

Hayden is Not Stupid

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/77253116) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/77253116>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Heated Rivalry (TV) , Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid
Relationships:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov , Shane Hollander & Hayden Pike
Characters:	Hayden Pike , Shane Hollander , Ilya Rozanov
Additional Tags:	Good Friend Hayden Pike , POV Hayden Pike , Shane Hollander & Hayden Pike Friendship , Hayden figures it out , Shane Hollander Loves Ilya Rozanov , Ilya Rozanov Loves Shane Hollander , Autistic Shane Hollander , Anxious Shane Hollander , Hockey Fights , Hockey , Coming Out , coming out for someone , Closeted Character , Misunderstandings , Hayden only figures out half
Language:	English
Series:	Part 1 of Verdant's Heated Rivalry Fics
Collections:	hollanov for the heart <3
Stats:	Published: 2026-01-07 Words: 3,021 Chapters: 1/1

Hayden is Not Stupid

by [Verdant_Words](#)

Summary

Hayden may be unobservant, but he's not stupid. After 10 years, he's figured out why Shane has hidden Lily for so long.

Notes

This has been bouncing around in my head. Stevlana figured out Jane was a he and I think Hayden would figure out Lily is a he if he thought about it for two seconds.

Not beta read, just my own grammar mistakes.

Please enjoy!

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

Hayden may be unobservant.

He may not notice what color something is or when Jackie gets her hair cut. It may have taken him a week to notice Ruby using a new backpack and Jade changed her favorite color to purple instead of pink.

He may have noticed a mole on Amber's foot that he swears is new, but Jackie insists has always been there. Arthur may have a new favorite toy and it took Hayden a solid four days to notice there was even a new toy.

It may have taken five hints until Jackie gave up and told him she was pregnant with Amber.

Yes, he's unobservant.

But he's not stupid.

At a certain point, coincidences and facts get thrown into your face enough that you make the connection, even if it's years coming.

For instance, Shane Hollander.

1. Shane texts a girl named Lily.

He knows this because he's seen the notifications on Shane's phone. He texts Lily constantly; In the bus, in the locker room, at Hayden's house, during parties

2. Lily lives in Boston

This is the only city Shane meets someone. Actually, this is the only city Shane will leave the hotel without the team dragging him out the front door and forcing him to socialize.

3. Lily is a secret.

This point is painfully obvious. Shane, their captain, doesn't talk about Lily. This man was my best man at my wedding, he's the godfather to my kids, he's the person we all trust the most, but he won't even mention her name. Any time Hayden brings her up, Shane clams up and tries to wave him off.

The other guys speculate that she's married or doesn't want to be in the media. They say, "Poor Shane," because they assume he's being forced to be kept a secret.

Hayden disagrees. Shane is quiet, yes, but he's a leader. He's the Montreal's captain and he's led us to three Stanley Cups. Shane is not someone to meekly agree to something. Shane *wants* this to be a secret.

Which leads to Hayden's most far-fetched point:

4. Shane is in love with Boston Lily.

Hayden doesn't have concrete proof for this but... He saw Shane with Rose Landry. Shane with Rose was cautious, calculated, and stiff. Yes, he went to clubs with Rose. Yes, he texted Rose, but his face never glowed like it does with Shane is texting Lily, especially when he's on the way to Boston. Shane smiles and laughs at his phone when he doesn't think anyone else can see.

Shane has been texting this girl for years, in secret. Constantly. Hayden believes only love can make you so dedicated to a secret for this long.

But why keep it a secret?

5. Lily is a man.

Why else would his best friend keep a secret relationship from him? It's because it's a gay relationship and Shane isn't ready to come out.

That's okay.

That's fine.

Okay, it hurts a little that Shane doesn't trust Hayden, but that's for Hayden to deal with. Shane doesn't owe anyone the facts of his sexuality, not until he's ready.

So Hayden will be supportive. He'll still chirp his best friend about "Boston Lily," but in a supportive bro way. He'll show Shane he doesn't have anything to worry about from Hayden Pike.

And Hayden Pike will be the best ally Hayden can be, even if Shane doesn't notice.

"Jackie's friend Bianca and her wife are coming over for dinner," Hayden says conversationally as they change in the locker room one day. "Did you want to come over?"

Shane hums as he looks up from his phone, the screen lighting up his face. "What? Oh, I'm meeting my mom for dinner tonight. Sorry, man."

One day, while they're stretching on the ice before a game in New York, Hayden juts his chin at Shane. "I'm thinking of going to Scott Hunter's bar after the game." It's a gay bar as he's sure Shane knows.

"Yeah? Don't be out too late. We have a early plane to catch."

Shane Hollander, always the responsible captain.

"My God Shane, did you want to join? Scott's husband should be there, and Eric Bennet with his boyfriend."

Shane looks up at this with a flash of something on his face, but before he's able to answer, their coach calls all the players to the bench for the game to start.

Shane never shows up to the gay bar.

A few weeks later, Hayden and Shane share a hotel room while in Florida. ESPN drones on on the television, but Shane hasn't looked up from his phone in over an hour.

"Nice game tonight, huh? Nice hat trick."

Shane nods as he types on this phone. "Uh-huh, thanks man. Thanks for the, um, the passes."

Hayden rolls his eyes. Distracted, Shane is always distracted. Too distracted to talk and too distracted to pick up on Hayden's ally-ness.

Maybe he should be more direct.

"Wow, is that Troy Barrett on the TV? He's looking good." Honestly, Troy is a douche-bag wrapped in a smelly gym bag that's been left in the Dallas Stars parking lot for a week, but maybe the name will shock Shane enough to pay attention.

Hayden looks over at a oblivious Shane Hollander. "Hmm, yeah. Very good."

Hayden groans and flops down on the bed. This is going no where.

The next time they're in Boston, Hayden almost had enough on the plane.

"Shane, please stop with the leg bouncing. You're worse than the twins after Halloween."

Shane immediately stops bouncing his leg looking sheepish. He pauses for a second. "Wait, have you ever been home for Halloween?"

"Hey, I don't have to be there to know that they wouldn't be as fidgety and jumpy as you are right now."

"Right, sorry."

Hayden sighs and shoves his friend's arm. "Hey, man, you don't have to apologize. Is everything alright?"

Shane nods and gives a small smile. "Yeah, everything is fine. Just..." He waves his hand, gesturing to the aircraft.

Hayden decides to approach the topic. Carefully, like a zookeeper approaching a scared tiger. "You meeting Lily when we touch down or after the game?"

"What?" Shane jerks slightly and stares at Hayden with wide eyes.

"Dude, I know you text somebody named Lily." *Somebody*. Hayden pats himself on the back. Very smooth of him to make it androgynous.

Hayden can see the gears in Shane's head turn as he forces himself to relax. "Yes, we're meeting before the game." He didn't quite manage to make his voice casual.

"You know," Hayden sighs, "you can talk to me, if you want. About Lily. Or about anything at all."

"I know."

"You're my best friend, Shane."

"And you're mine, Hays," Shane says more earnest this time. "It's just... I don't talk about my personal life in public. You never know when someone is listening."

It's bullshit, Hayden thinks but doesn't call his captain out on it.

On a plane, sure. In a hotel lobby, understood. In the locker room? Maybe Shane is worried some of the other guys would be homophobic. In the hotel room when they're alone? Okay, it could be bugged, but that's a pretty neurotic worry to have.

But Shane has kept this from him when they've been alone in Hayden's house. In *Shane's* house. In their cars. There's nowhere more private, and yet Shane still kept the secret up.

Hayden leans back in his uncomfortable airplane seat and pops his headphones back in. He'll have to try again a different day.

Hayden: Hey whats up

Shane: Nothing much at the moment. Watching the playoffs.

Shane: What's up?

Hayden: Jackie wanted to invite you over for dinner tomorrow. We have ginger ale and gross food for you. Very inciting

Shane: Tell Jacks I'll be there even if the world fell apart as long as there's ginger ale

Hayden sends a quick thumbs up and pulls his car to Shane's apartment. He said he's watching the playoffs, so he must be home, and Hayden is ready to finally have a *private* talk to Shane where he can't worry about anyone overhearing.

Only, Shane doesn't answer the door when Hayden knocks.

He frowns and looks through the crack in the curtains. He can see the kitchen and a sliver of the living room.

The TV isn't even on.

Where is he?

Shane can't be at his cabin already because he committed to coming to dinner tomorrow. Shane doesn't frequent sport bars and Hayden knows J.J. isn't in the country, so he's not over at his place.

Shane isn't in Boston with Lily, again because of the dinner tomorrow. Unless Shane was already planning on flying back to Montreal tomorrow morning.

So why isn't he at home?

"Look, Shane," Hayden starts the next night at his house. Shane and him are outside on his back patio, a gas-fueled fire pit lighting both of the men in orange flickering light. Jackie just went inside to check on all the kids, just as they'd discussed to give Hayden a gap to have this awkward chat. "I wanted to talk to you about something."

Shane looks over at his friend. It's been a nice night of no phones and light moods from everyone. The twins had put on a talent show earlier and the boa they wrapped around Shane is still around his neck. "Yeah? You look serious. Is Jackie pregnant again? Pike Child Number Five? You'll have a whole hockey team soon."

"No, I got my vasectomy after the last, thank God."

"I know, Hays." Shane rolls his eyes and takes a sip of his ginger ale. "That was me lightening the mood."

Hayden nods and bites his lip. Fuck. "I don't really know how to start this."

Shane frowns and leans in. His expression turns into his Captain Face; ready to deal with any situation and make a game plan. "It doesn't have to be perfect, Hays. Just spit it out, I'm here."

"I know about Lily," Hayden blurts out.

Shane freezes and Hayden swears he's not even breathing, so he barrels ahead, "I was trying to let you tell me about him yourself, but you never did, and it's eating at me that I know this secret about you, but you don't *know* that I know, and I know it's none of my business, Shane, but I want you to know that I'm here, okay?" He knows he's rambling. He knows and doesn't care. He needs this off his chest. "I'm *here* for you, Shane. You're my best man, my favorite person who I'm not married to or related to. I don't want you to continue thinking you need to keep this secret from me. You're just my friend, no matter what."

Shane gaze had shifted during Hayden's long speech. He's now staring into the flames and Hayden can't get a read on what he's feeling.

"How long have you known?" Shane asks quietly.

"Since October, maybe November. I'm sorry," Hayden runs a hand over his face, "I should have let you come out to me. I know it's an important thing, coming out, but I kept thinking that *you* thought I wouldn't accept you. I don't want you to think that."

"I don't," Shane whispers blandly.

Hayden's seen this a few times over the years; Shane gets overwhelmed and he shuts down. He needs to give him time, Hayden reminds himself.

"I didn't say anything to Jackie. I asked her to give us some private time, but I didn't tell her why and I won't tell her if you don't want me to."

"I don't want you to lie for me." Shane's voice is still that dead blandness, but Hayden sees him wipe his cheek. "That's partly why I didn't- I didn't want you to lie for me, or Jackie to lie for me. That's not fair to you."

"And it's fair for you to hide who you are from everyone? Does anyone know?"

Shane nods. "Rose. She did the same thing you did, coming out for me." Shane takes a shaky breath in. "My parent found out during the summer; My dad, uh, walked in on Ilya and me while we were at the cabin."

Hayden frowns. *Ilya?* "Rozanov-"

"And our agent knows now, for obvious reasons. If the media got a whiff of Rozanov and Hollander, rivals for their whole careers, dating..." Shane barks out a wet laugh.

"Your agent..." Hayden mind is swirling. *Ilya?* The Russian dipshit that everyone on the team and the league shit-talks? Shane's arch-rival Ilya Rozanov?

Shane's oblivious to Hayden's sudden panic. "Yes, we share one now. Ilya's agent was Russian and quit when we told her. You know how they are about homosexuals in Russia."

Hayden freezes. Fuck, he didn't even fucking think about Rozanov's home country. "So, keeping it a secret?"

"It was for both of us, our careers. I want to play hockey and not have my sexuality be a debate on ESPN. I don't want people to doubt my loyalty when I play against my boyfriend." *Fuck, boyfriend Rozanov.* "At least, at the start. Now, it's mostly a secret because if Ilya gets dropped, if no NHL team wants him, he'd be deported. Deported as an openly bisexual man to a country that is openly anti-homosexuality. He wouldn't be safe."

Hayden nods along and take a long, *long* drink of his beer.

Shane sighs and finally turns away from the fire. It might just be Hayden, but it seemed like Shane was different somehow. Lighter than Hayden has ever seen him. More open. Unguarded.

"It feels good to talk to you about it, Hays." Shane bumps his elbow against Hayden's arm. Shane sees Hayden's blank-due-to-shock expression and frowns. "What's wrong?"

Hayden blinks quickly and opens his mouth, but nothing comes out. He takes another drink of beer and tries again. "Rozanov..."

Shane nods slowly. "Yes, Rozanov. Ilya, who I have in my phone as Lily."

"Lily, Ilya," Hayden whispers. "Oh my god."

Shane frowns obviously a bit offended. "Hayden, you said you knew and you'd be supportive. What the fu-"

"I knew about Lily being a man, not that *Lily* is *Rozanov*, holy shit." Hayden puts his head between his knees. "I'm still supportive, I love you man, but give me five seconds."

Shane stammers, "F-fuck, I- Fuck, Hays, I'm sorry."

Hayden shakes his head. "No, no, no. You don't get to say sorry, Shane." He sits up and looks at his best friend's suddenly very pale face. "Don't apologize for loving someone, Jesus Christ. I'm the one being a dick right now. I just didn't expect... this."

Shane purses his lips. He looks like he wants to apologize again. "Is it a big shock?"

Hayden takes a deep breath and thinks through this new information. God, it fucking makes sense. Boston, the laser-focus on their games against the Bears, Rozanov visiting Shane last year in the hospital, the pointed chirping, the way Shane never directly talked shit about Rozanov — instead he would mostly nod along and nod add much to the conversation. Hayden assumed it was modesty, Shane's nice Canadian upbringing making him not want to talk about someone behind their backs.

Fuck, Hayden is so unobservant.

"No," he says finally. "No, it makes sense now. How you play against him, you always looking forward to Boston games. I-" Hayden frowns. Something nags at the edge of his brain. "Did you say he was at the cabin last summer?"

"Yes? We spend our break to see if this— if we could work as a couple."

"But you've texted Lily for years?"

"Yes, but..." It's hard to tell in the fire light, but Hayden swears Shane's cheeks redden. "We didn't *talk* much at first. We mostly just set meet-ups. It wasn't until last years All-Stars game that we started talking about our feelings."

Wow. What was that, nine years? Nine years of meet ups and secrecy with a year of dating and secrecy. Holy shit.

"And you're sure it's Rozanov? Not an alien from some other planet with his face?"

Shane laughs and shakes his head. "Yes. Look, I know he's an asshole on the ice, and he's also an asshole *off* the ice, but he really is sweet. In his own Russian way."

Hayden nods slowly. There's still something, something that Hayden's subconscious has connected but his thoughts can't grasp. "He was at the cabin..." Horror fills his body. "The phone call?"

"What?" Shane chokes out.

"The phone call! I called you and you sounded strange. You were breathless and disoriented and I thought it was the concussion, but-" Hayden looks over at his best friend who is looking exceptionally guilty. "Holy fuck."

"I didn't think you'd notice-"

"Oh God," Hayden groans and puts his head back between his knees. "I take it back. I want that apology now."

Hayden gets shoved into the boards for the second time this game. Hayden swears to fucking Christ, if the Boston player has a fucking Russian accent-

"Do not call Shane tonight," Rozanov says to Hayden with that cocky fucking smirk of his. "He will be too busy to answer your call."

"Fuck *off*, Rozanov. I don't know what he fucking sees in a dick like you."

"Well, he sees my dick for starters."

Hayden punches him right in the mouth.

"Hays, that's enough," Shane shouts and grabs Hayden's arm to prevent another punch.

Rozanov just stands there, cocky as ever, and spits blood onto the ice. The refs blow their whistle and indicate a two minute penalty for Hayden Pike. "Yes, *Hays*, go sit like good boy in penalty box."

"Fuck you."

"Shane tells me you have swear jar? I think that's three for you."

"Ilya, stop it. Hayden, go sit in the box." Shane skates with his hand still on Hayden's arm.

"I hate him calling me Hays," he mutters.

"He knows that, that's why he does it."

"He's an asshole."

"Yes," Shane says simply and Hayden fucking swears he can hear a smile in his friend's voice.

Written by a human in [Ellipsus](#).

End Notes

I hope everyone enjoyed!

You can find me on tumblr [@verdant-words](#)

I mostly do Drarry content, but gay hockey has me in such a chokehold I might be making more content for this fandom.

Thank you so much! Comments and Kudos appreciated and cherished
- Verdant

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