My Lunch with Rose

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My Lunch with Rose

by the_writers_block15

Summary

After the disastrous dinner with Hayden and Jackie, Shane meets Rose and comes to some realizations to fix his relationship.

There's some Hayden bashing but he isn't irredeemable, he's just working with outdated info.

Notes

This is my take on what should have happened after My Dinner with Hayden. In my opinion, Hayden was WAY out of line and Shane should have put a stop to it rather than getting pissed off at both of them.

Chapter 1

Everything had been well planned out. They would have dinner with Hayden, where Ilya would try to put aside their differences, and then meet Rose the next morning. They would spend their last night together until Ilya left the morning after that. Shane was happy… well, not happy, considering how dinner had gone, but he was comfortable with the plan. So, when Ilya backed out of lunch, offering a weak excuse over coffee, Shane got pissed off, grabbed his jacket and left the house.

He considered going to the gym first, but realized he would have to come back home to shower. Instead, he opted for a nice drive, until he found a parking spot facing the St. Lawrence River, where he stayed for the next several hours. It turns out that stewing in his own frustrations was a terrible idea because when he finally met Rose, he greeted her with a scowl rather than a smile.

“Hey!” She pulled him into a hug. “Where’s Ilya?”

“He— umm— couldn’t make it.”

She gave him a gentle smile before pulling him into the living room of her hotel suite. Shane sat down on the couch, eyes glued to the floor. Rose watched him, slightly caught off guard by the tick of his jaw.

“Shane?” she asked, gently, trying to pull him out of his own head. “Is everything okay?”

Shane looked up, meeting her concerned gaze. “Yeah, sorry. We just had an argument last night but I don’t wanna dump that on you. Let’s talk about your movie. Are you getting kidnapped in this one?” His attempt at the joke fell flat, but Rose humored him anyway.

“Yup! By aliens this time! I think it’s an upgrade.”

They chatted normally, trying to steer clear of the elephant not in the room until Rose’s resolve broke. “You know you can talk to me about him. After all, I’m one of the few people who has experienced being in his shoes.” Shane gave her a quizzical look. “Dating you.” she chuckled.

Shane gave a soft laugh. “Yeah, I guess. It’s just— he keeps resisting my attempts at trying to have a normal relationship. I couldn’t play nice with Hayden for *one night* and refused to come today. He knew how important it was to me.”

“What happened with Hayden?”

“It was a disaster from the start.” Shane shook his head. “Ilya was nice to Jackie but kept poking fun at Hayd, making innuendos and just generally being a little shit. I mean Hayden wasn’t any better either, but Ilya is my boyfriend. Shouldn’t he make peace for me?”

Rose nodded along. “What did they say exactly?”

“Chirps at his hockey ability and intelligence. So Hayden responded with some bullshit about how I should be dating other people.”

Rose’s eyes widened in horror. “What? Did you say anything back?”

“Sometimes, Jackie awkwardly shifted the conversation. Sometimes, I told them both to back off. And then I left the room for five seconds and they nearly got into a fight. I came back to Ilya squaring up. Later he told me Hayden shoved him.” Shane recapped.

“What the actual fuck?” Rose muttered to herself. “Shane, that is not okay!”

“I know! I kept telling Ilya to play nice but he just kept riling Hayden up!”

“No!” Rose exclaimed. “The way Hayden treated Ilya. That’s not okay. He pushed your boyfriend.”

Shane looked up, meeting Rose’s horrified expressions. He scowled in confusion, clearly having missed something. “They both do this kinda shit on the ice all the time.” Shane said, weakly.

“Yeah, I’m sure they do when they’re competitors. But this is your boyfriend, for fucks sake.” Rose stood up, beginning to pace around the room, letting off some excess energy before she could begin yelling at Shane. “They were in *your* house, not at the playoffs! Shane, your partner should always feel safe at your house. It’s your job to make sure you aren’t inviting people who would hurt them.”

“Ilya was being a dick too. Hayden wouldn’t…”

Rose didn’t let him finish. “Hayden *did.* Just based on your own retelling, Hayden questioned your relationship and started a physical altercation because what? Ilya made a few sex jokes?”

She paused for a moment, collecting her thoughts before finally saying, “Making innuendos and questioning whether someone deserves love is not the same level of dickish. Shane, if Hayden had said all these things about me when we were together and you didn’t take my side, we would have been broken up by the end of the night.” Rose said, her own irritation taking over.

Shane shook his head. “Hayden would never say that to you. He already had his reservations about Ilya.”

Rose took a deep breath. “I think that’s the problem.”

“What does that mean?”

“I can promise you that if someone had treated a WAG the same way he treated Ilya, hell would have broken loose. If you don’t believe me, ask Hayden what he would do if his friends questioned Jackie or fought with her,” she explained.

Shane groaned into his hands. But Ilya wasn't a WAG. He was Shane's secret boyfriend and he never needed Shane to defend him. They were supposed to have one normal night. "It was one meal, Rose!" He exclaimed. "I wanted one meal where we get to be a normal couple hanging out with our friends. Why didn't he stick it out for me? Why didn't he come today?"

"What did you do to help him get through the meal? Because the way I see it, you let him be shoved around."

"It's Ilya! He clearly doesn't need me fighting his battles for him." Shane argued.

"It's not his battle! It's both of yours! And you set him up for failure before the dinner even began." Rose nearly yelled.

Shane stilled, turning to her slowly. "I'd never do that! I had everything planned out."

She let out a huge breath. "When you introduce a partner to your friends or family, they are going to be scrutinizing every aspect of them to make sure that you are safe and happy. It's your job to set your partner up for success by building them up in the eyes of your loved ones and taking a stand if people take digs at them."

"We didn't have to do any of that." Shane gestured between the two of them.

"Maybe you didn't," Rose muttered, exasperated. Shane studied her carefully, never having seen her so irritated. "When I told my friends I was dating a hockey player, they didn't like it. You guys don't have the best reputation and they were worried I was making a mistake."

"Oh, I didn't know that." Shane mumbled.

"That's because before I introduced you to them, I told them that you were important to me and that if they had a problem with you, they needed to discuss it with me privately. I also deliberately spent time trying to build you up in their eyes, talking about how sweet and kind you were so they would have a good impression of you. Like with any person, there were things they had concerns about but I never let them put that on you."

"That's—" Shane trailed off, not knowing what to say. "Thank you."

Rose shook her head. "Can I ask you an invasive question?"

"I guess."

"Do you love Ilya?"

Shane's head snapped up. "Of course I do! He's my… everything. I've loved him since I was practically a kid."

"That's the first time I've heard you say that. I've noticed something. When you usually talk about Ilya, you don't have many nice things to say. You dunk on him a lot. And maybe that's the kind of relationship the two of you have, where you tease and make fun of each other. But when…' Rose hesitated, unsure how to articulate her thoughts without being too harsh. "But

when all we hear is the bad stuff, it's kinda hard to believe that you're in a happy relationship. Maybe Hayden thought Ilya was making you miserable."

"But I am happy with him." Shane assured her. "He moved to Ottawa for me. My favorite games are the ones I play against him. He's so good with my parents, with me. He's such a softie when you get to know him. Surprisingly incredible with kids…" Shane didn't realize when he had started smiling, the dopey, lovesick look taking over his face.

"Have you ever said any of this to Hayden?"

Shane shrugged. "I wasn't allowed to. We've been pitted against each other since we were 19. We are supposedly enemies. We were either expected to shit talk or maintain some professional distance. I don't get a chance to talk about why I love him."

"But isn't that the point of telling people? So you do have someone you can share the reality of your relationship with?" Rose insisted. Shane nodded, considering her words. "To be completely honest, I totally get why Ilya didn't come today. If you let Hayden question whether he deserves you, if you didn't reassure him that he absolutely does immediately after, why would he want to meet more of your friends who you wouldn't protect him from."

"You wouldn't do that." Shane said, quickly. "Even now, you're taking his side."

"He doesn't know that. Worse still, he doesn't know if you would take his side. Think about it Shane, if someone questions his worth and you don't immediately correct them, what does it imply about how you view him?"

Silence washed over them as Shane buried his face in his hands. "I really fucked up, didn't I?"

"Yeah," Rose said, "You did. But you'll fix it."

"I'll fix it." Shane echoed with a certainty he didn't completely feel. "Because I love him too much to let him doubt that."

Rose nodded. "I'll order some food and help you plan the apology and what to say to Hayden."

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

By the time Shane got to his car, he felt lighter. The guilt was still churning but he had a plan. He placed the bouquet of flowers and teddy bear Rose made him doordash gently in the passenger seat.

“Look, the flowers are an apology and the bear is something to remember you by when you’re away.” Rose had said. “You’re the one who wants a normal relationship.”

Shane had grumbled about Ilya making fun of him but was easily persuaded.

When he pulled out his phone for GoogleMaps, he noticed a couple of missed calls from Jackie. He quickly called her back, hoping he could wrap up the conversation before he got home.

Jackie picked up on the third ring. “Shane, where the hell have you been?” she asked.

“I was with Rose. Why?” Shane turned on his signal, pulling out of the parking spot.

“Ilya called me. Said you left in the morning and he hasn’t heard from you.”

“You have his number? Wait, why didn’t he text me?” Shane asked, confusion bubbling over.

“Yes, we exchanged numbers yesterday when I joked about adding him to the WAGs groupchat. And he said he did text you. You never answered. Or even saw them,” Jackie explained.

Suddenly a memory fell into place and everything clicked. “Fuck!” he groaned. “I locked our chat because practice is starting tomorrow and I didn’t think he’d text me since we were spending the weekend together.”

“What is wrong with you guys? Take him out of locked! What if there’s an emergency?” Jackie demanded.

“I’m sorry!” Shane exclaimed. “Look, I’m 20 minutes from the house and there’s too much traffic. Can you just text him for me? I can’t use voice recognition for locked chats.”

“Fine,” she reluctantly agreed. Shane heard the distinct sound of her nails clacking against the phone screen. “I just texted him.”

“Thank you.” Shane said. He hesitated before asking, “Hey Jackie, can I ask you something?”

“Yeah.”

“What would you do if any of us spoke to you the way Hayds spoke to Ilya yesterday?”

Jackie sighed, taking a sharp breath. “I wouldn’t have to do anything. Hayden would’ve taken care of it.”

“Oh,” Shane whispered.

“Look Shane, Hayden was way out of line yesterday. I talked to him, tried to explain why it was fucked up but I think you two should talk too. I don’t think he realized how serious you two are. I understand if Ilya doesn’t want to see us again but maybe we can give it one more shot the next time he’s in town?” Jackie asked hopefully.

“I’d love that. But I think I should talk to both of them first. If nothing’s going to change then I can’t put Ilya in that situation again. It’s not fair to him. I haven’t been fair to him.” Shane said.

Shane could practically hear her smile through the phone. “It’ll be okay, Shane. You’ve worked though so much. This isn’t going to be the thing that breaks you both.”

“Thanks, Jackie. I’ll talk to you later. Send my love to the kids and tell Hayden we need to talk.” Shane said.

“Sure.”

Fifteen minutes later, Shane pulled into his driveway. He grabbed the flowers and chocolate and made a beeline for the door. Shane entered the eerily quiet house to find Ilya’s duffle bag open in the living room, clothes half tossed in. Ilya returned seconds later, with his laptop and charger and shoved it on top of his clothes. He didn’t give Shane a second glance as he continued to pack.

Despite the anger radiating off his boyfriend, Shane felt something akin to relief flood him upon seeing Ilya. “What are you doing?” he asked cautiously, putting the flowers and teddy bear aside.

“Packing.” Ilya didn’t bother looking up.

“Why?”

“You seem busy so I thought I would go home early.” He gave Shane a brief glance before zipping up his duffle.

“Ilya, please,” Shane said, moving forward to take a hold of Ilya’s hands, gently prying his fingers off the bag. “I’m really sorry.”

Ilya looked straight ahead, not saying anything, determined to hold onto the anger, despite knowing Shane would melt it away anyway.

Shane maneuvered them, gently guiding Ilya to the sofa as Shane straddled him. Something in Shane’s heart broke at Ilya’s eyes, seeing right past him, refusing to meet his gaze. Shane brought his hands to cup Ilya’s jaw, guiding Ilya towards himself. Somehow, seeing Ilya’s

blank stare was worse than receiving anger. Rose was right. Shane had made his home unsafe for his boyfriend and that was evident with the walls Ilya had up right now.

“Baby,” Shane whispered, “I’m so sorry.”

“About what?” Came Ilya’s stone cold reply.

“About everything.” Shane said. “About not standing up for you yesterday, leaving you this morning and not answering any of your texts.”

Ilya finally met his eyes, the blankness replaced by a pained fury. “Why are you sorry? I ruined your plans, no? Your perfect dinner plan with Pike and your lunch with your ex.” Ilya shifted to get Shane off his lap but Shane didn’t budge. “I should go. You have much to discuss with your friends. About what ‘relentless douchebag’ I am or how you should be with someone else.”

Shane winced, realizing that Hayden’s words had gotten to Ilya more than he realized.

“Hey, I should be with you. No one else. Only you.” Shane assured him.

Ilya blinked rapidly, trying to get the hot tears to go away but he couldn’t help the two that slipped out. Shane instantly reached forward, whipping them away with his thumb.

“Ilya, you do know that I don’t agree with a thing that Hayden said, right? I don’t doubt that you’re it for me, that you’re perfect for me.” Shane promised.

A couple more tears slipped though. “You let him think worst of me. Of us. You did not stop him. You got upset when I stopped him. ”

Shane nodded vigorously, his own eyes pooling with tears. “And I was wrong,” Shane promised. “God, Ilya, there are a million reasons why I love you and I just wish I would have said that yesterday. I’m sorry I pushed you to meet Hayden when he clearly wasn’t ready to be respectful. I’m sorry I blamed you when he took it too far and I’m sorry I didn’t punch him when he said those awful things about us.”

Shane leaned his head forward, resting his forehead against Ilya’s. “I love you so much and I’m an idiot for letting you doubt that. Rose knocked some sense into me.” He pulled back again. “I haven’t been a good boyfriend. I should have built you up when the truth came out instead of pretending that you were an annoyance. I have no excuse besides just habit. But I’ll do better. I’ll talk about the amazing parts about our relationship to my friends. How you challenge me, how you were willing to give up the Raiders for me, how much you love me. Stay the night and let me make it up to you?”

Ilya pulled back. “You love me?” he asked, like he had to make sure.

Shane felt his heart squeeze in his chest at the earnestness of the question. Shane kissed Ilya’s forehead. “I.” Then his right cheek. “Love.” And the left one. “You.” Finally Shane pulled him in for a proper kiss, his hands flying to rake through the curls of Ilya’s hair. Shane felt Ilya immediately melt, the last bit of anger and doubt fading.

He slowly pulled away, taking Ilya’s hand and dragging him to his room. “I’m going to show you just what you deserve.”

Chapter End Notes

Well, this is it for now. Thanks for reading!

Should I add a chapter about them confronting Hayden or is this ending okay? I've had the idea on my mind for awhile but I wasn't sure if it should go with this fic or be a stand alone.

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

> Holy crap! I wasn't expecting all this enthusiasm for the chapter. Thank you guys so much for commenting!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The next day, they woke up bright and early, deciding to savor the little time they had before Shane went to practice and Ilya went home. Over breakfast, Shane sheepishly gave Ilya the flowers and teddy bear. Much to his surprise, Ilya didn't make fun of him. Instead his doe eyes widened in awe as he accepted the apology gift, cheeks flushing red. Shane made a mental note to get Ilya flowers more often, and not just as apology gifts.

They both left at the same time, Ilya placing the tiny bear on the passenger seat before driving away. Shane sighed, mentally preparing himself to meet Hayden. Shane wasn't a confrontational person. He wasn't going to ever physically fight Hayden or get in a screaming match but he had to do something for Ilya. He decided to invite Hayden again after practice, maybe a private conversation would sort things out.

"I can't because I need to be home when the kids come back from school, but why don't you come instead. We can order dinner and the kids miss you," Hayden had said. Shane was quick to agree.

Practice went normally. Shane did everything he could to not show his anxieties or annoyance on the ice and found himself succeeding pretty well. During breaks, Shane couldn't help but think how he would bring all this up to Hayden, who didn't even seem to notice something was wrong. A part of him wondered if he could just not talk to Hayden and bring it up next time but he shook the thought off quickly when he remembered how close Ilya had come to leaving yesterday, how heartbroken he had looked. Shane could do this. He'd had many uncomfortable conversations about his relationship, what was one more?

Soon enough, Shane found himself giving pointers to rookies in the locker room, who listened to him with apt attention like he was Moses bringing down the 10 commandments. Hayden hung back, waiting for Shane so they could leave together.

"You know, once you decide to be done with Rosanov, the rookies might be a good option. I'm sure atleast one of them is in love with you." Hayden said when they finally got home.

With that comment, the little reservation Shane had went up in flames. "What the fuck is wrong with you, Hayden? He's my boyfriend. Why are you so keen on breaking us up?"

"He's Rosanov!" Hayden said. "You really think this is going to last?"

“It’s lasted for a decade! It lasted even when the two of us were actively fighting against it. Now that we’re putting in the effort, it’s going to thrive.” Shane said, with conviction. “Look, I know you thought I hated him all this time, but I didn’t. I don’t like how you talk about my partner, Hayden, like he’s some asshole I’m dating because I know it’s going to piss people off. Like he doesn’t deserve me.”

“He doesn’t deserve you.” Hayden said before he could think better of it.

Shane stepped closer. “Why not?”

“Because, he’s a completely self-absorbed dick!” Hayden yelled. “He’s had fling after fling, he’s cocky and arrogant and…”

“Enough!” Shane’s voice boomed. “He’s the love of my life. Whatever you’re saying, that’s his *public persona*. That’s not the real him. And you’d know that if you bothered to make an attempt at a real conversation instead of fucking grilling him like he needed to pass some kind of trial by fire.”

Hayden was stunned into silence. Shane lifted his finger, pointing it at Hayden. “The next time you have something to say about him, I need you to ask yourself what you’d do if someone said that about Jackie. If your response would be to punch them, I need you to keep that thought to yourself. If you have a hard time with it, ask your kids. I’m sure they learned this in kindergarten.”

Shane stepped back, preparing to leave, not sure if he could take more of this tonight.

“Shane, wait!” Hayden called. “Look, I’m just confused. Can we talk this out?”

He groaned, knowing he couldn’t step back from a peace offering. Instead, he turned back around, collapsing on the sofa. “As long as you’re careful with your words.”

“I thought you hated him too,” Hayden whispered.

“I don’t. I love him with everything I have. He’s actually really sweet. Talked me through several meltdowns before we even got together. Practically gave up his career for me. If that doesn’t scream how serious we are, I don’t know what would. I know I never talk about how amazing he is but that is absolutely my fault but I can’t let him take the brunt of that anymore. I can’t have him doubt us.” Shane said. “I can’t lose him.”

He sank further into the sofa before saying, “Look, Hayden, you’re my closest friend. I want you in our life. I want you at our wedding someday. But that can’t happen if Ilya doesn’t feel safe around you. You questioned our relationship. You questioned whether he deserves love. *You pushed him for fucks sake!*”

“I didn’t— we do that kinda stuff all the time. He’s got more penalties for starting fights than anyone on our team,” Hayden said.

“We weren’t on the ice!” Shane echoed Rose’s words from the previous night. “We were at my house. You weren’t playing hockey, you were meeting my boyfriend. Would you have

done that with any WAG?"

"I–" Hayden shuddered at the word WAG. He remembered how anxious Jackie was when she officially met the team. They had always known her but she still had her worries about being labeled as the girl who made out with their teammate in a busy club.

But that couldn't have been how Ilya felt. He was confident and suave and kind of a dick. Still, WAGs had always been off limits to certain kinds of jokes, not out of respect for them but out of fear of what their teammates would do. "I wouldn't." Hayden said finally. "I just— I never knew. It's hard to completely flip the narrative in your head. I don't know how to go from 'Shane hates Rosanov' to 'Shane and Rosanov have been together for the past decade'. And to be honest, I was kinda pissed you didn't trust me. Why didn't you tell me before?"

Shane buried his face in his hands, the exhaustion of the argument taking over. It was hard, confronting Hayden when he knew he was also partly to blame.

"You asked him what it would do to me if this gets out." Hayden nodded. "Did you ever think what would happen to him if this got out? He's a Russian citizen, Hayden. If he gets kicked off the league, he goes back to Russia where they're going to be greeting him with *handcuffs*. He'd be in some Siberian prison because he has the audacity to love me."

The venom in Shane's voice made Hayden shiver. "I didn't know." Hayden muttered.

"Look, you can be mad at me for not telling you, for keeping secrets or whatever, but I'm not apologizing for not outing my boyfriend to you. I'm a gay man, Hayden." Shane knew Hayden would interrupt to make a dumb joke so he quickly continued. "When I tell you who I'm dating, it's not just about my relationship. I end up giving you information about my partner's identity which he's worked hard to keep hidden for his own safety. I can't out him if it puts him in danger. Hell, even if he wasn't in danger, I would never make that choice for him."

"Fuck." Hayden muttered under his breath, taking a seat next to Shane. When his best friend came out to him, didn't think it would be a big deal. They were in Canada, after all. It wasn't the fucking 80s anymore. "I thought when you came out to me, it just meant I'd have to talk about dudes with you or maybe go to a gay bar once in a while. I didn't think it would be this complicated."

"I know, Hayden." Shane said, gently. "You've been doing your best to be supportive, well, except for that dinner. I just need you to trust me when I make decisions for my relationship instead of expecting me to do things the way you and Jackie would. But I need you to treat him with the same respect you expect me to treat your wife with. And if something pisses you off, you don't get to take it out on him."

"Okay, I can do that. Did I– Did I cause problems for you two?" Hayden tentatively asked.

Shane chuckled. "Don't worry. You weren't the only one who fucked up. I should've called you out a lot sooner. We worked through most of it, though."

“Good. That’s good.” Hayden said. “Maybe the next time he’s in town, we can have a do-over dinner at our place.”

Shane smiled at the peace offering. “Maybe. But I want to talk to him first. I don’t want to push him if he still has his doubts.”

“Jackie really likes him. Says he’s good for you.”

“He is,” Shane promised. “He likes Jackie too. He called her when I was being a dick.”

“Oh, they’re going to be a nightmare together,” Hayden laughed just as the door opened.

“Uncle Shane!” the twins yelled, colliding onto him.

“Hey, girls!” Shane said, “How was school?”

The rest of the afternoon and evening went on in a flurry of excited children and chaos. As promised, Hayden ordered dinner. When they sat down to eat, Shane felt a pang in his chest, wishing the seat across from him would be occupied by his boyfriend. Maybe not today, but they could work up to it eventually.

Shane called Ilya as soon as he got home.

“You defended my honor today?” Was what Ilya said as soon as he picked up the phone.

“How did you know?” Shane demanded.

“Jackie texted.”

“Hayden’s right. You both are going to be insufferable.”

“You love me.” Ilya said. Shane’s heart melted. His words carried a certainty that was missing when Ilya had punctuated the same sentence with a question mark the previous day.

“I do.” Shane promised. “Listen, Hayden and Jackie both invited us the next time you’re in town. Do you want to go?” Ilya hesitated so Shane quickly added, “if you don’t want to, that’s fine. I won’t push you but I thought I’d check. Hayden will behave and if he doesn’t I have your back.”

“Maybe we can do it at our place?” Ilya suggested. “Home turf advantage. And we invite Rose too. You said she has some time filming.”

Shane’s eyes widened in surprise. “Hayden, Jackie and Rose? Won’t that be a lot?”

Ilya shrugged. “If we meet everyone in one night, we have more time to ourselves.”

“That’s true.” Shane mulled it over one last time. “I’ll text everyone tomorrow but only if you’re sure.”

“I’m not sure,” Ilya admitted. “But I trust you.”

Shane smiled. “Thank you. I know I don’t completely deserve it.”

“We are in this relationship together. If one of us makes mistake, the other gives grace,” Ilya said.

“I love you. So much.”

“I love you, too.”

Chapter End Notes

I think I'll end the story here. TBH, I'm not sure how to write Hayden and Ilya interacting with each other.

I hope you liked it and it came somewhat close to your expectations.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!