# You're The Only Friend I Need

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# You're The Only Friend I Need

by dabforpalermo

Summary

Hayden knows something is wrong the moment Shane lets his coat drop to the floor, in a little pile by the front door, instead of neurotically hanging it up like he always does. How could a hookup with 'Boston Lily' leave him this distraught?

Or; an outsider perspective of episode 4, where Hayden has to pick up the pieces Ilya left of Shane after he storms out of his home in Boston.

01/18/25- EPILOGUE ADDED!

Notes

Hayden Pike and Jackie Pike I am your number one fan... pls adopt me

See the end of the work for more notes

# Chapter 1

The door swings open. Hayden looks up from his phone, spots the familiar tenseness of Shane's back as he shucks his jacket off, and reaches over to turn the volume on the television down. He watches carefully as Shane lets his coat drop to the floor, in a little pile by the front door, instead of neurotically hanging it up like he always does.

*"You know you don't have to be a stereotypical hockey player,"* Shane had snapped at him after they started rooming together in hotels and he realised just how easily Hayden let mess pile up in his living space. *"You could pick up your socks for once."*

"Hey," Hayden starts. Shane startles a bit, like he wasn't expecting the greeting, and shuffles his way over to the bathroom. Hayden hears the fan turn on, then the tap, and then Shane drags his feet all the way back to his bed, flopping on it like he's just run a marathon.

"Shane," Hayden calls. "Are you… are you okay?"

Shane doesn't answer, only pulls the blanket tighter over himself and turns over. Hayden can't stop his brain from instantly going to the worst case scenario.

"Did somebody hurt you?" He asks, sitting up. Shane's body wracks with a sob, and Hayden is standing before he can register what he's doing, coming and sitting next to Shane on the bed. "Buddy, come on, look at me."

Shane doesn't move.

"Shane, kiddo, you gotta tell me if somebody hurt you."

"I *can't,"* Shane's voice breaks. He digs his face further into the pillows. "I can't, I can't, I fucking *can't-"*

“Shane.” Hayden’s not the best at his *dad voice*, given the fact that he’s a total pushover when it comes to his children, but he knows when to pull out the baritone of his voice, trying to remind himself that he’s in charge. “Stop. Take a breath.”

“I’m sorry,” Shane cries. Hayden’s heart is breaking by the second. He debates calling Jackie, asking her to come help deal with him, but right now, he just needs to know if Shane is okay.

“Shane, answer one question. Are you injured?”

“No,” Shane cries. He buries himself further under the blanket.

“Don’t lie to me, Shane,” Hayden says. His hand hovers over Shane’s leg- he’s afraid to touch, to scare him off. “Do you need the medics? I can call the doctor, we can get this worked out-“

“No,” Shane chokes out. He curls further in on himself. “Just- I’ll be- I’ll be fine. I just…”

“What’s going on, bud?” Hayden feels completely out of his element here.

“I can’t tell you,” Shane mumbles. “I can’t- I need-“ he cuts himself off with a sob, shaking his head. Hayden wracks his brain for a solution.

“Tell you what,” Hayden says softly. He rests a hand on Shane’s back. “The kids and I have a rule. If both of us are under the blanket, they can tell me anything, and I’m not allowed to get upset. Let’s- let’s try it, okay?”

Shane doesn’t move for a long moment, and Hayden thinks he’s totally fucked up, before the Shane-shaped lump in the blanket twists. Shane’s shaking hands hold up the duvet, and Hayden breathes a sigh of relief as he climbs in. He can see Shane’s tear stained face, the red trim of his eyes, the flush of his cheeks. His boy looks like a wreck.

“There you are,” Hayden says, trying to keep his voice light. He gives what he hopes is a convincing smile and rests with his shoulder pressing against Shane’s. It’s a lot more awkward to do this with a full grown man, but he’d deal with a bit of discomfort to help his best friend. Shane doesn’t speak. “Do you… do you want me to guess?”

Shane nods beside him. Hayden wracks his brain.

“Is this… is this about your parents? Did something happen?” Shane shakes his head. “Was it someone on the team?” Another shake. “Was it… was it about your friend here?”

Shane freezes. *Bingo.*

“Lily, right?” Hayden says. He can feel that he’s losing Shane. “Hey, hey, stay here. It’s okay. I’m not judging you.”

Shane settles back from where he was trying to escape from the covers. His breathing is picking up again.

“Okay, deep breath. You’re okay,” Hayden reminds him. “So- Lily. Something bad happened when you met with her?”

“Hayd…”

“Did she… did she break up with you? Were you guys official? I didn’t even know you had a girlfriend, Shane-“

Shane’s eyes find his gaze for the first time. He looks utterly terrified. “Do- do you promise not to get mad?” He asks, sounding about twenty years younger and full of anxiety. Hayden can’t say no to that face.

“I promise.”

“She’s- *Lily* isn’t Lily.”

Hayden’s brows furrow in confusion. He tilts his head a bit. “Oh…kay?”

“Lily isn’t… isn’t a girl.”

Oh.

*Oh.*

Hayden tries not to let the surprise show on his face. He must do a shit job, because Shane looks away, starting to tremble again.

“Hey, *hey*,” he calls, reaching out and grabbing Shane’s hand. “That’s okay. It’s alright. I just- it surprised me, is all. I’m okay with that. It doesn’t… it doesn’t change anything, buddy. Thank you for telling me.”

Hayden must have passed some invisible test, because Shane moves closer, body still shaking as if he’s freezing. Hayden squeezes his hand.

“Okay, so Lily’s a guy. Did… did he hurt you, Shane? Did he make you do anything you weren’t comfortable with?”

Shane shakes his head. “We- we were… you know. And right after, I- I left. I got scared, and I left, and he hates me- he hates me, he won’t want me around anymore, I’m no good-“

*Okay*, Hayden thinks. He takes a deep breath. He and Jackie don’t have the most adventurous sex life, but after four kids, he knows a thing or two. Sometimes, Jackie goes somewhere after sex, her mind hazy and anxious and needing comfort. Hayden will sit with her, rub her

back, tell her how amazing she is, and help her stay afloat until the cloudiness fades away. He feels the same on occasion too, and Jackie has to comfort him. He sees the same kind of energy buzzing through Shane's body.

"Okay," Hayden says. He squeezes Shane's hand again. "Here's the plan. You're gonna go hop in the shower, get nice and clean, and then we're gonna watch a movie, and if you want to talk about it, I'm here. And if you don't want to talk, we don't have to."

Shane nods, the direction seeming to get through to him. "I'm sorry…"

"No, no need to be sorry," Hayden says. He gives Shane a comforting smile and rubs his thumb over his knuckles. "Shower. Come on."

He helps Shane up, hand on his back as he guides him toward the bathroom. Shane sits on the closed toilet seat, body hunched, eyes somewhere far off. Hayden hesitates before reaching into the shower, turning the water on, and making sure it's the right temperature.

"Alright," he says, startling Shane out of his trance. "Two options. You could get in by yourself, or I could help you."

Shane shakes his head, and Hayden presumes he doesn't want to lose any more of his dignity tonight. It would be no big deal- they see one another naked more than Hayden and Jackie do- but tonight is different. "It's- I got it."

"Okay. Just… call me if you need me." He ruffles Shane's hair gently, pausing when he sees the way Shane tilts his head into the embrace, eyes fluttering shut. He keeps his hand there for a moment longer before bringing it down to Shane's cheek, gently tapping him to bring him back.

He leaves the bathroom, keeping the door cracked open in case Shane needs him, and listens to make sure he gets in okay. He sighs in relief and grabs his phone.

*Hayden:*

*I need your help.*

The texting bubble appears instantly.

*Jackie 💕:*

*What's wrong?*

*Hayden:*

*What do you know about*

*Like*

*Aftercare*

*Jackie 💕:*

*???*

*Hayden:*

*Okay you can't tell anyone*

*But shane just got back to the room after a hookup*

*And he's like*

*A total mess*

*Doesn't seem like himself at all*

His fingers move rapidly over his keyboard.

*Hayden:*

*And I feel weird helping him but like what else can I do*

*I got him to take a shower*

*But like is it weird if I help him???*

*Jackie 💕:*

*Deep breath.*

*You're fine.*

*Do you want to call me and I can talk to him?*

*Hayden:*

*No he's freaking out and doesn't want anyone to know*

*Jackie 💕:*

*Did something happen? Like… without consent?*

*Hayden:*

*No he said it was fine*

*He's just like*

*Idk*

*You know how you get kinda sad sometimes after sex*

*Or I do*

*And we need to like hold eachother or whatever*

*He didn't do that he just rushed home and now he's crashing*

*Jackie 💕:*

*Okay.*

*Get him some water and something with sugar.*

*Cuddle up with him and play with his hair and tell him he's good.*

*That's what I do for you.*

Hayden rolls his eyes.

*Hayden:*

*excuse me, I'm the man here*

*Jackie* 💕*:*

*Okay baby, whatever you say.*

*It'll be alright.*

*Call me if you need me, I can talk to him.*

Shane's phone starts buzzing where it's been abandoned on the bed. He checks the caller ID- *Lily.* Although he has the urge to accept the call and bitch out whoever let Shane leave in such a state, he knows that would only upset Shane more, so he sends it to voicemail.

*Hayden:*

*Should I like… message the person he was with?*

*Jackie* 💕*:*

*Do you think it would cause more harm?*

*Hayden:*

*I don't know*

*He's been seeing this person for like*

*Eight years Jackie*

*He'd probably know how to fix this better than I would*

*She'd****

*Jackie 💕:*

*Mhm…*

*If you think it would help, then go for it. But maybe try first. You're a good comforter, sweetheart. Trust yourself.*

The shower turns off. Hayden looks up from his phone.

*Hayden:*

*Okay, I love you*

*Jackie 💕:*

*I love you too.*

The bathroom door opens, and Shane shuffles out, eyes still downcast with a towel wrapped around his waist. He stares at the shirt he came in wearing and promptly breaks down into tears.

"Oh, Shane…" Hayden coos. He stands, opening up the dresser and taking a pair of Shane's comfy sweatpants. He grabs one of his own hoodies and holds it out to Shane. "Come on. Let's get dressed."

He helps him change, then grabs the hairbrush in his backpack and runs it through Shane's wet hair, humming to himself, and leads the two of them back to his bed, flipping the TV onto some random nature documentary channel.

“Okay, we’re okay,” he repeats the whole time. He’s not sure who he’s trying to convince. He lays down, tugging Shane next to him, and tuts when Shane lays stiffly down a few inches away. “Come on, man. How long have we known each other? Cuddle with me like a real friend.”

That doesn’t get quite a smile, but Shane relaxes, allowing Hayden to pull him close. He presses his cheek against Hayden’s chest, eyes closing on instinct, and Hayden awkwardly brings his hand up to run through Shane’s damp hair.

“See? We’re alright,” he says quietly. “Everything’s okay.”

Shane makes a little noise in the back of his throat, blinking as more tears start to fall down his face.

“You’re good, it’s good, we’re good.”

“‘M not,” Shane mumbles against Hayden’s chest. He digs his face in further. “‘M not good.”

“Yes, you are,” Hayden insists. “You’re the best player in the league, you’re a great uncle to my kids, and you’re the best friend I could ask for. You’re a good guy, Shane.”

“I left,” Shane cries. “He- it got real, and I left.”

“That’s okay,” Hayden rubs his other hand down his back. He thinks briefly on the start of their friendship, how timid they were around one another, and wishes he could show himself a decade ago how close he is now with Shane. Closer than anybody else but Jackie. “That’s okay. We all screw up sometimes.”

“No.”

“Yes,” Hayden insists. He scratches lightly at Shane’s scalp. “Did I ever tell you about the day Jackie told me she loved me?”

Shane shakes his head, bringing one of the strings on his- *Hayden’s*- hoodie up to his mouth and beginning to chew. It’s okay. Hayden would buy a million replacements if it meant keeping him content.

“We were going out for dinner, and I had this whole evening planned. It was a fancy restaurant, and we were celebrating being together for two months, and at the end, I was gonna tell her I loved her. I even called ahead to the restaurant and put my card on file so she knew it was serious.”

Shane moves closer, going boneless on top of him. Hayden draws patterns on his back.

“Anyway, I go to pick her up, and I’m so nervous that I jump out of the car to open the door for her. The passengers seat door was jammed- you know, the one on my old car?- and I had to pull it so hard that I ended up smacking her directly in the nose.”

Shane huffs out a small laugh, and Hayden feels his heart swell with victory.

“And- and then, she started bleeding,” he explains, chuckling. “Oh god, we looked like such a mess. I only had napkins from Burger King in my car, so I had to hold those up to her face, and she just- she beat me to it. She looked at me, and with a mouthful of blood, she said-“ he puffs his cheeks out to imitate Jackie’s garbled words. “*I love you sho much.”*

Shane’s fully laughing now, and he swings his leg over to wrap around Hayden’s thigh like a koala.

“And I just- I panicked, man,” Hayden forces out. There’s tears in his own eyes from laughter. “I had the whole night planned, and I had just nearly broken her nose, and she beat me to it. So, after she said that, I said the stupidest thing I’ve ever said.”

“What?” Shane asks, voice still shaky and weak, but Hayden can hear the smile.

“I said- and I quote- *you’re even hotter covered in blood.*”

“You did *not*.”

“I did, swear to god,” Hayden exhales, chest shaking with his laughter. “So, anyway. I don’t know why she stuck with me.”

“Probably because-“ Shane shifts. He settles back against Hayden. “You’re a really good guy.”

“I have my days,” Hayden replies. He squeezes Shane’s shoulder and looks up at the TV. It’s quiet for several minutes before Shane’s breath hitches, and when he looks down, he’s crying again.

“What do you need, Shane?” Hayden prompts quietly. He wipes a tear away from Shane’s face and frowns down at him.

“I need- I need him.”

“Okay,” Hayden whispers. “Do you… do you want me to call him?”

Shane nods. He’s still got that distant look in his eyes, but he looks less cloudy with Hayden’s help, so he takes his word for it and gently detangles himself from Shane. He shoves a pillow where he was laying so Shane can wrap himself around it.

He moves toward Shane’s bed, grabbing his phone, and winces at the fifteen missed calls from Lily. He presses the notification and tries to remain calm while it rings, stepping outside and closing the door behind him, not knowing if Shane wants to hear. The line connects after two rings.

*“Jesus, Hollander, I have been calling for one hour.”*

Hayden’s blood runs cold. He opens his mouth to respond, to say anything, but he can’t, because *Ilya fucking Rozanov*, Shane’s arch rival, and the absolute bane of Hayden’s existence is on the phone.

*“Are you okay? I do not like to see you like that. You know what happens. Did you have water? Fruit? Just- fuck, come back, I will come get you, we can talk-“*

Hayden clears his throat. “Rozanov?”

The line goes silent. He can hear shuffling in the distance, and hopes he hasn’t screwed up already.

“Look. Uh- I have… I have no idea what’s going on. I don’t think I *want* to know what’s going on. But- but Shane’s a wreck, and he needs you here, and-“

*Click.*

Hayden grunts in frustration. *Fucking asshole.* He makes his way down to the lobby quickly, buying a tangerine and a ginger ale, as well as a chocolate bar he knows Shane probably won’t eat. He pays for them and makes haste back to the room, unlocking it and sighing at the sight of Shane.

“Okay, kiddo. Time to eat.”

“Don’t wanna,” Shane whines. He’s still crying. Hayden is reminded of the way Ruby gets when she’s upset.

“Sucks to suck, buddy,” Hayden responds quietly. He goes back to the bed and opens the can, holding it out to Shane, who takes it with a shaky hand and takes a sip. “Good.”

The praise settles somewhere in Shane’s brain, and he sits up more, as if he’s desperate to make Hayden happy. He peels the orange for him and holds it out piece by piece, gently thanking Shane every time he takes a bite. Once it’s finished, he holds open the Snickers bar, and tries not to let his jaw hang open in surprise when Shane takes it.

*Rozanov must have really done a number on him.*

“Good job, Shane. That’s good,” he says softly. Shane’s eyes flutter shut and he manages to choke down half of the chocolate bar before handing it back to Hayden.

“Is… is he coming?” He asks quietly, the words slurred. Hayden inhales deeply through his nose.

“Uh. I don’t… I don’t know, bud.”

“‘M sorry I lied,” Shane says. His head is hanging down on his knees, and his eyes are beginning to fill with tears once more. “‘M sorry, Hayd. I didn’t w’nt to.”

“I know,” Hayden comforts. He places his hand on Shane’s ankle and squeezes. “It’s okay. I forgive you. I just- *Rozanov?* Seriously?”

Shane tenses at the use of his name and digs his face further in his knees, his back beginning to shake with sobs. *Welp*. Hayden missed the mark.

“Hey, hey, it’s alright. It’s okay.” He moves closer, pulling Shane into a hug, and squeezes the back of his neck. “You’re okay, Shane. I promise.”

“I love him,” Shane cries into his embrace. Hayden’s heart breaks even more.

“I know, I know,” he repeats. He really wants to call Jackie. “It’s gonna be alright. I promise. It feels like the end of the world, but it’s not.”

“I love him,” Shane says, over and over, and Hayden is reaching for his phone to call his amazing wife when a loud knock on the door is heart. Shane stiffens, then slumps back against the bed, and Hayden quickly moves to open the door.

He likes to think he’s a progressive person. He raises his children to respect everyone, to show kindness first, and he believes he also has those traits. But he has to clench his fist at his side to keep from punching Rozanov in his stupidly handsome face for hurting Shane like this.

Rozanov doesn’t even acknowledge Hayden. He shoulders past him roughly, nearly knocking him down, and drops down to his knees beside Hayden’s bed. *Gonna have to wash those sheets.*

“Hollander, *Hollander.* Look at me.”

Shane shakes his head, but Rozanov reaches out and grips his chin, pulling him out of the ball he’s curled himself up in.

“Good boy. Look at me. Just me.” Rozanov’s thumb strokes along Shane’s cheek, his jawline, his bottom lip. “Is okay. You are okay.”

“‘M sorry,” Shane cries. Rozanov shushes him and moves up, sitting on the bed, and pulls Shane into his lap like he weighs nothing.

“No ‘sorry’. Nothing to be sorry at.” Rozanov rubs his hands down Shane’s back. “Should not have let you leave.”

Hayden looks at them- *really* looks at them, and it all starts to make sense. The bickering at face-offs. The lingering glances at award shows. The soft, stupidly in love smile that Shane has on his face every time he's texting *Lily.* When he looks up at Rozanov, he sees nothing but pure worry, pure *love.*

"I'm gonna-" Hayden starts, calling Rozanov's attention back. "I'm just gonna… go to the gym?"

"Okay," Rozanov says quietly. He presses a kiss to Shane's head and holds him tighter, looking up at Hayden when something softer in his eyes. "Thank you."

"I- uh…" Hayden slides his shoes on. "Yeah. No problem. Just- I'll be back in an hour. One hour. Sixty minutes. That's *my* bed."

"Shut up, Pike."

Hayden's halfway out the door already. He closes it behind him, taking a deep breath, and reaches for his phone when he finds that it's not in his pocket. He turns around and is about to open it when he hears the conversation inside.

"I love you," Shane's broken voice says from behind the door. "I'm sorry."

"What did I say about sorry?" Rozanov responds. He can hear a kiss, then the shuffling of them laying down, before Rozanov speaks again, his voice softer than Hayden's ever heard it. "I love you too."

Hayden begins his trek downstairs. His phone can wait.

# Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Hayden would do just about anything for Shane. This just barely includes a dinner with Shane's boyfriend, who happens to be the man he hates the most in the entire universe.

Chapter Notes

It's my birthday so I needed some Hayden Pike action
I couldn't stay away!! This got suuuuuch a great response from you guys, and I'm so so so glad you enjoyed it, and I'm a sucker for praise and attention so. More!
TW for panic attack

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"I'm not asking a lot out of you."

Hayden rips his neck guard off, scratching the irritated skin. Actually, *all* of his skin feels irritated right now. It's like his body is experiencing an allergic reaction to the mere mention of having dinner with Ilya fucking Rozanov.

Still, Shane looks hopeful. He's got the spark back in his eyes, he played a great game tonight, and he's staring at Hayden like he has the power to brighten up his entire life. Or send it crashing down. So, he musters up the fakest smile he can offer, and nods once.

"Sure, buddy."

"Yes!" Shane cheers quietly, then checks himself. The others are starting to pile out of the showers. "I- uh, I assume you talked to Jackie? Right?"

Hayden strips his shirt off and shoves it in his bag. "Yeah, man. I'm sorry."

“No! No, don’t be- don’t be sorry,” Shane dismisses. He’s still got that stupid little smile on his face. “It’s fine. I expect nothing less. I just… maybe she would want to come?”

“Shane,” Hayden says seriously as he grabs his towel and wraps it around his waist, walking toward the shower stalls. Shane follows him like a lost puppy. “I think Jackie would kill me if I didn’t invite her.”

Shane breathes a sigh of relief. “Okay. Okay! That’s- that’s good. How’s, uh… tomorrow?”

“Fine by me,” Hayden starts the water, scrubbing at his sweaty skin. He checks behind them and moves in closer, ensuring nobody can hear his voice. “Look. Uh. He’s… he’s treating you right?”

Shane blushes down to his chest. He tugs his own clothes off and begins to shower in the stall next to him. “Yeah. I… yeah.”

“Okay,” Hayden exhales. He keeps his eyes on Shane for a beat longer. “Just… you’ll tell me, right? If that changes?”

“Yes.”

Shane peeks over at him when Hayden doesn’t respond. He’s holding his hand out, his pinky sticking up, and has his eyebrows raised at Shane.

“Jesus, Hayd. You need me to make a pinky promise?”

Hayden just wags his hand at him again. Shane rolls his eyes but connects their pinkies, twisting their hands together before pulling away and beginning to shampoo his own hair.

He can work with a pinky promise. Those can't legally be broken.

-

"Hayden. Sit."

Hayden follows the order obediently. He rests his elbows on his knees, leaning forward, and finally takes the slow, deep breath that Jackie has been requesting for the last twenty minutes. Her soft, manicured fingers rest on either side of his face, and he allows his eyes to flutter shut.

"You're gonna be fine," she soothes, rubbing her thumbs over his cheeks. He reaches around her and grips her ass, pulling her closer, and buries his face in the familiar softness of her sweater. He takes another deep inhale. "Why are you so stressed?"

When he doesn't answer, she tugs at his hair gently. He moves so he's only resting half of his face against her chest and frees his mouth up. "I… I don't know."

"I think you do know."

He rolls his eyes fondly. She can always see right through him. He moves his grip to a more appropriate spot, cupping her lower back, and tries to collect his thoughts.

"He's my best friend," he starts, his eyes shutting again when Jackie begins to scrape her nails through his scalp. "I just… seeing him like that. It was scary. I've never seen him so upset. So… I don't know. Vulnerable, I guess."

"It must've been hard for you." Jackie allows him to pull her down onto his lap, tucking her chin over his shoulder. He runs his hand up and down her back, not quite sure who he's soothing with the motion, but feeling the tension leave his body anyway.

“And, I mean… it’s Rozanov. Guy’s an asshole. He’s always been like that. It’s just… it’s hard for me to see him as anything other than Shane’s rival. Or the guy who made him feel that… that fucked up.”

Jackie presses a kiss to his shoulder and pulls back, resting her weight on his thighs. She cups his face again and ducks her gaze to meet his eyes. “I get that. It’s valid. But you have to try. You need to have some trust in Shane. He’s a big boy, you know. He can take care of himself.”

“I think he’s spent his entire life taking care of himself.”

Jackie smiles softly at him and kisses the corner of his mouth before getting up. “Okay. Here’s the plan. We’ll make a safe word. If he’s really bothering you, and you need me to make a diversion so you can take a breather, you just say it. Got it?”

*God*, Hayden thinks. *I fucking love her*. “Got it.”

Two hours later, Haydne finds himself in a place he wouldn’t even go to with a gun. Sitting across from Ilya Rozanov, trying to avoid eye contact, and picking at the delicious bird food Jackie put together for them all. He thanks his lucky stars that Jackie’s mom was able to take the kids.

“So.” Shane breaks the silence first.

Hayden flinches a little when Jackie rests her hand on his leg. He looks up at Shane. “So.”

“So,” Rozanov repeats. He looks… *nervous*?

“So, Shane. How’s your parents?” Jackie diverts. He rests his hand on top of hers and squeezes.

“Uh. Good. Yeah. They’re good,” Shane mumbles. He puts his fork down and sighs. “Look. This is horrible. Can we just… can we talk?”

“Nothing to say,” Hayden says bitterly. Jackie pinches him.

“I also have nothing,” Rozanov says. He’s bouncing his leg under the table. Hayden kind of wants to cut it off. Instead, he turns to Jackie.

“Wow. This food is good. Was it made with *pineapple*?” He stresses the last word. Jackie rolls her eyes.

“Okay. Follow me. Both of you.”

He stands, following her, and grunts in displeasure when Rozanov does so as well. She leads them near the front door, shoving both of them into the coat closet. Once they’re in, she closes the door in front of her, the sound of a lock clicking making Hayden’s heart rate shoot up.

“What the fuck?” Hayden calls, twisting the doorknob. It doesn’t budge. He bangs on the wood for a moment before giving up. “Jesus. What the hell?”

“Talk,” Jackie says through the door. “You aren’t coming out until you’re civil.”

“What happened to the safeword?!”

“Please,” Shane’s voice replaces Jackie’s. “Just try.”

“You were in on this, weren’t you?” Hayden accuses. He hears nothing but footsteps walking away from the door. He continues wobbling the doorknob for a long moment.

“Maybe door is voice activated.”

Hayden whips around, glaring at Ilya, who is making himself comfortable on the ground next to a box of diapers. “What?”

“Maybe you have to say *door open*.”

“What the… what the fuck are you even saying?” Hayden’s voice comes out much quieter than he wants. He wants to sound angry, biting, snarky. Instead, he just sounds… scared.

Because if there’s one thing Hayden Pike hates more than Ilya Rozanov, it’s an enclosed space.

It’s something he’s been working on in the privacy of his own home, mostly on the off season. He hasn’t even brought it up to Jackie. It’s a stupid, stupid phobia, especially for someone who spends most of the year with his head encased in a helmet, but something about being *trapped* makes his breath pick up. At this rate, the room is going to run out of oxygen in the next hour.

He doesn’t realize that Rozanov has stood up, doesn’t even realize Rozanov is trying to speak to him, until the Russian is directly in front of him. Hayden can’t look at him. Can’t open his eyes. He *can’t fucking breathe-*

“Pike,” Rozanov calls. He hesitates before resting a tense hand on Hayden’s shoulders. “You are having panic attack.”

“Stop, stop, just- just fuck off,” Hayden shoves at him, but there’s nowhere for him to move. He brings his hands up to the collar on his shirt, sucking in painful heaving breaths as he scratches up his neck. He’s going to die in this stupid closet, surrounded by children’s toys and winter jackets, with *Ilya Fucking Rozanov*. “Fuck.”

“Pike,” Rozanov repeats, gripping his shoulder again. Hayden squirms- or, well, attempts to. Rozanov doesn’t let him go far. “You will pass out. Take a breath.”

“No, no, I can’t, I can’t, I need-” Hayden doesn’t know what he needs. He needs Jackie, needs Shane, needs the kids. Needs the cocky Russian bastard in front of him to stop *looking* at him with a gaze filled with something other than hatred before he loses his shit. “I can’t, I can’t-”

“Hey, hey,” Rozanov quiets his voice. It’s softer, but it still has a sharp edge to it, like he knows he’s to be listened to. “Stop talking. Take a breath.”

“Rozanov,” Hayden chokes out. He finds, with absolute horror, that his hands have moved without his consent. Instead of scratching his neck enough to make a bloody mess, he’s gripping onto the solid muscle of Rozanov’s biceps, tightening his fingers into the soft material of his hoodie in a way that must be painful. Rozanov doesn’t even flinch.

“It’s okay,” Rozanov says softly. “You need to calm down.”

“I’m gonna die,” Hayden pants. He squeezes his eyes shut again and knocks his head back against the door repeatedly, getting harder every time. “I’m gonna fucking die in here, with the person I hate the most, and you’re probably gonna- gonna steal my watch, and then my son is gonna grow up and wonder what happened to his dad’s only family heirloom, and you’re gonna sell it on Etsy for twelve dollars, and-“

Hayden’s rambling is cut off when Rozanov roughly moves him away from the door, his own back against the hard wood, and brings his giant hand up to squeeze tightly at the back of Hayden’s neck. The grip shuts Hayden up instantly. His shoulders loosen, his head drops, but his chest is still rapidly rising and falling in a nearly hysterical manner.

“Hayden,” Rozanov says. “Shut the fuck up.”

Hayden swallows thickly. Rozanov doesn’t remove the hand from his neck, but he uses the other one to brace himself back against the door, taking slow, deep breaths. He’s loud and

obnoxious with it, as he is with everything else, but after a moment, Hayden finds himself copying the rhythm.

“There we go,” Rozanov says after a few minutes. “Good. Easy.”

“Fuck,” Hayden spits out, suddenly aware of himself, of his proximity to the man who he uses as the villain in all of his kids bedtimes stories. He takes a big step back and braces his hands on his knees, suddenly light headed.

“Sit,” Rozanov orders. Hayden is disgusted to find that he’s already moving to sit on the floor. “Head between knees.”

It takes more energy to argue than to obey, so Hayden props his legs up and presses his face in between his knees, rocking back and forth a little in a self soothing motion. He hears rustling above him, and when his heart rate has settled into a normal level, he looks up. Rozanov is holding a water bottle out to him, the cap already twisted off.

“Drink. All of it.”

Hayden does so, chugging the bottle down and scrunching the plastic up. He hands it back to Rozanov and holds his hand out for the cap. The man gives him a look of confusion but places it in his open palm, and Hayden doesn’t think twice before shoving the hard plastic circle into his mouth, chewing on it.

“Okay,” Rozanov says quietly. He shuffles a little. “Is okay if I sit down?”

Hayden glances up at him, spots something strikingly like concern in Rozanov’s eyes. He nods, but Rozanov doesn’t move.

“Words, Pike. Need to know you have enough brains to make them.”

Hayden's glare returns. He kicks a box out of the way and gestures to the ground. "Sit, whatever. I don't care."

Rozanov sits across from him, his legs straight out in front of him, and Hayden tries not to focus on the fact that his moral enemy is staring at him, trying to get a read. He relaxes after a couple minutes of silence.

"Uh," Hayden starts, because Rozanov sure isn't going to. "Sorry. For that. That was- I don't know."

"Panic attack," Rozanov supplies. He fidgets with the edge of his own hoodie. "You get them lots?"

"No," Hayden dismisses. Shane gets panic attacks. Shane locks himself in the bathroom and shakes and cries and can't breathe. Shane needs his help between the two of them. Hayden just… has *episodes*, sometimes. "No."

"Ah," Rozanov says, like he's seeing something Hayden isn't. "Is not big deal."

"I don't have panic attacks, Rozanov," Hayden bites out. The other man just shrugs. They go back to sitting in silence until it's physically painful for Hayden to continue doing so. "You're… you're good at that. At calming people down."

"Wasn't," Rozanov says. He looks to the side, his jaw tense. "Had to learn when I started seeing Shane."

Finally, a topic the two of them can share. Hayden goes to open his mouth again when Rozanov hisses in pain.

"Back hurts." He rubs a spot on his lower back, arching and trying to stretch. Hayden looks at where he's cramped up across from him and sighs, making room for Rozanov to come sit

next to him. There's more leg room for the taller man. Once he's next to him, Hayden feels better. He doesn't have to look at him this way.

"I had to, as well," Hayden offers. "Learn. I didn't know how to help him. The first time he, uh, got like that, I was a mess. We were in a hotel together, like, two weeks after our first game. He was just rocking and silent and started whining if I tried to touch him."

"Yes," Rozanov agrees. He blows out a little sigh and shakes his head. "He does not ask for help."

"No, he doesn't."

"Neither do you." Rozanov takes him by surprise. He darts his eyes to him and finds the other man already looking at him. "Is okay, you know. To be scared."

"Yeah? Is it?" Hayden barks. "I'm not sure I'm gonna take any lessons on emotional intelligence from you."

He's itching for a fight, for Rozanov to insult him back. Instead, the man just shrugs and looks away. "Fair."

"You- what?"

"I am asshole," Rozanov says quietly. "Is easy this way. People know what I am before I meet them."

Hayden settles. He lays his legs out in front of him and inhales slowly. "Must be hard."

"Huh?"

“I don’t know. Everyone thinking you suck. Most of them have never even had a conversation with you.”

“Have you?” Rozanov asks. “Had a conversation with me? Before you write me off as… as terrible person. We never have even talked.”

Hayden opens his mouth to respond, to beak at him, but finds that he’s right. This is the first time he and Rozanov have ever had a private conversation that wasn’t chirps on the ice or snide comments in passing. He’s completely dismissed the man before he’s even got to know him.

“I’m sorry,” Hayden surprises himself. He doesn’t even register that he’s thinking the words until they’re out. “I’m… I shouldn’t have judged you like that. I’m sorry.”

Rozanov tenses beside him. He takes a breath and then knocks his foot against Hayden’s. “Is okay.”

“No, it’s not,” Hayden replies. “I’m- I don’t know, man. I’m protective. Of Shane, I mean. I don’t… all I hear is that you two hate each other, and then I see him like… like *that* a couple weeks ago. I didn’t know what to think.”

“Is good that he has you,” Rozanov says. When Hayden looks over at him, his eyes are closed, and his head is back against the wall. He looks almost… content. “I am happy he has friend like you.”

“I’m happy he has someone like you, too,” Hayden mumbles. He gets a cramp in his ass from the awkward position and adjusts, moving an inch closer to Rozanov. “I still don’t like you, though.”

Rozanov snorts out a quiet laugh. “I can handle that. I do not like you much either.”

“You’re arrogant, and rude, and if you ever treat Shane like you did that night, I will…” he thinks of the most horrifying threat he can imagine. “I will have another kid.”

“Oh god, no, anything but that,” Rozanov dramatically whispers. Hayden can’t help but chuckle, and after a few moments, the two of them are practically doubled over, laughing like idiots. It takes a minute for them to calm down enough, and once they do, Hayden finds his shoulder pressed against Rozanov’s. “I promise,” Rozanov says, voice cracking a little. “I will never let that happen again. He is everything to me.”

Hayden takes a deep breath. “Okay,” he agrees, nodding a little. “I can deal with that.” He holds his hand out to him. “Friends, Rozanov?”

Rozanov looks at his hand, then up to Hayden’s eyes, then nods. He shakes his hand. “Can call me Ilya, I guess. If we are *friends*.”

“I don’t know if I can do that.”

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“Do you think they’ve killed eachother?” Shane asks, leg bouncing as he leans forward on his elbows. Jackie laughs quietly and rubs his back.

“Probably not. Hayden knows I don’t like to clean. He wouldn’t leave a crime scene for me to deal with.”

Shane huffs out a laugh and checks his watch. “Okay. They’ve been in there for an hour. They’re either best friends or dead.”

“I guess we can let them go,” Jackie agrees. She stands up and cracks her neck, grunting a little. “These kids are running me straight into my grave, I swear to god.”

Shane follows after her, a little nervous about what he might see inside the closet. He pictures the dead bodies of his best friend and boyfriend, both choked out from the aggressive hands of one another. He pictures a hole dug out the door, the two of them using whatever kind of weapon they can to free themselves. He pictures them mid fist-fight, Hayden losing (of course), and prepares himself to have to drag Ilya off of him.

What he's not picturing, however, is for Jackie to open the door and find the two of them asleep, snuggled up against each other like they're long lost lovers.

Hayden is snoring softly, his face smushed against Ilya's shoulder, a small circle of drool already appearing on the man's hoodie. Ilya is equally as passed out, but his head is tilted against Hayden's. They're slumped against the wall of the closet, and Shane thinks he's never seen anything as amazing as this.

Shane looks to his side to see Jackie holding up her phone, taking as many pictures of the scene as she can. He can't stop the loud laugh that bursts out of him, his hand flying to his mouth to silence himself, but the damage is done. Hayden blinks himself awake groggily, rubbing his eyes, causing Ilya to grunt as he wakes up. The second the two of them realize the position they're in, they shove off of the other, sending themselves flying in every direction. Shane thinks he's about to cry with the force of his laughter

"What the fuck?" Hayden gripes, rubbing his head where he's just smacked it into an old baby sensory chair. Ilya scrambles up on his feet.

Jackie takes a minute to catch her breath, and, still wheezing, grips onto Shane's arm. "Do you-" she bursts out into more giggles. "Do you two need Shane and I to take the guest room tonight?"

"Fuck off," Hayden groans, stumbling as he stands. He glares at Shane and Jackie. "You guys are traitors."

"I'm not the one cuddling with your wife," Shane says, then doubles over, holding onto Jackie for stability. Ilya rolls his eyes and shoulders past Hayden.

“Yes, yes. Laugh it up. Mister comedian,” he grabs Shane by the shoulder. “Can we leave?”

“You sure you two don’t wanna cuddle some more?” Jackie asks. Hayden rolls his eyes.

“Am sure. Thank you for hosting, Jackie,” Ilya leans in and kisses Jackie on the cheek, dragging Shane away as he’s still laughing. “Goodbye, Hayden.”

“Bye, Ilya.”

“Fine,” Hayden admits that night, after the other couple has left, after the kids have been FaceTimed, after he and Jackie get comfortable in bed. “I guess he’s not *that* bad.”

The next time they come for dinner, the picture of Hayden and Ilya is up above the fireplace. Ilya grumbles at it. Hayden tries to hide it. Shane asks Jackie to make a dozen copies so he can have one in every room.

Chapter End Notes

This is for the two (2) people on twitter who requested this.

End Notes

I love them so much they make me sick ugh how are we all holding up.. I am manically writing and this is a new record for me but I managed to crank this one out in less than two hours so apologies for the mistakes they are all mine

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