with an equally wet smile.

“I’m sorry I didn’t tell you. I was scared and I didn’t want to disappoint you”, Shane explained, fighting for his voice not to waver.

“You could never disappoint us”, Yuna replied sternly, shaking Shane by his cheeks a little. “I am sorry we ever made you feel otherwise.”

Shane felt a new tightness in his throat, this time from the overwhelming gratefulness and love that he was feeling. Still, he wasn’t done with apologizing.

“You didn’t deserve to find out how you did”, he mumbled, feeling embarrassed.

“Do you remember how we did?” Yuna asked, letting his cheeks go with a final squeeze.

“I remember enough.”

”Do you remember his visit?”

Yuna’s voice was soft and she looked at him encouragingly, like she was preemptively telling him everything was okay. Shane appreciated it, his breath hitching even at the mention of a *he* who had visited. He was glad his mom was brave enough to bring the other topic of the conversation up, because he wasn’t sure if he would have been able to.

”No”, Shane sniffled and then laughed self-deprecatingly. ”But I had a dream that didn’t feel like a dream, not completely. And I remember where you and dad were standing, and someone was holding my hand on the other side.”

Shane blushed, but forced himself to keep going. ”And I remember... being happy, then, so...” He shrugged, hoping that was enough. That his mom got what he wasn’t saying - that Ilya was the only person that could have made him happy, so he didn’t have to remember the visit to know that it happened.

He kept дорогой and мой любимый to himself, the unknown words feeling too fragile to bring out in the open.

Judging by the genuine smile on Yuna’s face, she got it anyway.

“He was nice”, she offered and Shane immediately snorted and called her bluff.

“*Was* he?”

“Well”, Yuna shrugged good-heartedly. “He had his moments. But I like him.” She reached to touch Shane’s arm. “I like him for *you*.”

“I -“ Shane started, choking again on the emotion in his voice. Yuna took pity on him and with a final comforting squeeze of her hand she let him go, and crouched down to pick up the dish gloves.

Shane wiped his eyes and took a deep breath while she busied herself with cleaning the gloves so she could continue with the dishes.

Everything was okay. He was okay. *They* were okay.

As the adrenaline left his body he remembered something he’d noticed earlier, but had put on the back burner for the time being.

“You can tell dad you can both stop being all weird now”, he said with a laugh.

“Weird? We’re never weird.”

”You both kept telling me you love me”, Shane smiled.

”That’s because we *do*.”

”More than usual. It was constant. Sending you an Instagram reel doesn’t require an *I love you*.”

”Well, my love, you’re not always the most observant person”, Yuna pointed out, glancing over her shoulder. “Sometimes you’re so stuck in your own head you might not notice that someone loves you.”

Shane froze, suddenly getting the feeling they were talking about something else now.

“Mom -“

”And -” Yuna continued. ”I think if you love someone, you should tell them.”

Shane felt the now familiar tightness in his throat, but forced his voice through it.

“I love you.”

Yuna looked at him with a knowing smile. “That’s a start.”

End Notes

I feel the need to explain that while I called Yuna Mrs. Hollander in the first one since that was more from Ilya's point of view and they are not yet familiar with each other, I chose to mainly call her Yuna in this instead of variations of "Shane's mom". I thought that was the most cohesive choice, even though I do not believe Shane call his mom by her first name.

Also, I have chosen to believe Google Translate, so дорогой and мой любимый mean sweetheart and my love.

Also also, I am writing the third and final part as we speak and I hope returning to work won't extinguish this inspirational fire I find myself in.

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