

I'll Learn to Hayd-him A Little Less

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I'll Learn to Hayd-him A Little Less

by [znks](#)

Summary

“That, and the exhausted edge to his voice when he’d asked Hayden if they could change the topic of conversation.

Because Hayden had been complaining about Rozanov for nearly half an hour, so drained he’d actually forgotten that maybe the person who, for some reason, loved him wouldn’t want to hear about Hayden’s many grievances. Especially while they were literally on the way to a movie night with the guy.

Hayden’s mouth clicked shut, guilt building up sticky behind his teeth as he understood just how badly he must have fucked up for Shane Hollander to ask for something he wanted, namely, for Hayden to stop being a dick.”

Notes

as always this is for [Pudding Life](#) thank u for letting me ramble about how much I love this show and for rightfully mocking me when I said I wouldn't write fic for it lmao you know me too well

[Coriesocks](#) wasn't involved in this because she hasn't seen the show YET but I'll still always mention her

ok look I had 6 hollonov fic ideas, 2 were being worked on, and then suddenly I was writing this instead don't know what happened I just went with it but I hope it brings someone somewhere some joy!!

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

Shane wasn't the most talkative person in the world by default, that coupled with the bittersweet sting of a home loss to Ottawa, meant that Hayden didn't realize that something was wrong until he'd already put his foot in it for a good fifteen minutes.

Hayden had noticed that Shane wasn't really responding anymore, sure, out of the corner of his eye he'd registered that Shane wasn't looking his way, head pressed against the car window, but it was his hands that finally clued Hayden in; the way they were twisted in the bottom of his shirt yet unmoving like Shane was worried that would give him away.

That, and the exhausted edge to his voice when he'd asked Hayden if they could change the topic of conversation.

Because Hayden had been complaining about Rozanov for nearly half an hour, so drained he'd actually forgotten that maybe the person who, for some reason, loved him wouldn't want to hear about Hayden's many grievances. Especially while they were literally on the way to a movie night with the guy.

Hayden's mouth clicked shut, guilt building up sticky behind his teeth as he understood just how badly he must have fucked up for Shane Hollander to ask for something he wanted, namely, for Hayden to stop being a dick.

He hadn't intended to go on such a long rant, he'd just wanted to bitch about the shit that Rozanov had pulled during the game and how - while he agreed that the moves weren't dirty enough to involve the referee - they were just annoying enough to piss Hayden right off.

Looking back, Shane had gleefully joined in at the beginning, laughing along, even, except Hayden had steamed right on through his valid accusations straight into... general dissatisfaction with Rozanov as a person. He'd been quite mean, in fact, as mindless as his rambling had been.

Calling Rozanov a selfish piss-poor excuse for a leader had been many steps too far but that was finally what cracked through Shane's dislike of confrontation.

"Can we please talk about something else?"

He'd said it so quietly Hayden immediately felt nauseous, because Shane wouldn't usually police himself like that around Hayden, not anymore, he wouldn't usually resort to such a meekly polite request because it shouldn't have been necessary in the first place.

Hayden suddenly hated himself for having put Shane in that position, one where he felt like he couldn't call Hayden out as a friend because Hayden had given him the impression that it wouldn't be welcomed.

Because Hayden was being a fucking *dick*.

"Yeah, of course, I'm- Shit, I'm sorry, man."

Shane shrugged, still pressed against the car door. He didn't speak for a long time, just long enough for Hayden to build up to another apology.

"I know you don't like him. I'm not asking you to, okay? I won't- It's fine, we can just, I don't know, go back to-" Shane cut himself off with a stuttering little breath that was drowned out by Hayden's noise of protest.

"No, wait, Shane, that's not- Fuck." Hayden's fingers tightened around the steering wheel, Shane's unsaid 'we can go back to pretending' devastatingly heavy in the air. Pretending this massive part of his life didn't exist for Hayden's sake, pretending that Shane wasn't in love and didn't want to talk about his person to his best friend.

Go back to how it was before, before Hayden had been brought into the miniscule inner circle, reluctantly or otherwise.

Before a borderline terrified Shane had come out to him and Hayden had sworn that he would support Shane no matter what. And then the no matter what had been Rozanov and Hayden had been the exact opposite of supportive.

Before the weight that had been pressing down on Shane's very soul had been lightened, just a little, just enough to allow Hayden to gladly shoulder some of it, only for him to fucking fumble it.

"Can you just bring me ho- Can you just drop me off? I'm tired tonight, maybe you and I can do something tomorrow?" The little slip of Shane having to relearn how to censor himself broke Hayden's heart.

He was a fucking monster, he'd made Shane think he couldn't say the word *home* when talking about their house, the one he shared with Rozanov.

"Shane, we can still-"

"We can do lunch tomorrow? Just tell me where to meet you?"

Hayden inhaled shakily, already feeling stupid about what he was about to ask. Because he'd asked before. Because he damn well knew the answer.

"He makes you happy, right?"

"Hayden, I can't do this again. It doesn't matter what I-"

"It does matter. Fuck. I never meant to make you feel like this. Of course it matters, Shane."

When Shane didn't speak, Hayden rallied himself as silently as possible.

"I'm ready to listen, now. I'm sorry I wasn't before, and for just being an all around ass, but I'm ready now, if you want to tell me about it. About him."

Shane scoffed, which made Hayden feel even worse but also a tiny bit better because that was a Hayden-specific response that Shane wouldn't throw around willy-nilly.

“I know he can be... complicated, to like. I know he’s been a dick to you. Every time you two are in a room together, fuck, it’s a nightmare.”

Hayden winced, remembering the couple double-date dinners they’d attempted before diversifying to movie nights where less talking could occur. Shane had been the one who’d essentially yelled out the compromise before swearing and leaving the room, clearly at the end of his rope. And Hayden had just... kept fucking tugging on it.

Even he could admit that Rozanov had been well-ish behaved since then, even when Jackie wasn’t there to mediate alongside Shane. It was Hayden who had kept antagonizing Rozanov, barely even registering that he wasn’t rising to the bait.

Fuck. Shane went quiet then, too. He’d stay until the credits rolled and then busy himself in the kitchen, like he couldn’t bear to witness whatever shit Hayden was about to start, the shit he always started even when Rozanov didn’t.

“Shane...”

“I can’t talk to you about him. Because all you’ll ever see is the asshole he plays on the ice. I get it, okay? But I guess sometimes I just- fuck.”

“You can. You can tell me. I’ll behave, I promise.”

“Hayden, a month ago you told him he didn’t deserve to be loved.”

Hayden bit down hard on his bottom lip. He’d obviously said it as a joke but fuck if that wasn’t a horrifically messed up thing to say to an *orphan* who was in a longterm relationship with your best friend. No one in the room had taken it as a joke, rightfully so.

That time, it was Rozanov who had left, just went straight out the front door while Jackie screamed at Hayden and Shane glared at him before grabbing his phone and not appearing again for the rest of the night. For the first time, Hayden realized that he’d actually managed to properly hurt Rozanov’s feelings.

“I just can’t do it anymore, alright?” Shane continued, oblivious to the fact that Hayden’s eyes were stinging as a direct response to the shakiness in Shane’s voice.

Hayden impulsively flipped the blinkers up and carefully pulled off the road, parking next to some random froyo shop and cutting the engine.

“Don’t give up on me,” Hayden blurted out, swallowing back more begging when Shane groaned.

“Jesus christ, don’t be so dramatic, I’m not giving up on you. Just on... talking about my relationship.”

“Shane, that’s not fair to you.”

Shane shrugged with so little energy his shoulders barely raised. Defeated.

“When has any of this been fair? Sorry, that was... I guess I’m also a bit dramatic.”

“You’re really not, man. I’d go insane if I couldn’t talk about Jackie 24/7.”

Shane glanced at him before looking away, lips pressed together.

“I made you feel like that. All the fucking time, I make you feel like that. God, I’d kill anyone who spoke about Jackie the way I’ve spoken about- Shane, I’m so fucking sorry.”

“I’m under no illusion, I know Ilya loves to push your buttons,” Shane answered with the tiniest of smiles. “He’s very good at it.”

“Yeah, but he’s been better recently, hasn’t he? Not better at pushing my- I mean, just better in general, right? I’m the idiot who didn’t respond in kind. I didn’t respond with any kindness whatsoever, actually.”

Shane snorted, finally turning towards him, smile losing some of its strain.

“I didn’t even have to guilt trip Ilya into it, he realized all on his own that you weren’t going anywhere any time soon.”

Hayden sighed, fondly. “Alright, I deserve that. I deserve way worse than that.”

“I get it. You love me just as much as you hate him, the balance is off.”

Laughing, Hayden turned on the overhead light when the car went dark.

“I love you more than I could ever hate him. You said you get it, well I want to get it, too. I want you to be able to tell me about him.”

Shane stared at him, eyes darting all around Hayden’s face like maybe he could gauge his sincerity by how deep his frown lines were.

“Really?”

It was asked with such trepidation Hayden had to refrain himself from letting a dozen more apologies spill out. Fuck it, he shouldn’t stop them.

“Shane, I’m really sorry for how I’ve acted and how I made you feel. Unintentional or not, I still made you feel like you couldn’t share things about someone you love. That deserves a proper apology. A sincere one, okay?”

“Alright, alright, geeze.” Shane slapped Hayden’s wiggling fingers away before they could even pretend to tickle him.

Changing tactics at the last second, Hayden reached out his other hand to grab Shane’s.

“I know he makes you happy. Despite everything, despite my old reservations about him - so old, dude, entire minutes old - I can see how happy he makes you. I need you to know that I

see that, alright? You don't have to prove shit to me, I'm not what matters here, okay? But for what it's worth, I do see it.

"I see how much he fucking loves you, obnoxiously so, actually, but... he's also really gentle about it? God help me, and you, but he does have a soft side and you're, like, all of it. It's only meant for you, and I've seen enough glimpses of it to know that I can fucking... trust him with you."

Shane was shifting uncomfortably again but Hayden was pretty sure it was for good reasons this time.

"You guys are constantly chirping each other but he fucking adores you, he's positively smitten, it's glaringly obvious. I only ever see those softer moments by accident but I hope that one day neither of you will feel like you have to hide them. I'm not saying I want to see you making out, please do not do that, but I've seen enough to know that you two can be cute as hell. I just, you know, repressed the shit out of that until just now."

Hayden blinked to try and dissuade his eyes from burning, looking down at Shane's hand in his. "Fuck. He holds your hand during movie nights, doesn't he? But you keep it hidden. I made you feel like you had to keep that hidden."

Shane cleared his throat, lazily nudging at Hayden's knee with their linked hands. "We have a lot of practice hiding. Hanging out with you and Jackie, it really helps. Makes us feel... normal, I guess. We'll get-"

Hayden surprised both of them by bursting into tears. Shane jerked backwards, mouth opening before a disbelieving laugh bubbled out of him.

"Hayden, what the fuck!"

"I'm such a *dick*!" Hayden whined, roughly pressing his free wrist into his eye.

"In your defense-"

"Not in my defense, there is no defense! Don't you dare defend me!"

"Part of loving someone, isn't it?"

Shane made a distressed noise when that just made Hayden cry harder.

"Hey, just out of curiosity, how well are you sleeping, right now?"

"Alright, fuck you. Shut up. God."

"Do you... do you still want to do movie night?"

Hayden lowered his arm, squeezing Shane's fingers before starting the car up again.

"Yes. I will be the perfect guest. I will not insult your boyfriend. I'll even let him pick the movie."

“Relax, Hayds, I don’t want you to completely change who you are as a person.”

“And I want- I *need* - you to be yourself, too, okay? Your whole authentic self, Rozanov and all.”

Shane choked on a laugh, smacking at Hayden’s shoulder, probably feeling as glad as Hayden that Rozanov wasn’t there to make the obvious joke. Something about holes, probably.

“Baby steps. Just take me home, Pike.”

They were almost there when Shane exhaled in a way that meant he was about to say something he’d had to work himself up to and might need an escape from.

“He does make me happy. Really happy, Hayden. And I love him more than I ever thought- I never thought I’d get to find love like this. Not ever, not for me. I need you to not get offended by this, okay? But I never feel more like myself than I do when I’m with him. He fucking helped me discover who my real self or whatever even *was* in the first place.”

Shane purposefully wasn’t looking over at him so Hayden allowed him his moment and kept his eyes on the road.

“I never realized- It wasn’t just falling in love, it was getting to meet *me*, too, the me I didn’t know could even exist. Not with... our fucking jobs, the- everything, you know? He makes me feel like just being myself is enough. I never knew it was possible for it to be so easy- shut up, don’t laugh! I just mean, easy to just breathe. To be together. Even through the hard shit, even with how fucking long it took us to get here, it’s still just... easy. Being myself, being loved by him, getting to love him in return.”

It wasn’t lost on Hayden that no previous version of the Shane he’d known would have ever felt comfortable enough to share so much before, about anything. Chances were actually quite high he probably never would again, given how theatrically Shane slumped back into his seat with a laugh like he’d used up his vulnerability quota for the year.

“Thank you for telling me that. All of that. I’m so fucking happy for you, man, you deserve the world.”

Shane just hummed, evidently done with feelings for the time being, but when Hayden glanced over he looked relaxed, at peace or some shit. He looked like himself, the new variant that had met the love of his life and learned how to be himself in the process, apparently. Hayden loved every single Shane he’d met over the years, but he loved this one the most.

Rozanov was rearranging the couch when they walked in. Hayden smiled at his attempt to look casual like he hadn’t just been piling up Shane’s favorite blanket and pillow next to his preferred lounging spot where a ginger ale was already waiting. On a coaster.

Hayden’s smile grew when, after a brief moment of hesitation, Shane walked right up to Rozanov to kiss him hello. Rozanov visibly tensed up before he could, eyes immediately

going to Hayden and Hayden felt like an absolute asshole when he saw the apprehension there, like Rozanov was worried Hayden would say something nasty.

Shane gently cupped Rozanov's face and easily guided his attention back to him. Even from where Hayden was standing he could see Shane's soft smile as he pulled Rozanov in.

When Rozanov's eyes met Hayden's again they narrowed suspiciously, which Hayden thought was kind of fair because he had just been staring at them.

"Good game tonight, man."

Rozanov frowned, sending Shane a befuddled look which made him laugh.

"Is Pike dying? Am *I* dying?"

"No, *Ilya*, I'm just stating facts." Hayden grinned at how Rozanov seemed to recoil at hearing Hayden use his first name. It made Hayden feel better about how he'd almost done the same thing.

"Okay. Thank you." He directed his next question to Shane. "What are we watching?"

Hayden couldn't bring himself to regret letting Roz- *Ilya* pick the film because it was as ridiculous as it was entertaining, and it made Shane snort-laugh a good three times so it was a winner in Hayden's books.

After *Ilya* replenished their drinks halfway through the movie, Hayden noticed that Shane reached for his hand over the blanket, eventually even migrating closer to lean against *Ilya*'s shoulder.

Ilya's smile was so fucking sweet as he opened his arms to let Shane cuddle up to him. Hayden felt his cheeks go a bit warm. His whole face burned when *Ilya* looked up and caught him staring, again, his smug assessing little smirk still visible in Hayden's periphery.

When Hayden dared to look back during a scene that happened to include a subtly romantic moment between two men, *Ilya* was watching him, mouth pulled tight like he was still waiting for Hayden to make some kind of dickish comment.

Hayden gave him a nod.

Ilya just rolled his eyes, but Hayden saw him finally relax, pressing a kiss to the top of Shane's head and fully wrapping himself around him.

Hayden only ended up feeling remorse about giving Shane blanket permission to tell him all about *Ilya* a couple times a week. He never shared any salacious details - those Hayden usually found out from *Ilya* himself - but Shane would sometimes tell him about shit that *Ilya* did that was so fucking adorable it made Hayden a bit lightheaded.

But Shane loved *Ilya*, and Jackie loved *Ilya*, and his very own damn kids loved *Ilya*, and they were his family, so Hayden figured maybe he could make room for one more.

He really wished he'd never found out about the phone call blowjob, though, he could have happily died not knowing about that, regardless of how hard it had made Jackie laugh and how endearingly red Shane had gotten.

End Notes

having a totally normal fine chill time on [tumblr](#) don't worry about it

if you reach this bit then hopefully you enjoyed this thank you so so much for reading!! this show has unlocked a part of me that's been dormant for a very long time!! AH, ya know?

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