

Hayden Pike vs. Bisexuality

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Hayden Pike vs. Bisexuality

by Anonymous

Summary

You: But I am not bi!

You: I am literally married to a woman?!

Rozanov: ...

Rozanov: What did I just say about bi erasure?

You: I am straight.

Rozanov: ...

You: Do not say it!

Rozanov: I wonder if internalized bi erasure is something

Rozanov: I will ask Harris

Rozanov: He told me about internalized homophobia

Basically, Hayden Pike gets added to the Ottawa group chat... where everyone apparently assumed that he was gay? Which somehow leads him to figure out that he is not gay, but in fact bisexual.

Notes

Be mindful of spoilers! This is set after the books (and TV series)

Shane and Ilya are already married and on the Centaurs and Hayden just got traded to Ottawa as well... I hope you like it ♥

(The messages in this are from Hayden's POV - messages from him are labelled as 'YOU')

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

Chapter 1

Hayden sighed as he stepped out of the bathroom. He still hadn't gotten used to the quiet. If he was entirely honest, it made him want to crawl out of his skin. He had never lived alone and at least ever since the twins had been born, there hadn't been a moment of silence in his wonderfully chaotic home.

But that was back in Montreal. In the city of the team that had drafted him. The city where he had met his wife and where all of his wonderful children had been born. The city, he thought he would spend his life in.

And yet, since then, Montreal had also become the city of the team that had hurt his best friend so much that he had left. It had become the city that had turned on Shane in a way that still made Hayden's stomach turn whenever he thought about it. It had simply become a place that Hayden didn't feel comfortable in anymore.

So yeah, it was probably a good thing that Hayden was in Ottawa now. In this impersonal hotel room where he was supposed to stay until he found a new place to live, until his family managed to move, until everything was settled again. It was just...

He groaned and let himself fall on the bed as he picked up his phone. He was going to call Jackie. Maybe she could just put him on speaker, and he could fill up the cold air around him with the sound of screeching children while he got himself ready for a meeting with the Centaurs social media team.

However, his plans suddenly changed when he saw that he had just been added to a group chat.

Group chat “Sexy Half-Horse-Men ✨🌈”

Rozanov: Okay, fuckers, listen up! Shane has something to say!

Shane: That was not what I meant when I asked you to get the team together for this.

Shane: But thank you, I guess?

Rozanov: Anything for you 🙄

Shane: Anyways... As you may have heard, we just acquired Hayden Pike in a trade with Montreal.

Shane: Most of you have met him at the wedding and know that he and I played together for many years.

Shane: But he is still new here. So, please be nice and welcoming.

Shane: Ilya, that goes for you especially.

Rozanov: When am I ever not nice to Pike?!

Shane: ...

Rozanov: Saying he is 14th best player on Metros is just fact.

Rozanov: Well not anymore

Rozanov: Now he is 23rd best player on Centaurs

Rozanov: We have better players than Montreal

Shane: Ilya!

Hayden couldn't help but snort. He knew that, back when he had first learned about Shane's relationship, he would have probably taken offense to a quip like that. However, since then so much had changed.

Since then, 'Rozanov' had become 'Uncle Ily' to his kids. Since then, he had seen just how happy the Russian player made his best friend. Since then, Hayden had learned that Ilya mostly chirped at people to get a reaction out of Shane. Because for some reason getting reprimanded by his own husband was Ilya's favourite state of being.

So, in that moment, in that cold and too quiet hotel room, Hayden couldn't help but just roll his eyes and bite back a smile as he replied.

You: Wow

You: Thanks for the warm welcome man!

Hayden sighed as he realised that he probably shouldn't get too comfortable too quickly. He had just gotten traded. He wanted to come across at least somewhat professional to the other players on the team. He had indeed met most of them at the wedding, and a few of them had been at the Irina Foundation Camps as well. But it wasn't like he was close friends with any of them. Well, besides Shane.

You: Seriously though, I am super excited to be playing for this team and will do my absolute best to finally bring the cup to the capital with you 🏆

Hayden smiled and watched as people started to introduce themselves in the chat. He tried his very best to add every single contact into his phone with the correct name and some context clues like their position, the year they started or their hometown if they mentioned it.

He had always done the same with anyone who had been new in Montreal. But it was undeniably a lot more overwhelming when an entire team was introducing themselves to you all at once.

Eventually however, a name popped up. A contact that Hayden had clearly previously added.

Wyatt Hayes (Cens Goalie): Welcome man! So happy to share the ice with you once more.

Rozanov: Only if he gets any playing time

Wyatt Hayes (Cens Goalie): Shut up or I'll tell your husband about the socks.

Rozanov: You wouldn't!

Shane: What happened to the socks?!

Hayden's laughter sounded far too loud in the empty hotel room. But he couldn't have cared less in that moment. He had always liked Wyatt Hayes and Shane had told him multiple times just how amazing Ottawa was as a team, how comfortable they felt... but even in his wildest dreams, Hayden wouldn't have anticipated a player just casually 'threatening' Rozanov – their captain – by saying he'd tell *Shane* something about some *socks*.

The Montreal group chat had mostly been used to organise practises, meetings or hotel pick-ups. Occasionally, someone had extended a birthday invitation or asked whether anyone else was having trouble with the facilities Wi-Fi. But it had definitely been mostly professional. Fond chirps? Someone casually joking about a player's *husband*? Unthinkable.

Hayden already liked this far more.

Wyatt Hayes (Cens Goalie): Anyways, you'll love it here, I promise.

Wyatt Hayes (Cens Goalie): Boody is organizing a barbecue at his place on Saturday. Obviously, it's not my place to do so... but I am just going to go ahead and invite you anyways

A new number, one that Hayden immediately saved under 'Boody (Barbecue)', replied almost instantly.

Bood (Barbecue): Of course, man! We'd love to have you!

Bood (Barbecue): And if you want to bring your partner or anyone else, we'd love to have them as well.

You: That's super nice! I'll check in with Jax!

Hayden found himself smiling again. Not only because he loved how easily Bood extended the invitation to him - a virtual stranger, but also because he had not missed that his teammate had chosen a gender-neutral term for his partner.

It was something that he probably wouldn't have noticed a few years ago. But being Shane's best friend had since certainly trained him to look out for that kind of inclusive language in an otherwise very heteronormative and sometimes still outright homophobic space.

He already loved how easy kindness seemed in Ottawa. These were exactly the sort of values he wanted his kids to grow up around.

Bood (Barbecue): Sounds good!

Bood (Barbecue): I know that a trade can be super tough on partners as well.

Bood (Barbecue): If you want to, you can send me Jax's contact and I'll tell Cassie (my wife) to reach out. Our partners have an amazing support system and I'm sure that Jax would be more than welcome!

This time... honestly? It was almost a little too much. Hayden couldn't help but swallow thickly at those words. He was simultaneously extremely grateful for the warm welcome and the fact that he would get to call these guys his teammates... while also feeling his heart break at the thought of how different things had been in Montreal, at how normal that kind of behaviour and environment had been for him.

He knew that not a single player in Montreal would have ever even *considered* making sure the partner of a new guy felt welcomed. And Hayden *hated* that that was what he had come to expect.

He had to take a moment to pull himself together before he could type out a reply.

You: That would be great!

You: Organizing the move with the kids has been super tough on Jax. I feel extremely bad for not being able to be there. I'm sure some support from people who already live here and could give some tips would be greatly appreciated.

He cringed as soon as he hit 'send'. *God*, he had no idea why the fuck he had just put *that* in a group chat. He knew that he would have been torn to shreds for it with every other team he had ever played for. And yet, in that moment it had simply seemed fair to be sincere.

Bood (Barbecue): Ooff, I can imagine! I'm sure the girls and Harris will be happy to help in any way they can!

Bood (Barbecue): I have a son, Milo. But he's still super young. Dykstra has a daughter as well, Suzi. But if you want more info about schools and stuff, Chouinard is probably your man. He and Selena have three little ones.

Once again, Hayden hated how surprised was by the fact that Bood could just easily rattle of his teammates' kids and family situations. He doubted that – besides Shane and maybe JJ – a single player in Montreal could have even just *guessed* two out of his four children's names.

Chouinard (3 kids): Absolutely! Selena and I will be more than happy to help you, Jax and the kids! What ages are they?

You: Thank you so much again! Seriously, you guys seem great!

You: I have four actually. One set of twin girls, a son and a daughter.

Rozanov: It's thing he's best at!

Shane: Ilya!

Rozanov: What? Pike kids are very cute!

Bood (Barbecue): Wow! Four?!

Hayden laughed out loud again. It just seemed so ridiculous. With the Metros he had always been the guy 'with a million kids'. It was so strange that a teammate of his would be surprised to find out about them. Before he could figure out what to reply to that though, his phone lit up with yet another notification.

Troy Barret: That's amazing! I didn't know you guys had kids, man! Did you adopt?

Huh?! Hayden frowned at his phone. Sure, it might have not been the weirdest question in the world and maybe it was simply yet another sign of how progressive the Centaurs were as a team... but he had never ever met anyone who hadn't just assumed that his wife had you know... birthed his kids.

However, he didn't get to ponder the question too much before Shane suddenly chimed in.

Shane: Wait! Troy?! Are you thinking about having kids?!

Troy Barret: Well... You know... We've just been talking about it a little...

Troy Barret: Not now obviously. We both have far too much work. But it's nice to think about. We decided that we'd like to adopt. It would be nice to know another couple who has.

Great. Suddenly, Hayden felt almost bad for having made his own kids.

Rozanov: Please adopt! We need more kids and more dogs!

Troy Barret: You're the married one! Get started! 😄

Rozanov: I try every night and most mornings, but Shane is still not pregnant 😞 We might need to see fertility doctor soon 😞

Shane: Ilya, stop it!

Hayden made a face and tried his best not to picture what his best friend's husband was insinuating. Luckily, Shane came to his rescue before he could truly start to feel sick at the mental image.

Shane: You should absolutely adopt! You two would make great parents!

Shane: But Hayden's wife actually carried all of their kids. She's a champ!

Shane: You should reach out to Scott and Kip though! I know that they have been looking into it recently!

Rozanov: I look into it too

Rozanov: You know, in case fertility treatment doesn't work 💔

Shane: I should have never taught you that word...

Hayden found himself chuckling again. He was definitely happy that he had landed with the Centaurs. There was a carelessness about the team that felt extremely comforting. None of them seemed scared or overthinking their words. It was obvious that they knew that they would be okay, that them simply being themselves wouldn't get them in any trouble... And yes, maybe that should be the bare minimum. But Hayden had played hockey for long enough to know that it unfortunately still very much wasn't the case in most locker rooms.

He sighed and was about to put his phone away to finally start actually getting ready, when another notification caught his attention.

Troy Barret: I'm so sorry @Hayden! I didn't know that you have been married before. That's great though that the kids are still coming to Ottawa with you!

Huh?! For the second time that day, Hayden found himself entirely confused by something Troy Barret had said.

You: Yeah...

He was texting slowly, brows furrowed. He was fairly certain that he was missing something.

You: I mean my wife is coming too. So yeah, it would be kind of weird if we just left them in Montreal...

Dykstra (Suzi): Wait... WIFE?!

Young (2nd year): I'm sorry... but Jax is a *woman*?!

Hayden stared at the phone on his lap. He had no idea what the fuck was happening.

Hayden: Uh... yeah?

Rozanov: Hahahaha Hayden has to come out for liking woman!

Troy Barret: Oh my God! I am so sorry, man! I could have sworn that someone said you were gay!

Young (2nd year): Yeah! Why was I so sure that you were dating a man?!

What the actual fuck? Hayden's head was still spinning when Ilya fucking Rozanov decided to make everything a million times worse.

Rozanov: I am disappointed by the bi erasure in this chat.

Rozanov: Just because someone has wife does not mean they can't like men.

Rozanov: Have I taught you nothing?

And suddenly, Hayden was angry. He didn't even think about what he was doing before he had already opened his private messages with Rozanov.

Private chat with Rozanov

You: Why the fuck did you tell your team that I am gay?!

Rozanov: Hahahaha

Rozanov: I tell them nothing

Rozanov: But I should have

Rozanov: This is so funny

Rozanov: My side hurts

Rozanov: Is your fault if I cannot practice tomorrow

Hayden rolled his eyes. This was so typical of Rozanov. And by now, Hayden should have found it funny. Hell, he knew that he should be laughing about this. That he should be texting Jackie so she could get a kick out of the mistake of his teammates as well.

And yet... An ice-cold panic had started to slowly rise in his chest, already causing his hands to get clammy and leaving an acidic taste in his mouth. It was a panic that Hayden couldn't yet explain.

You: Why couldn't you have just said that I'm straight?!

You: Why did you have to lecture them on bi erasure?!

Rozanov: Because is serious issue!

Rozanov: I marry men = I am gay

Rozanov: Man marry woman = He is straight

Rozanov: Stupid!

Hayden exhaled through his nose.

You: I'm sorry about that, okay?

You: But I am not bi!

You: I am literally married to a woman?!

Rozanov: ...

Rozanov: What did I just say about bi erasure?

You: I am straight.

Rozanov: ...

You: Do not say it!

Rozanov: I wonder if internalized bi erasure is something

Rozanov: I will ask Harris

Rozanov: He told me about internalized homophobia

It was in that exact moment that Hayden decided that, *actually*, he couldn't deal with Ilya Rozanov in that moment. He wasn't even sure why he had texted him in the first place. It was so obvious who he should have been talking to about this instead.

So, without overthinking it any further, he switched over to his private chat with Shane.

Private chat with Shane

You: Why did you have to marry him?

Shane: I just forced him to give me his phone

Shane: And I am going to make him apologize for what he said

Shane: He of all people should know that you can't just force someone to talk about their sexuality

You: Thanks? I guess?

Hayden tried to relax himself. He tried to lean back and to fucking unclench his jaw at the very least. It was so fucking ridiculous that he was so worked up about this. He wasn't homophobic, was he? No, definitely not.

Sure, he had not had the *best* reaction when he had found out about Shane and Ilya... but that had just been because he had been upset that Shane hadn't told him for so many years! It wasn't that he was disgusted by it. Okay, maybe a little bit. But that was just because Ilya was not exactly PG on the best of days and Hayden didn't want to think about his best friend in that way! It wasn't because they were both men?!

He sighed... And then a realisation hit him like a ton of bricks.

You: Wait! Do you also think that I am bi?!

Shane: ...

Shane: Would it help if I said no?

You: Not in that tone it wouldn't?!

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

I am so sorry that it took so long 😭 But I really hope you like it!

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

Hayden had to force himself to breathe normally. Which was tough because his heart was pounding in his ears. He had no idea why he was getting so worked up about something so stupid.

Obviously, he wasn't bi. *Right?* He had honestly never really considered it. He knew he wasn't gay. And he was happily married to Jackie, so what did it even matter?

God, Hayden didn't even really know why he was so fucking angry about this. He should have known that Rozanov would try to get under his skin. Hell, he should be used to it by now. It was just... Everything had been going so well. Hayden had truly started to believe that things could be better with this team...

And then Shane's stupid fucking husband had to go and ruin it all. Because there was no way that this rumour hadn't started with Rozanov, was there? Sure, the fucker had denied it. And to be honest, even for Rozanov's standards the whole thing seemed a little cruel.

But Hayden needed someone to blame, someone he could get angry at. He felt as if he might explode if he didn't.

There was Shane too, he supposed. Because yes, even if he was entirely sure that there was no way in hell his best friend had started this, he was still mad at him. Because if Shane had just reassured Hayden that he was straight, instead of doing that whole cryptic 'would it help if I said no?' thing... *Ugh*, then Hayden wouldn't be freaking out right now.

He groaned as he reached for his phone again. There was one single person who could make this nightmare disappear. Or who could at least make it fade until it became background noise, something to laugh at instead of something to have half a fucking panic attack about. Hayden needed his wife.

Private chat with Jax♥

You: So, I just got added to the Centaurs group chat...

Jax♥: Oh? Did it go well?

You: I guess?

You: First of all, Rozanov named it “Sexy Half-Horse-Men ✨🌈”

Jax♥: Hahaha of course he would

You: Yeah... I mean they’re all super nice

You: It’s just...

Jax♥: ??

Hayden sighed. By now he wasn’t even sure whether he wanted to tell her about what had just happened. However, his hands were still sweaty, his fingers were still shaking where they hovered over the display, and his heart was still racing as if he had just finished a thrilling overtime Game 7. This was obviously bothering him way more than it should. And yeah, if all of those years of marriage had taught him one thing, it was that in situations like these, he should probably lean on Jackie.

He swallowed thickly and started to type.

You: The team thought you’re a man

Jax♥: Hahahaha

At that, Hayden released a breath that he hadn’t realised he’d been holding. Her reaction finally relaxed him a bit, reminding him that yes, all of this was laughable. It was hilarious actually. He was the guy who had always been known as the ‘man with a million kids’ in the Montreal locker room... To think that his new team just immediately assumed he was married to a man...

He huffed out a quiet laugh and shook his head.

You: That’s not funny! I basically had to come out as being married to a woman!

Jax♥: That’s even more hilarious!

Jax♥: I’m happy though. That sounds like they’re welcoming.

Hayden swallowed. Because yes, they were. Even if the last few minutes had been far more stressful for him than he would have liked, he couldn't deny that the Centaurs had already made him feel more welcomed than Montreal ever had.

He just wished that Jackie and the kids were already with him. That they had already found a house to make their new home in. That he wasn't in this stupid fucking hotel room, all by himself while his wife was probably drowning in work and chaos. Suddenly, he really, really missed her... *all of them*.

You: They're absolutely amazing. We're invited to barbecue on Saturday.

You: And Bood already offered to connect you with the other WAGs

You: Although there is at least one guy in there. Harris, Troy Barret's boyfriend.

You: Wait, is there a gender-neutral term for WAGs?

Jax♥: ...

Jax♥: You know, you could just say family or partners...

Hayden winced. He knew that some of the wives and girlfriends absolutely hated the "WAG" name, but it had been so normal to him to call them that, that it hadn't even occurred to him to just say 'partners'. He cursed quietly while he inadvertently wondered whether he was even any better than the misogynists and homophobes in Montreal.

You: Oh God, I'm sorry

Jax♥: You're good

Jax♥: I don't think I ever realised how much this stupid fucking locker room toxicity has affected you and therefore us, until the whole thing with Shane happened

Jax♥: I never realised just how normal so much horrible shit has become for us (and I don't mean calling us 'WAG's)

Jax♥: But maybe we can unlearn some of this stuff together

Jax♥: If Ottawa is really as good as Shane has always said...

You: Yeah, I really hope so ♥

It was a nice idea. Especially because he wanted his kids to grow up as far from that toxicity as humanly possible. The thought that someone could talk about any of his girls in the way some of his teammates had talked about the women in their lives... it made him sick to his stomach. And *God*, the thought that Arthur could become one of those men was even worse.

Another thought crossed his mind, and Hayden couldn't help but huff out a quiet laugh. Never in his life would he have ever thought that out of all of the teams in Hockey, the team captained by Ilya fucking Rozanov would be the one he would want his kids to grow up around.

It could have been worse though, he supposed. And he almost felt calm again... when he looked down at his phone once more and saw another message from Jackie.

Jax♥: I'm so happy for you to have a locker room that's accepting in that way ♥

Her words caused Hayden to wince harder than he maybe ever had in his life. Harder than when he had seen a puck flying right at his face, moments before it had broken his nose for the first time. Harder than just before a particularly brutal player had collided with him in his last home game in Montreal, leaving him with several bruised ribs. Hell, even harder than when Amber had taken her first few cautious steps on ice and had immediately face planted with full force.

He was wincing more than he had in any of those situations... because this was infinitely more terrifying. Because the implication that immediately jumped out at him from those words... it could change fucking everything.

You: I am straight.

Hayden hated himself for sending the message as soon as it popped up as 'delivered' on his own screen. *Fuck*. Jackie's words didn't even have to mean anything. There could be a million fucking reasons for her to say that she was happy for him for having a more open and accepting locker room. She hadn't exactly accused him of sucking dick, had she?

He groaned while he tried very, *very* hard not to think about how defensive he had sounded, how scared.

Jax♥: Let's not talk about this now

And well, that certainly didn't fucking help. Suddenly, Hayden was angry again. It just... He couldn't shake the feeling that all of the people he was the closest to had all been lying to

him, for years. How could Shane and Jackie have suspected something like this about him, maybe for years... and never even *think* to tell him?

You: We're absolutely going to talk about this now!

Jax♥: Hayde... It's okay.

Jax♥: I know you love me and it's natural to have little crushes here and there. It doesn't mean anything.

Hayden wasn't even sure what he was feeling anymore. The anger was definitely still there. At Rozanov and his stupid fucking 'bi erasure' agenda for causing this whole debacle in the first place. At Shane and Jackie for... well, for what? For indirectly telling him that they thought he was bi? For not bringing that up with him until now? Who the fuck even got mad about something like that?

He groaned. Because for as much as all of this was pissing him off, anger wasn't the only thing he was feeling. Far from it, actually. Because right there like a glaring hole in the middle of his chest sat a bone chilling hurt. The hurt that you only ever felt when someone you deeply and genuinely love betrays you.

And yes, maybe that was even more misplaced than the anger. But Hayden couldn't shake the feeling that Shane and Jackie, hell, even Ilya, had lied to him. That they had deliberately kept something from him that he had a right to know about. It felt as if they had somehow gone behind his back, agreed on something about him without consulting him first. He felt utterly powerless in the face of the feeling.

And then, next to that whole mess, was pure hot panic that made him want to crawl out of his stupid fucking skin. Panic, that made him lash out in a way he never ever wanted to.

You: What the fuck are you talking about?

You: Why does everyone seem to think that they know me better than I know myself?!

But the thing was, with Jackie, Hayden kind of believed that himself. If anyone in the world knew him better than he did, it was his wife. It was why he was as terrified as he had ever been.

Jax♥: I really don't want to have this conversation over text.

You: I'm not gay!

Jax♥: Oh I know that ;)

Anger flashed through his body again. What the fuck was wrong with her that made her think that it was suddenly okay to make *jokes*?!

Fuck. Hayden shuddered. Was he completely overreacting? Were they all just messing with him?!

You: Quit messing around

You: I am not bi either!

Jax♥: Okay

Jax♥: But please know that it wouldn't change anything if you were, okay?

Hayden wanted to throw his phone out of his window. He hated that he was so angry about all of this, so defensive. He wished that he could just laugh, that he could be secure enough in his sexuality that none of this bothered him.

But it did.

The simple reality was that this had clearly hit Hayden in a sore spot that he hadn't even known existed. Just a few minutes ago, he had been fine. *Hell*, he had even been happy about how welcoming his new team had seemed. And then stupid *Rozanov* had decided to go ahead and start talking about fucking *internalized bi erasure* and somehow that had upended everything Hayden had ever been sure of.

He felt extremely disoriented, to the point where he was almost dizzy with it. And he felt hurt, betrayed by the people he trusted the most. And he just wanted all of this please simply just to go away.

You: I am not homophobic

You: But I am not bi either.

Jax♥: I would really rather have this conversation when you're home

Jax♥: Please don't freak out

The message caused him to snort out a humourless laugh.

You: I am very much already freaking out

You: Thank you very much

He hated how mean he sounded. He wished that he could do better. He always, always tried to do the best he could. Especially with Jackie and Shane.

And yet, in that moment, he was simply so terrified, and so fucking angry.

Memories flashed across his mind. Moments in the Montreal locker room, when emotions had been running wild and relentless chirping seemed to be the preferred mode of communication among the team.

The *jokes* had started when Hayden and Shane had first started becoming friends and had only gotten worse with time.

The teasing had been relentless, some comments borderline cruel. From ‘jokes’ how they clearly sucked each other’s dicks, about how Jackie must feel knowing that Hayden was always up their captain’s ass and about how they probably used their shared rooms on the road. That, and much more crude comments about cuck chairs, infidelity and double-ended dildos.

Hayden forced himself to open his eyes and relax his fists, which had been clenched to the point that his knuckles had gone white and his nails had left crescent indents in his skin.

It made him so fucking incredibly angry that Jackie might think that there was any, any credence to those stupid fucking comments from his old team.

You: I don’t have a crush on Shane!

Jax♥: I know, honey

You: He’s just my best friend!

Jax♥: Yes

Jax♥: And I am so happy that you have him in your life

Jax♥: He’s the politest, sweetest person I know

Jax♥: He’s always ready to help whenever we need anything at all

Jax♥: You have so much in common with him, even if it might not be super obvious at first

Jax♥: But you both care extremely deeply, which I absolutely adore about both of you

Jax♥: You were both never fully comfortable in that toxic ass environment around your team and yet you were both always ready to give everything for Montreal

For a moment three little dots kept appearing and disappearing while Jackie was clearly trying to work out what she should say next and Hayden's heart stopped when he read what she eventually landed on.

Jax♥: And you both have similar taste in men

Chapter End Notes

Ahhh I am so nervous about this chapter! The first one got way too much attention. I just really, really hope you aren't too let down 😊

I am so sorry that this kind of ended up being kind of angsty? I promise we'll be back to crack with the next chapter!

(Also, yes I added a chapter! Please don't murder me!)

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

I'm so sorry for taking so long!! I really hope you enjoy this last chapter 💜

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

Hayden almost dropped his phone and then almost dropped *himself* off of the bed. What the fuck? Him having the same taste in *men* as *Shane*?! Who was gay? So gay that he was actually *married to another man*?! And not just any man but the biggest asshole in the league?!

There was no way Jackie was serious, was there?!

Private chat with Jax♥

You: WHAT?!

Jax♥: Honey, you've been super close with Shane for years

Jax♥: And you pay attention to the people you are close to

Jax♥: You care

Jax♥: I love that about you

You: Right...

Jax♥: So why do you think you've never noticed that Shane looks at some men differently than other players do?

Hayden let out a pathetic groan that sounded even worse in the quiet of his room. This was ridiculous. Shane probably just hadn't looked at any men when Hayden had been around. Yeah. That had to be it.

It did make sense. After all, his former captain had apparently been hooking up with Rozanov for the entirety of his hockey career. So, he had probably not paid any attention to anyone else ever... right?

It had to be true. It was the only plausible explanation.

Because... well, Hayden could try as hard as he wanted to to recall a moment when he had noticed Shane looking at another man with more attention than was maybe strictly straight... he came up entirely empty every time.

You: Idk? I wasn't really paying attention

Once again, Hayden hated how defensive he sounded. He was terrified and he couldn't even really say why. He knew that he wasn't homophobic. So why did the insinuation that he might be bi scare him as much as it did? Especially because he still didn't think it was actually true.

You: He was probably too focused on Rozanov to pay attention to anyone else anyways

Jax♥: Well, did you ever notice anything about how he looked at Rozanov then?

You: Obviously not.

You: No one did

You: That was kind of their whole point

Jax♥: No one is you

Jax♥: No one is his best friend on the same hockey team and spends every day with him

Jax♥: And I did notice

Jax♥: More than a few times

Jax♥: It just wasn't my place to comment on it

Her words felt like a punch to his stomach. Deep down, he knew that she probably hadn't intended it, but she had mercilessly placed her finger in a wound that had opened the day Shane had told him that he was gay and that had refused to close up entirely ever since.

You: Okay?

You: So, what now? Are you just going to shame me for being a bad best friend?

You: Believe me, I already feel bad enough about it by myself

It was true. Hayden hadn't slept well for a week after Shane had come out to him. He just hadn't been able to stop thinking about how horrible his friend had to have felt for so many years. How isolating it must have been to hide something so big, so impactful on his own life from the people closest to him. And for so damn long.

Hayden had felt incredibly guilty and selfish. He had blamed himself for not creating a safe enough environment for his friend. He had felt so bad for not paying closer attention and picking up on the clues he was sure had been there. He had hated himself for not being a better friend.

And now Jackie was – intentionally or not – rubbing it into his face.

Jax♥: What? Oh God, Honey! No!!

Jax♥: You're the best friend he could hope for

Jax♥: It's not that you never noticed him looking at Rozanov differently than other players because you didn't care...

Jax♥: You just look at Rozanov the same way

This time, Hayden did drop his phone.

You: WHAT?!

He felt like a broken record. But what the fuck else was there to say to that?!

You: I don't! That is absolutely disgusting!

Jax♥: And why is it disgusting?

Hayden stopped for a moment and forced himself to consider her question. He tried to ask himself whether Rozanov was objectively attractive... but that just made him want to throw up. If he was truly honest, there was only one thing his mind kept coming back to.

You: Because he is married to Shane?!

Jax♥: ...

Jax♥: And if he wasn't?

You: Well, he is.

Hayden grimaced and then shook his head as if that would dispel the entire situation. He couldn't believe that he was having this conversation. With his *wife* of all people!

Jax♥: Imagine...

Jax♥: (Before you met me!)

Jax♥: (And in a scenario where he never hooked up with Shane)

Jax♥: You're out in a club in Montreal after a win against Boston

Jax♥: And Ilya fucking Rozanov comes in, in a tight black shirt that hugs his muscles in all the right places. And he comes onto you... cocky and confident as always...

Jax♥: Would you have said no?

Jax♥: Be honest.

Hayden swallowed thickly again. But he gave his best to imagine the scenario that Jackie had painted. He tried to think back to the beginning of his career, to a time years before he had ever found out about Shane's relationship, a time when he had mostly known Rozanov as an incredible hockey player, who chirped as if he had no will to live and who slept with a different woman in every city he played in.

He imagined being at the club that they had usually gone to after home victories back then and immediately recalled the high of a night like that. Montreal had been absolute dog shit when they had drafted him... but he had been lucky enough to be drafted together with Shane fucking Hollander and got to be there as they turned the ship around. Back then, every single home victory had been absolutely exhilarating.

He imagined that on one of those nights, Rozanov showed up at the club. Vodka in hand, smelling of cigarette smoke and expensive cologne and cocky enough for ten people, despite having lost that night. He imagined seeing him like that... with the knowledge of having beaten him just a few hours earlier.

If he was truly honest with himself, back then, Hayden had always kind of hoped that he would actually get to see Rozanov at a club one day. That he would be allowed see him ‘in action’. He had been fascinated by how drawn people seemed to be to him, despite his reputation as an asshole. He had always wanted to see him ‘work his magic’ with his own eyes.

However, he had never imagined a scenario where Rozanov would come up to *him*, instead of some girl that was probably a model or influencer something. The thought seemed absurd. And yet... Hayden forced himself to picture it. To imagine what it would have felt like to be the centre of his attention like that, to be the subject of his charm, to be someone he desired and well... *fuck*.

You: I wouldn’t have shut him down right away

It was a big admission. Even if it still technically probably didn’t mean anything. Because there was no way that Hayden would have actually gone home with fucking *Ilya Rozanov*.

For one, because he would have been kicked right out of the locker room and consequently probably the league if his teammates would have seen any of it – and Hayden would have definitely not been ready to risk that.

But also, because he would have never seen Rozanov at a club in Montreal... or at a club in Boston when Hayden was playing there for that matter. Because ever since their rookie seasons, Rozanov had always been *busy* with other things on those particular nights...

You: Oh my God! Can we please literally imagine anyone else but him. That’s Shane’s husband!

Jax♥: Remember how distraught you were when you found out about them?

Hayden winced. Yes, he did. And he immediately knew what his wife was insinuating.

You: It was because Shane lied to me

Jax♥: You weren’t mad that he’d hidden being gay from you...

You: Yeah, but Rozanov?!

You: He could have at least told me!

And then he remembered the anger. The feeling of complete and utter betrayal. How mad he had been at Shane, at himself. How he hadn't even really understood why he had been so goddamn angry...

You: Oh.

You: Shit.

Jax♥: Yeah.

Jax♥: I thought you were aware of it at the time

Fuck. Hayden slumped over on the hotel bed. This was all overwhelming him in so many ways. Was he really bi? Wouldn't he have realised that earlier?

Jackie seemed to sense that his momentary silence couldn't be a good thing.

Jax♥: Honey, it's okay ♥

Jax♥: It was honestly always just very cute to watch you and Shane

Jax♥: And again, I know that you love me

Jax♥: Having little crushes here and there is fine. It doesn't mean anything.

Jax♥: You never acted on it, did you?

You: Of course not?!

You: I wasn't even aware there was anything to act upon?!

You: I am still not exactly convinced that there ever actually was.

Hayden sighed. *God*, he felt so stupid.

Weren't there kids who came out when they were like 13? How was he a grown ass man with a whole ass wife and family and had never figured this out? Especially when Jackie, Shane and Ilya had apparently all been well aware...

You: Do I have other crushes that I don't know about?

Jax♥: Well, there was this one physio therapist that you and Shane were kind of obsessed with for a while...

Hayden hated that he immediately knew who she was referring to. The guy's name had been Alexis, and he had been from Barcelona. Hayden had no trouble at all recalling how he and Shane had both given their best to book sessions specifically with him. They had reasoned that it had been because 'he just has more interesting stories to tell than the others', with him being from Europe and everything...

However, if Hayden was truly honest with himself now, it probably also had something to do with that husky, accented voice, those broad shoulders and that calm and quiet assertiveness that Hayden had always found suspiciously relaxing. *Damn.*

Jax♥: And that one player from New York? I think he was on a different team before?

Ah yeah. Matti Jalo. It was true that Hayden had always considered him extremely attractive. But he had thought that that was just consensus. Jalo showed up on pretty much every 'hottest hockey players' list out there. He had whole fan clubs for various body parts of his. Hell, there were people out there making very *sensual* edits from his game tape... Not that Hayden had gone to look for it.

Fuck. Okay, maybe they all had a point. That night when he had sat in that hotel room in New York and googled 'Matti Jallo leadership moments compilation' probably hadn't been his straightest moment.

Jax♥: Oh and you're definitely into the kids' paediatrician

Jax♥: No man in the world enjoys taking his kids to routine check ups more than you do

And suddenly, Hayden laughed. He couldn't help himself.

This was all so fucking ridiculous.

Because yes, he was probably *absolutely* into his kids' paediatrician. *God*, if he thought about it, he felt exactly the same when 'Dr. Benson' told him that he was a good father as he had at 8 years old when the cutest girl in his class had handed him some candy with a shy smile or – admittedly probably also – at 12 when the smartest guy in school had complimented his handwriting.

He didn't know why it had been those words, but suddenly, Hayden felt lighter again, maybe lighter than he ever had. Suddenly, he thought that maybe this didn't have to be complicated. Maybe this wouldn't have to change anything about his life at all. Because he had probably always been this way. He had just never been aware of it.

You: Okay but he is seriously hot

Jax♥: We have such different taste in men

Her words sobered him up for a moment. He was pretty sure that Jackie had meant them to be funny, that she had just wanted to tease. And yet... He simply had to ask.

You: You really don't care?

Jax♥: No honey, I don't

Jax♥: I love you

Jax♥: And none of this changes that

Jax♥: You've always been a bisexual disaster (said lovingly)

Jax♥: I fell in love with that guy, I married him, I made him the father of my kids, and I still love him to this day

You: Fuck.

You: I love you too

You: So much

His heart felt bigger in that moment. In the same way that it had on his wedding day and on the days when his kids had been born. The same way it always did when Jackie gave him one of those soft smiles that had made him fall head over heels at that club all of those years ago. The same way it did when his kids told him that he was the best dad ever. The same way it always did when it was so full of love that it almost felt like it had to grow to accommodate it.

He was so lucky to have the best fucking wife in the world. Who else but Jackie fucking Pike would have been so patient and supportive of their husband realising his own sexuality well into his fucking *thirties*? Who else would be so chill about the apparently countless crushes

said husband had nursed over the years? Who else would be so calm and secure in their relationship that none of this mattered at all?

You: So, I am bi?

Jax♥: Or pan. Or queer. Whatever. It's just a label really

Hayden frowned. It still felt strange, wrong, foreign to think of himself in that way. And yet, deep down, he had to admit that it was probably true. And maybe, just maybe it was also okay.

Although... there was still one aspect of this whole thing that he was definitely far from being *okay* with.

You: Oh God...

You: And I have a crush on Rozanov?!

Jax♥: Well, you might be cured now... apparently?

He took a moment to think about it.

You: He's hot

Jax♥: Sure

You: He's confident. I like that

Jax♥: I know, honey

Hayden hid his face in his hands. *Fuck*. He remembered how much he had liked Alexis' quiet assertiveness, how drawn he had been to Matti Jalo's leadership abilities and how much he admired Dr. Benson's competence... Well, he really was bi, wasn't he?

You: Wow...

You: This was definitely not how I suspected today to go...

He kept talking to Jackie for a little longer after that, although not about his apparent bisexuality. Instead, she told him about the twins' latest art project at school, about Arthur's sudden interest in baking of all things and Amber's new friend Josey. It was so utterly and perfectly normal that it almost made Hayden want to cry.

The meeting with the social media team ended up getting cancelled which Hayden suspected Shane might have had something to do with. He would thank him at practice. Maybe not just for that, but for everything.

As he crawled into his far too cold bed later that night, he wondered whether he should come out to the team. They would be fine with it. He had absolutely no doubt about that.

And yet... He once again wondered whether it even mattered at all. Sure, he had always thought of himself as a straight man and someone even just suggesting that that might not be true, had sent him spiralling, so clearly this was kind of important to him.

But at the same time, he knew that he loved Jackie and that he would never, ever do anything that jeopardized their relationship in any way. He was with Jackie and he would stay with her for the rest of his life. So why even say anything?

But then he remembered Rozanov's rant about bi erasure. And he thought about his kids, about the example he wanted to set in this world. He never wanted them to think that he had been ashamed of his sexuality or that the only way that he could be in a happy marriage with their mom was to keep that part of himself hidden away.

He sighed and took out his phone again.

Group chat “Sexy Half-Horse-Men ✨🌈”

You: So, apparently, I am bi

Of course the Centaurs were all extremely supportive about it. Well, except for their captain who got told off by his husband for making a joke about how Hayden was ‘not just slow on the ice’. But Hayden still went to sleep with a smile on his lips that night and maybe also feeling a little bit more *whole* than he had before.

Chapter End Notes

Bonus:

Private chat with Rozanov:

Rozanov: So did your wife have to tell you that you have crush on me or did you figure out yourself?

You: She told me that I have a crush on our paediatrician

Rozanov: ??

You: Our kids' doctor

Rozanov: He looks like me?

You: Way hotter

Group chat "Sexy Half-Horse-Men ✨🌈":

Rozanov: Shane, you're not taking Pike kids to doctor in Montreal

Rozanov: Ever

Shane: ???

Shane: Wasn't planning on it

Rozanov: Good

Anyways... Thank you so, so much for reading!! 💜💜

I appreciate it so, so much! And thank you especially to everyone who commented!! I am trying my best to keep up with the replies but even if I don't get to you, please know that I read every single one and I appreciate you so, so much 💜💜

Also, I was thinking about writing a 5+1 style shot about all the times Hayden didn't realise that he had a crush on Ilya Rozanov/ that he is into men + the one time he does... would you be interested in something like that??

End Notes

I really hope you enjoyed the first chapter so far! If you feel comfortable, please let me know your thoughts in the comments! I absolutely adore reading your thoughts, reactions and theories ♥

Also I have two more Heated Rivalry fics, if you want to check them out ♥♥

[It's Just A Question...](#) ♥♥ (more Hayden!!)

[You Are So Loved](#) ♥♥

(Also if you ever want to make a podfic of a story of mine or create art or works inspired by my stuff, you hereby have blanket permission. Just let me know in the comments or something so that I can leave some love♥♥)

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