There is no problem

by Schussel

Summary

Major Hayes comes back from an away mission and changed. Malcolm wants to help but Hayes blocks every attempt. Malcolm fights hard to penetrate the hard shell of the MACO.

Notes

I apologize for my bad English, it is only my second language. I hope you can enjoy the story despite the tons of errors.

This story contains descriptions of violence and attempted rape.
"What the hell, do you think you're doing you bloody idiot?"

Everyone in the armory went silent and stared at the two men in front of the weapons locker. The crewman's face was red and he looked at the phase pistol in his hand.

"Sir, I'm sorry ..."

"I'm not interested in you being sorry. How can you be so foolish and put an unsecured pistol into the locker?"

"Sir, I guess I forgot to ..."

"You are a danger to this ship. I expect you to ..."

"I think that's enough."

Malcolm Reed had approached the two men.

"I will handle this. Foster you are dismissed. Report to my office later."

"Yes, sir!"

With obvious relief the crewman left the room. The people around were still staring at them.

"Go back to your work!" came the order from Reed.

When they were no longer the center of attention Malcolm turned to Hayes.

"Would you please follow me to my office?"

The two men walked silently to the small room and as soon as the door closed behind them, Reed had a hard time hiding his anger any longer.

"What was that all about?"

"Sir, I was just reprimanding crewman Foster for a stupid mistake."

"Yes, and I'm sure even the people on the bridge heard you. You exaggerated a bit, don't you think?"

"No, I don't think so, sir."

Malcolm took a deep breath.

"Listen, Major. I have no idea what your problem is lately. But I expect you to control your temper."

"Sir, my reaction was completely appropriate."

"You think calling one of my men a bloody idiot is appropriate? What the hell is wrong with you? I've never seen you so emotional. You've always been a textbook example of military composure."

Hayes looked a bit sheepish at that.
"If there is a problem, you can talk to me Major."

"There is no problem, sir."

"Are you sure? I am not the only one who noticed that you got more and more agitated lately."

"Sir, I assure you, there is no problem."

Malcolm sighed. That damn MACO wouldn't admit a problem even when it was sitting on his shoulder and waving at people.

"Very well, dismissed."
Malcolm stood in front of Hayes' quarters. He came here to ask the major what was wrong with him. Since he came back from his last away mission, he got more and more tense and aggressive. He hesitated to press the chime. He was sure Hayes didn't want to talk. But he had to try at least. He pressed the button.

The door opened and Hayes looked at him. The expression in his face betrayed for a moment how awful the MACO must feel. Tiredness, exhaustion, frustration, sadness. All that was in his face but only for a millisecond. Then his face switched back to his usual cold mask.

"How can I help you, sir?"

"May I come in, Major?"

Reluctantly Hayes stepped aside and let Malcolm enter his quarters. Malcolm tried to find the right words. Hayes would surely not react kindly when he expressed concern. But finally he couldn't think of anything else to say than

"Major, something is bothering you. I would like to know what it is, maybe I can help."

Hayes looked at him with empty eyes.

"There is no problem, sir."

Malcolm sighed.

"It is kind of obvious that you have difficulties to keep calm. That is not like you."

Malcolm could not see the inner fight, Hayes fought with himself, when he said "And what makes you say that, sir?"

"Well over the last three weeks I've got five reports about you from members of my security team that you dressed them down for minor mistakes. You threw a crewman out of the gym the other day. And even your people get more and more nervous during the sparing drills. I was hesitant to believe these reports are accurate until that incident in the armory yesterday. There I witnessed it first-hand."

Hayes almost spit the words into Reeds face.

"These minor mistakes should not have happened. See that your crew does a better job and I won't have to discipline them."

Reed had to pull himself together very hard at that.

"Major, I'm warning you. I'm still your commanding officer. And I will not tolerate this tone any longer."

Hayes got into at attention position at that.

"I apologize, sir."

Malcolm's voice got a little softer.
"Just tell me how I can help."

"I don't need any help. And if you please excuse me, sir. I have some work to do."

Malcolm shook his head and went to the door. "Very well, Major. But this isn't over yet."
Malcolm watched Hayes walking through the room between the sparring pairs. He was pale. The skin under his eyes was dark, he looked tired. Malcolm tried to remember when he saw Hayes in the mess hall the last time. It must be at least a week ago. Usually they ate roughly at the same time, so either the major was avoiding him or he didn't eat much.

A loud bang distracted him. Trip was lying on his back, laughing. Amanda Cole stood over him and grinned.

"You shouldn't look at my butt all the time, then you'd have a chance to counter my attack."

she told him with a cheeky expression on her face.

"Corporal, I've had enough of your shameless display of adolescence behavior. You will switch partners with Corporal Hawkins. We will talk about your inappropriate behavior later."

Hayes had spoken with such rage that Cole looked a bit scared.

"Yes, Sir!"

She hurried to exchange places with Hawkins. Tucker looked at the strong MACO and looked a bit worried too. Hawkins wouldn't joke around with him. Malcolm almost felt sorry for Trip.

But he was more worried about Hayes. It wasn't like him to overreact in this way. Sure, Trip could be expected to pull himself together. He surely spent enough time with Cole in his quarters to be able to be a bit more professional during their training. But dressing them down like this was a bit much. Especially since Cole obviously was looking forward to further punishment.

He approached Hayes. "Something is troubling you." It wasn't a question.

"I'm alright, sir."

"Yeah and the reason you want to see Cole later is to have a cup of tea with her."

"If she would limit her questionable ... relationship with Commander Tucker to her leisure time, she wouldn't have that problem."

"I agree, but no reason to bite her head off. Do you even realize how hostile you became?"

"Unlike you starfleet people, my team are no soft children."

Malcolm was lost for words when he watched Hayes walk away. What the hell happened to the man?

----------

"Ok, Major. You will tell me, what your problem is, or I have to report you to the Captain."

After the last drill, it took Malcolm some time to think about what to do.

"The third possibility is: get a grip on yourself and stop overreacting."

Hayes stared at him.
"Talking about overreacting. You will make a fool of yourself reporting this."

"Major, I'm trying to help."

"There is nothing you need to help with."

"Very well, have it your way. But let me make one thing very clear. The next time you insult me or one of my men, the Captain will get a report in which I will question that you are fit for duty."

Malcolm never met anyone so stubborn in his life. He didn't want to do this. He didn't want to get Hayes into trouble by writing a report. But he had to make sure things are running smoothly in his department. For a short moment he had seen fear in the MACO's face. He knew what his work meant to Hayes. If Malcolm told Archer that Hayes was unfit for duty, the Captain would listen and it would have consequences for the major.

With a glare so full of hostility that it proved Malcolm right, Hayes left his office.
Malcolm was about to leave the ship. Despite the fact that it was not welcome, he wanted to see Hayes before he was on a mission for a few days. He looked for the major in the armory and in his quarters. Next stop was the gym and he actually found him there. He was using the treadmill and seemed oblivious to his surroundings. His shirt was soaking wet. For how long had he been running? It took something to make the MACO sweat properly.

"Major."

The dark haired head turned. The fact that Hayes didn't stop running showed how much the man changed. Usually he would have stopped immediately, taken a formal posture and maybe even apologized for his untidy clothing. Now he didn't seem to care.

"I wanted to let you know, I will be off the ship for a few days."

"I understand, sir."

His breathing was very heavy.

"Is there anything you need, before I leave?"

"No, sir."

"Seriously Major, I'm a little worried when no one is looking after you."

Now he had Hayes' full attention.

"With all due respect, sir. No one has to look after me."

Malcolm swallowed his answer. He just nodded and with a

"Well, then see you in a few days."

he left.

----------

Malcolm couldn't believe what he saw when he entered the armory. He hadn't seen Hayes for almost a week. That man at the console looked more like a ghost than the soldier he knew. His face had almost no color, his eyes looked so tired, Malcolm thought he would fall asleep any second. His hair was not perfectly combed back as usual. His whole posture spoke of complete exhaustion.

Carefully Malcolm moved closer.

"Major?"

He startled when the MACO looked at him. His eyes were red. If Reed hadn't known better he would think Hayes had cried. But Hayes didn't cry. And he was never tired. And never anything else than flawless.

"Major, go to sickbay. You are not well."
"I'm perfectly fine, sir."

Malcolm couldn't take this any longer. He resisted the urge to strangle Hayes. "Please" he thought, "cooperate you stubborn bastard."

"Let's put rank aside for a minute and talk honestly. I'm worried. Not only as your superior officer. You need help. I want to help you, please let me."

Hayes remained silent. Malcolm stepped closer and put one hand on Hayes' shoulder. "Please."

Hayes pushed the hand away and stepped back.

"For the last time. I don't need help. And especially not yours. Obviously you are desperately searching for a weakness in me. I have to disappoint you. And even if there were a problem. You were the last person I would want to talk to!"

With that Hayes stormed off.
Chapter 5

After that Malcolm didn't talk to Hayes anymore unless it was absolutely necessary. His words had really hurt. He was wondering why. In the beginning he was worried because it was his duty. But seeing this man crash, had touched him on a very personal level. He sincerely wanted to help. When did that walking stone wall become so important to him? And what could he do for him? He had tried so many times now. Malcolm felt anger rise inside him.

"You were the last person I would want to talk to!"

"Fine", he thought. His help wasn't wanted. He wasn't wanted.

From that moment on, Malcolm kept away from Hayes. When he saw him in the armory or somewhere else, he had to remind himself that he didn't care any longer. Seeing the man suffer was no fun.

--------

If he had beaten a human with the same force he used on the punching bag, he'd have shattered every bone in his body. The bag would have screamed if he could. Every muscle in his body hurt but he didn't stop. He released all the pain and frustration by beating the bag. At least he tried. After that away mission he got lost on, he had barely slept a whole night. It took him hours every evening to fall asleep and then he woke up from nightmares.

When he was down on that planet with his team, he got separated from his men. It took Enterprise almost a week to find him and get him back. And all that time he didn't know if he would be rescued at all.

When he was back on board he was determined to just go on with his work. To not let himself be influenced by what happened down there. He failed miserably. He lost his appetite. He forced himself to eat at first because he knew he needed his strength but he gave up on it after a while. And it showed.

He slammed his fist into the bag and silently cursed himself when he remembered crying in his bed last night. Crying. Him. His hand hurt from the impact.

And then there was Reed. He just wouldn't leave him alone. No, that was wrong. He had left him alone at last. He finally succeeded in chasing him away. And the moment he realized that Reed had given up on him, he regretted it. Maybe he should have accepted his help. But he could never tell Reed what happened to him. He would laugh and see him as the sad, weak failure he was. Reed could never respect him again.

He hit the bag with even more force and something in his hand gave away. A terrible pain stung through his fist. He gasped in pain and fell on his knees. Panting he tried to keep himself from weeping.

When he finally managed to control his breathing, he got up and turned to get his towel. And there stood Reed leaned against the wall, his arms folded in front of him. His face full of disapproval.

"Was it fun watching the show?" he spat at Reed.

"Oh yes, don't you see my cheerful face? I can hardly stop myself from applauding," Reed said in his best snobby accent.

"Go to sickbay and let Phlox check your hand."

Reed shook his head briefly and left the gym. Somewhere in his chest something started to hurt when he realized Reed really didn't care anymore.
Hayes left sickbay, his face glowing with embarrassment. Phlox had dressed him down for injuring himself like that. And of course he commented on his general shape. He had relieved him off duty for a few days. Now Hayes was walking down the corridors heading to Reed's quarters. He had to talk to him. And that conversation was going to be very humiliating too.

He chimed and a few seconds later Reed opened the door. He saw a mixture of concern and anger in Reed's face. Maybe he wasn't interested in an explanation anymore.

"Major, how can I help you?"

"Sir, I came to apologise."

Malcolm stepped aside to let him enter.

"You should rather apologize to the punching bag."

"It is the next on my list."

Did Reed just smile? He stood in front of his desk, waiting. Hayes took a deep breath and started.

"You were right, I am troubled lately. And I failed to keep it out of my work. I behaved disrespectfully. I'm very sorry."

Was that enough? Why didn't Reed say anything.

"Why are you troubled?"

I had hoped, Reed wouldn't ask that question. But he wanted to make up for his behavior.

"My last away mission didn't went to well."

"Yes I know. You were missing."

"Yes, my time on that planet was demanding. I have more difficulties to ... adapt then I anticipated."

"Demanding in what way?"

"Sir, please, don't ask."

Hayes face lost that little color it had and stopped Malcolm from pressing on.

"You never wrote that report to the Captain."

"No."

"Why not?"

"Good question. I can still write it."

"Sir, ... I know that is much to ask. But I would ask you not to do that."

"Then help me a little. I want to understand. Talk to me. Not as a MACO, not as a Major. Just as a ... friend."

Hayes' head turned sharply. Friends? He has never been friends with Reed. Maybe this was an
invitation from Reed to change that. Should he accept?
"Come on, talk to me. Tell me what happened."

Hayes looked at the floor.

"What do you know about that plant I was lost on?" he asked.

"Not much. I know it is a very unfriendly place."

Hayes made a face.

"Unfriendly doesn't begin to cover it. Those people who live there believe in survival of the fittest. They steal from each other, they attack each other, and they kill each other. I tried to keep out of trouble as good as I could. Most of the time I hid in the woods. I tried to find food and water. It wasn't much. I managed to hunt some small animals. I was hungry almost all the time and got weaker. Sometimes I ran into small groups of men. Most of the time I could fight them off. These people are aggressive but not very skilled. But one day ..."

Hayes went silent. Malcolm looked at him and noticed how pale he went. He could imagine how difficult it was. Fighting hard to stay alive and not to know if rescue would come. He waited for Hayes to continue.

"I ran into three very strong guys. They were clearly drunk. When they saw me, I tried to run away, but I had no chance. They were fast, so they got me. First they beat me up a little."

Hayes closed his eyes as if to keep the memories away. He made a long pause. Malcolm waited patiently. Then Hayes sighed and continued.

"They tried to rape me."

Malcolm gasped.

"Two held me down, the third started to cut my belt and my pants with his knife. He slipped his hand under my clothes and touched me. He made some obscene comments how much he was looking forward to taking me. When he described the details of what he was about to do, I got angry enough to gather enough power to get one arm free and knock the first guy some teeth out of his face. With one hand free I was able to turn halfway round and gave the bastard a good kick to his balls. The third guy cut me with his knife before I could knock him down. It was my luck that they were drunk. That cut was pretty deep and I lost a lot of blood. After that it was even more difficult to find something to eat without running into trouble. I was in pain and got weaker because of the loss of blood."

Malcolm didn't know what to say. Everything seemed to be wrong. But he needed to say something.

"I think I understand now."

"No, you don't!"

Hayes yelled at him.

"Nothing happened! A few assholes punched me a few times and threatened to rape me. And they
got an ass kicking for it! There is absolutely no reason for me to act the way I do!"

"Well I beg to differ."

Hayes laughed. A very sad, very tired laugh.

"Off course you do. Now I get the lecture that I am just human, and that these things can effect me. And that it's ok to feel this way."

Malcolm smiled carefully.

"That about sums it up."

"You're wrong! I am trained for situations like this! It shouldn't effect me. And if it does, I failed."

Hayes buried his face in his hands and turned away. Malcolm slowly approached Hayes. When he got closer he heard him crying, very silently. He put one hand on Hayes shoulder and said

"But it does. And believe it or not, it's ok. However, you have my word, I do whatever I can to help you through this."

Hayes suddenly turned around, eyes wet.

"Why?"

Malcolm sighed and looked down.

"You still haven't figured that out?"

He gave Hayes a sad smile. He lifted one hand and touched Hayes' cheek. He wiped away a tear with his thumb.
Chapter 7

It took Malcolm a moment to recognize the sound of his door chime. He checked the watch: 02:33. Who could that be at this time? He slowly moved out of his bed and walked to the door. He was more than surprised when it was Hayes. He was wearing sweatpants and a shirt. And his hair was all tousled.

"Joss, what happened?"

One day when they were sitting together after duty, having a drink, Hayes had offered to call him by his first name. He had blushed and almost stuttered. Malcolm was very touched by the gesture. Especially when the MACO revealed to him that he liked the short version of his name more than "Jeremiah". It felt very intimate to use this name.

"Can I come in?"

"Off course."

"I'm very sorry I woke you up. But I ... I need to ... tomorrow is ... I have to"

Suddenly his voice broke and he turned away. Malcolm carefully lay a hand on Hayes arm and pulled him over to his bunk. He softly pushed him down and sat next to him. When he saw the desperation on Hayes' face he couldn't stop himself from wrapping his arms around him.

"Take a deep breath and start again. What do you need?"

"I have to go on that away mission tomorrow. I couldn't sleep. Dreams. I didn't know where else to go. I need to sleep. I need my strength tomorrow..."

"It's alright. Come here."

Malcolm pulled away his cover.

"Lie down."

Hayes looked at him, a big question mark on his face. Malcolm maneuvered Hayes head onto his pillow. He slowly stroked his hair back. He just sat there moving his hand in slow, soothing motions. Hayes looked very uncomfortable.

"Trust me", Malcolm whispered.

When Hayes finally seemed to be asleep he carefully lay beside him keeping one hand on his arm. He didn't know that Hayes was still awake. He felt very strange lying here in Malcolm's bed almost cuddling with him. But he felt surprisingly save.

He remembered talking to Malcolm how his experiences on the planet had influenced his self-confidence. When he could be overwhelmed like this by three drunk guys, was he still suited for his job? Off course Malcolm had tried to show him the other side. He was already weakened and it was three against one. "A MACO must handle that!" had been his answer. Malcolm had smiled at him and made a comment about "those soldiers have impossible standards". Even if he didn't agree with that, he had felt better hearing it from Malcolm.

And yes, he was afraid. What if he hadn't managed to fight them off? When they had really raped him? Thinking about he close he was experiencing that violation made him cringe.
But now he was here with Reed. The rest of the night he slept peacefully.
Malcolm couldn't help it but smile broadly. It took him three weeks to talk Hayes into this. They were sitting in the last row watching the movie. Hayes had struggled against this very hard. "childish" he called it. But when Malcolm took his hand and said "Please, do it for me.", Hayes suddenly said yes.
The faces of Sergent Kemper and Corporal Romero, when they spotted their commanding officer at the movie night, were priceless. Malcolm could tell, that Hayes was desperately searching for a hole to disappear in. Especially since Malcolm had insisted that the MACO left his uniform jacket in his quarters.
Hayes insisted on sitting in the last row. Malcolm agreed, it had some advantages. This was his night with his MACO. Yes, "his". Somehow.

When they were sitting together in Malcolm's quarters afterwards, Hayes complained about the stupid movie.

"That was a complete waste of time."

Malcolm laughed.

"I appreciate the sacrifice."

Suddenly Hayes laughed too.

"You're welcome."

These lips looked very tempting when there was a smile on them.

Malcolm couldn't quite recall how he got Hayes flat on his back on his bunk. How he managed to strip him off his shirt. But he remembered vividly how sweet the kiss tasted. And how soft Hayes' skin was. He almost expected it to be as hard as the shell the man was hiding under.
Malcolm forced his own uniform off his body. At first Hayes didn't dare to really touch his bare skin.

"You've never been with a man?" he asked quietly.

He wasn't surprised when the soldier shook his head.

Malcolm moaned with pleasure when he lowered himself on Hayes' erection. It has been a while since he did this the last time. And he never would have guessed that we'd do it with this MACO. Hayes had been a little hesitant to push his fingers into Malcolm to prepare him.

"That must hurt." he said.

"Would fit, you have always been a pain in the ass."

Hayes had smiled at that. Now he wasn't smiling. His eyes were half closed his lips were parted. But he remained silent. Only his breathing was heavy. Malcolm was riding Hayes slowly but insistently.

When Malcolm felt his orgasm rushing on Hayes' strong hands grabbed his hips and he let out a loud groan. The sound of Hayes voice so full of arousal almost drove Malcolm over the edge. Suddenly Malcolm was lying on his back and the major was on top of him. And he wasn't silent any longer. He loudly expressed his pleasure. With one firm push against his prostrate Malcolm
climaxed and spilled his semen all over the strong hand on his dick.

"Shit, Malcolm."

Hayes voice was only a whisper when he pressed his hips one last time against his ass.
Chapter 9

Malcolm took the glass from Hayes. He sat on the Majors' bunk. After what happened the other night, he seemed a bit awkward around Malcolm. He wanted to change that. That's why he came to Hayes' quarters tonight. And he gladly accepted the offered drink. He smiled when he remembered the night they spent together. He'd never have thought that the stiff MACO could be so passionate.

"What are you smiling about?" Hayes sat next to him.

Malcolm leaned over and kissed him. He was surprised when Hayes returned the kiss immediately.

"I could fall in love with you."

he whispered. When there came no answer, Malcolm started to worry that he said the wrong thing.

"Isn't that a little too strange?"

"Yeah, maybe it is. But I don't care."

"You are my superior officer ..."

"Yes, we have to be careful. But we managed to work together despite the fact that we hated each other. We can work together despite the fact that we like each other too."

"You are a guy ..."

"I promise, I won't buy you flowers."

"I don't know what I feel for you, if I feel something for you."

"Then let's find out. Are you done making excuses?"

He emptied his glass, set it on the table and pulled Hayes in for another kiss. The mix of alcohol and Hayes' own taste made Malcolm lightheaded. He started peeling the soldier out of his uniform. He hated to admit it, but he found that stupid MACO cloth sexy. A figure like Hayes' would be wasted in a starfleet uniform.

They removed their clothes and Malcolm sprawled on the bed under Hayes' hands. He was still fascinated how sensible that hard guy reacted to touch. He always imagined the soldier had such a hard shell, he wasn't able to feel pleasure anymore. He was never happier to be wrong. His hands wandered over the muscular arms and shoulders, then down the back while his mouth was busy on neck and chest. He licked Hayes' nipple and felt the other man get fully hard.

Suddenly Hayes rolled on his back and pulled Malcolm on top of him.

"I want you to ... do to me what I did to you the other night."

"I don't think, that's a good idea."

"I want to know if I can do that. If I like it."

Malcolm had learned to read between the lines. "If I can do that." After what happened. Malcolm thought it definitely too early for that. "If I like it." Maybe he thought if he didn't Reed would stop this "experiment".

"Joss, this is no test, no drill."
"I know, but you said let's find out. I want to find out."

"And you think if you realize you don't like to get fucked, this with us has no chance? I hope you know that is bullshit."

"But how ..."

Malcolm put a finger on Hayes lips to silence him.

"Darling, listen carefully. There are so many ways we can pleasure each other that don't involve my cock in your butt. And we will try them all out if you want to."

"How did you just call me?"

Malcolm blushed when he realized what he just said.

"I'm sorry ..."

"Did you really mean that?"

In that moment Malcolm was sure he did. He placed a very gently kiss on Joss' lips.

"Yes, I meant it. Every single word."

With that he continued moving his hands over the beautiful body beneath him.

Then he felt Hayes' lips on his ear.

"But I owe you that. And ... I admit, I'm curious."

Hayes looked at him almost shy. Malcolm smiled.

"Trust me, it is better we wait until you are ready. I will make it worth waiting, I promise."

That night he made his MACO moan in ecstasy when he let his talented mouth work on his cock. And when he heard Joss whisper his name while he slowly pushed into him a few months later, he knew it was right to wait.

Sometimes Hayes still woke up from nightmares. Then Malcolm just held him tight and caressed him gently until he calmed down. They certainly didn't solve all the problems over night. But the first important step had been to admit, that there IS a problem.

END

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