



## First Season

*R.J. Scott , V.L. Locey*

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*Layton wants success, Adler wants family, how can love make both these things possible?*

Layton Foxx works hard for what he has. The condo, the career, the chance to make his mark, is all down to the sacrifices he has made. With tragedy in his past, he doesn't want or need love. Then he meets Adler Lockhart, the extroverted, sexy winger for the Harrisburg Railers and abruptly he can't avoid love even if he wanted to.

Adler Lockhart has had everything handed to him his whole life. Cars, villas, cash, college tuition at the finest Ivy League schools. The only things he doesn't have are parents who care or the love of a good man. Then Layton walks into his privileged life and shows him what real love can be like.

*Word Count: 55,000*

## First Season Details

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## From Reader Review First Season for online ebook

### Karen says

*“...Nothing worth anything was ever easy...”*

And for Layton Foxx and Adler Lockhart it's going to be an uphill battle. Layton's a spin doctor, PR troubleshooter... whatever title you want to use he's the man you need when things are going FUBAR for you and/or your organization. He comes in and does damage control, makes a plan and fixes things, handles the media. He's all about the success both for his clients and himself but don't make it personal he doesn't do personal. His past has taught him where that road leads and it's a trip he doesn't want to take again any time soon or ever. But he's not a coward by any means either and letting his past rule his future isn't something he's prepared to do.

Adler's had life handed to him on a silver tray. The best of everything... cars, homes, schools, whatever he's wanted... whatever's kept him out of his parent's lives because they don't do kids. Adler's grown up feeling like he's never good enough, no matter what he's done, it's not enough to get him the love he wants from his parents and it's left him feeling more than a little inadequate about himself so he tries to fill the void with his gruff joking exterior and following his parent's role model that 'love comes in a box with a fancy price tag'. Adler for me was like that puppy you see when you enter the pound the one that looks at you with hope and optimism in his eyes because each new person that enters his world is another opportunity to find his place, but it's not until he encounters Layton that he begins to learn that it's not about finding your place in the world it's about creating something new... (I admit it, you'll have to read the story to fully understand this quote and how it came to be.)

“I want to be paint with you.”

“Oh...kay. I want to be paint with you too?”

A raspy, coughing laugh rolled out of me. “Cool. We're going to make one truly vibrant and unique color, Layton.”

On the surface, this is probably one of the most unlikely pairings that I've encountered in a while but at the end of it all, it's also one of the sweetest.

I really enjoyed 'Changing Lines' the first story in this series and with this story while we have new MCs in Layton and Adler and they really are the focus of the story we also get more about Jared and Tennant, which I really liked since they're story really isn't finished. I have to admit I'm more than a little impressed with how well balanced this story is the events of the story that pertain to Jared and Tennant neither overwhelm nor get lost in what's developing between Layton and Adler and if you pay close attention the groundwork is laid for the next book in this series.

So far I'm a fan of the characters we've been given... not just the MCs, there are lot of awesome secondary characters in these stories... Adler's best friend Apollo was intriguing, I love Landry's family. They were big and loud and in your face protective of him and with good reason and all the players that we get little glimpses of both from the Rainers and other teams.

While I'm not a huge fan of sports themed stories this series was just too tempting to resist. It's hockey and I

am Canadian...so the least I could do was give it a try, right? But what's got me wanting more isn't the hockey it's the wonderful stories that the writing team of R.J. Scott & V.L. Locey have produced. I can't wait to see what's ahead for this team because so far it looks like the Harrisburg Railers are shaping up to be a winning team.

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An ARC of 'First Season' was graciously provided by the authors in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Natalie says**

4.5 but rounding up because Adler made me cry. Review soon.

I'm so happy I read this and got so many wonderful feels from this second book of the series. Adler and Layton were terrific and I connected with them both as individual characters and as a couple. From the start, you can fairly well guess what kind of event Layton was affected by. As a PR agent, he's been hired to mitigate any backlash from Ten and Jared coming out publicly in the hypermasculine atmosphere of hockey. A duck out of water, he knows almost nothing about the game and he faces his fear of intimidating players. He's not sure what to make of Adler at first but eventually responds to his less than smooth overtures and penchant for gift-giving. Layton's interactions with the team were often quite humorous as well, with the coach and especially with Stan.

Poor Adler! I adored the poor little rich boy, socially inept and clueless, often lacking any brain to mouth filter, but never spoiled or arrogant. His frequent gaffes and verbal blunders weren't heavy-handed though, and he exhibited great empathy that resonated with Layton. Apollo, Adler's best friend, was a good advisor without becoming too pushy and it was refreshing not seeing a female bestie, for a change. The pacing of the narrative was very good and showed Layton and Adler interacting, without too much telling. A portion of the relationship was still pretty condensed but it was more balanced than book one was. There is sex but don't look for wild monkey sex, and you may never think of handkerchiefs in the same way again! It made things feel more real-to-life and I enjoyed the depictions of Adler and Layton together, both in and out of the bedroom.

Secondary characters are strong, including Layton's family and Stan, the taciturn Russian goalie is given more depth. His full character is going to be one to unfold slowly over the course of a few books, I think. I wasn't as taken with book one but this sequel gives me hope the whole series will become another favorite for me. Perhaps the authors just needed to hit their stride with this collaboration. Recommended for fans of stories with men that like to puck around!

An ARC was provided to me by the publisher via Jessie G Books review blog, in return for an honest review\*

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### **Anne-Marie says**

This was no more than an okay read, I liked it less than the first book in the series.

This can be read as a standalone, but Jared and Ten from the first book return in this one and are actually the

reason Layton Foxx gets hired by the Harrisburg hockey team. So, having read the first book is a bonus.

Layton Foxx is an expert on crisis management, social media troubleshooting and sensitivity training. An expert in all this even though he's still in his twenties and only on his 4th assignment since graduating from college. This is his first assignment in sports. One wonders why a NHL team would hire such a newbie (who is also self-employed, so not working for a prestigious firm.)

Layton says he is the best but doesn't come across that way. The story doesn't let him shine, having most of his expertise taking place off page.

Layton is traumatised by an incident in his adolescence, which seems to excuse the way he behaves sometimes. It doesn't help his questionable professionalism. For instance, when Adler Lockheart, the other MC, comes out to him, his response is poor, and when there is a team dinner and he makes a remark that is unintentionally funny, he immediately bolts and flees the place. Not even to step outside to recollect himself, but no, to flee and go home. An immature reaction to a minor incident.

Adler is a successful hockeyplayer. He is persistent and has no filter, which is sometimes charming. He has the enthusiasm of an overgrown puppy, which is also sometimes charming. He is the one who works at wooing Layton.

However, I never truly felt their sexual or romantic chemistry and failed to emotionally connect with them. Layton never really grew on me, Adler was endearing at times but the way he threw money around (buying presents) and invited himself to a Layton family event was inappropriate and mistifying.

The imbalance in their relationship - and Layton's tendency to walk away and Adler then providing protection and comfort - bothered me. Adler was doing all the work and Layton was mostly passive. Also, I have a problem with people who won't take no for an answer.

I am not sure if I will read the next one in the series.

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## **BR11 says**

This book was all over the place. I felt it was more about the public coming out of Ten and Jensen (from book one) than about the two so-called "main" characters. Their story was insipid at best. I felt a lot of it didn't make sense and I found Adler too immature.

I like the first book of the series better. I'll give a chance to the 3rd just because of it.

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## **Tpagirl says**

First Season was the second book of RJ Scott and VL Locy's Harrisburg Railers Hockey series.

The book opened where the first book, Changing Lines (Ten/Mads) closed. Layton Foxx was hired by the team as a crisis management expert to assist with Ten, the first openly gay NHL player, coming out of the proverbial closet.

Layton Foxx was a business man. He was the best at his job and he knew it. He had been openly gay since he was sixteen and despised "jocks" as a result of their bullying him as a result. The last thing he wanted to do

was consult with a professional team but he needed the client.

Adler Lockhart was the new member on the Railers team. He was gorgeous, arrogant and snarky, always the life of the party. His “no filter” manner seemed rude but once the backstory was unraveled, the true meaning was revealed and it was cute versus annoying.

First Season was written with a dual POV. It was a pretty intense storyline while focusing on Adler’s lack of love and attachments which greatly impacted his life and social skills to Layton’s tragic incident and how it impacted his life and relationships. All of this while simultaneously focusing on Ten’s formal coming out announcement. It definitely wasn’t a light hearted read.

The authors established a solid storyline while also providing an educational theme. A big picture was created for the difficulties, challenges and solutions for professional athletes when coming out. They additionally highlighted potential injustices from childhood and the longstanding affects. Lastly, I loved the way the authors introduced the team to us. It was creative, interesting and the perfect way to mesh it within the storyline while continuing to set the stage for the series.

All in all, it was a little slow for me but it was still enjoyable and entertaining. Dieter Lehmann is next up in Deep Edge.

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## **Sierra Guru says**

[; this trauma causes him to use lots of ha

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## **Kaje Harper says**

This second book gives us two new MCs, who are a lot of fun. I had to first get over the disappointment of not seeing Ten and Jared's experiences from the inside. I really wanted to be there with those two guys, in their headspace, through this phase of their lives. We do get to see a lot of them in this book, but I missed the emotional connection.

However these two are another great couple. Adler is a ton of fun as a new member of the team, finding his footing despite the handicaps of an impulsive nature and a major lack of filters. Adler grew up without any emotional support from his distant parents, and his efforts to be a good guy and get people to like him have a little edge of desperation and overeagerness. He loves playing hockey, and he has money, and his friend Apollo is great, and yet you can feel that there's a big empty space in his life. And a good heart underneath it.

Layton is a publicist, a spin-doctor, brought in to handle the fallout that the team might be facing from book 1. He's gay and out and not at all fond of jocks, but it's a great job and he feels useful in doing something worthwhile for LGBT in sports. As he tries to get himself up to speed about hockey, meeting this team, and its members, he's both nervous and off balance. Being hit on by someone with Adler's size and enthusiasm is unnerving, even though he is definitely attracted, too. He's very wary, due to badly damaged trust in the past, and he's not won over easily by Adler's fumbling attempts to get his attention. This story is a nice, slow burn, as Adler tries to get the hang of adding friendship to sex, and Layton tries to get past his own fears and let someone inside the walls he's built up.

I thought the fallout from Layton's past got a little bit of a short shrift, in the way its impact changed through the book. But I felt empathy for both men, and enjoyed their contrasts. I was intrigued watching the difficulties they faced negotiating around both of their issues and the risks of Adler coming out. There were some excellent moments in here, of both humor and emotion.

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### **Laurie says**

Hired to help with the media circus that is going to ensue after a player and coach for the Harrisburg Railers coming out as gay, Layton has his work cut out for him. Added to the mix is one of the players, Adler, who has shown an interest in him. And while he returns Adler's interest, there are things in his past that keep him cringing and shying away. Adler's gentle pursuit slowly works on Layton.

Adler is a fun character. He has an open mouth and words fall out problem. What he says doesn't always come out the way he means. At heart he's a fun, loving and caring guy. It just doesn't come across that way all the time. With cold and uncaring parents, all he's looking for is someone to love him. He thinks that someone is Layton. Now he needs to take things slowly enough for Layton to realize it too. And then there is the fact that if he wants Layton, he'll need to come out of the closet too.

Loved both Layton and Adler. Their different personalities contrast nicely, and yet balances well between them. They have starts and stops, pushes and pulls in the building of their relationship. Also, the secondary cast of characters from the first book, *Changing Lines*, show up here. Tennant and Jared, Stan and the rest of the group add great depth to this story. I think Stan may need his own book. And I am looking forward to the next book in the series.

On a serious note, I love the way the authors dealt with the issue of a player coming out. Of being gay in a professional sport. It will happen at some point, I hope soon. I also have hope that in real life the player is allowed to live and love as he chooses. He will be a brave, brave person. And this world needs brave people.

I received an ARC in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Amanda says**

This is really good and give me all the feels. We are back with the Railers and the team is dealing with Ten and Jared wanting to come out. In come Layton, the social media/crisis manager, a guy with a closet full of skeletons. Layton didn't like jocks at all and as the story progress, we finally found out where his wariness came from and it was a heartbreaking to learn about it.

Adler is the new player being traded to Railers and he was not much of an important figure in the last book, thus I think this work pretty well as standalone. At first glance, Adler seems like a typical jock with a foul mouth and a total jerk. Hence, Layton didn't like him at all. But in Adler's case, he seems delusion about his behavior. Okay, he did know he acted like an idiot in front of the hot guy, but he can't control himself. I totally digging the whole 'enemies to lovers' vibe we have here with Layton totally not giving any chance to Adler.

Adler was definitely my favorite part of the story. Although he didn't come from a great family and he had lousy parents, but deep down he still had the biggest heart. He is relentless in pursuing Layton, despite all the brush off. Adler had all the best intention to win him over, although most of his tactics doesn't really work, but I'm definitely having a good laugh at his effort. Or maybe it did work because Layton finally gave in after a long fight.

As hinted, Layton didn't have the best experience with men especially a jock like Adler, but with time and commitment, Adler proves him wrong and I'm just swoon over with the way Adler show his love to Layton.

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### **ButtonsMom2003 says**

I love this book!

First Season is the second book in the Harrisburg Railers series co-authored by RJ Scott and V.L. Locey. You don't need to have read book one to enjoy this one but you should because it's so good.

Layton Foxx is hired by the Railers hockey team to help manage any fallout from two members of the team (a player and a coach, Ten and Jared from book one) coming out as a couple. He's confident in his ability to do his job by using social media and working with the other players on how to handle this situation. He's not prepared to be so attracted to a player on the team. A player who at first seems to be a bit of a jerk with no filter for what comes out of his mouth.

Adler Lockhart can't help his attraction to the spin-doctor the team has hired. He knows that he doesn't filter what comes out of his mouth the way he should. He resents that Layton assumes he's homophobic and demanded that he attend sensitivity training, so he soon lets him know that he's gay, too.

Wow, this book kept me glued to my e-reader from the moment I started it until I finished. Layton has a lot of baggage and big, tough jocks are something he usually avoids. As he and Adler grow closer he knows that his secret must come out.

I loved everything about this story. Adler buys Layton gifts and this makes Layton uncomfortable; but Adler doesn't know any other way to show he cares. His parents were absent from his life while he was growing up; they even want him to call them by their first names. Adler knows he has to go slow to convince Layton that he's serious about him and so he doesn't scare him off.

The chemistry between these two is really good. The writing of these two co-authors is even better/smoothier in this book than it was in book one. My emotions were all over the place reading this one. There were moments that brought tears but there were also light-hearted times that helped balance things out. And, of course, there is an HEA. I am so looking forward to reading more books in this series!

\*\*\* Release day review will post to Xtreme-Delusions on September 27\*\*\*

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### **Carra says**



Okay, I've got say...Adler was a trip. His thought pattern and the way his mind would race from one thing to the next made him seem younger than he was, and most of the time it came across as adorable, though when his thoughts reaffirmed his separate upbringing from his parents it increased my sympathy for him quite a bit. His lack of a brain-to-mouth filter made for some great lines, some of which had me laughing out loud. Adler edged out Layton by just a tiny bit for my favorite in this story.

Layton, with the darkness he experienced in his past, was one that I wanted to give a giant, never-ending hug and let him know he was safe. I loved that Adler was able to understand the subtle cues Layton gave to show his uneasiness in certain situations, and that Adler would immediately adapt to make Layton more comfortable. It was a classic show of how the two of them complemented each other.

We get to see plenty of Tennant and Jared from book one of the series as parts of their story continued to play out, and also the other team members like Stan (Stan is just AWESOME) who were introduced in Changing Lines. There's also some establishment of what's to come as the series progresses, which for me was a tease that has me really wanting the next book ASAP.

First Season was a great 4.5-star read for me, and I do highly recommend it (along with the first book) to M/M romance fans, and if you love hockey romance...even better! While you could probably read it as a standalone, I would strongly recommend reading Changing Lines first—it will definitely increase your enjoyment of First Season to get Tennant and Jared's backstory. This book is for readers 18+ for adult language and sexual content, as well as references to an event in Layton's past that may be disturbing for some readers.

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## **Christelle says**

**\*\*3.5 stars\*\***

A sport romance with hockey players from an author I enjoy : this is the 2nd book for this series. After Tennant and Jared's story and their decision to go public about their relationship, it's time to get to know Layton and Adler, two new additions to the hockey team, Layton as PR consultant and Adler as a new player transfer.

The author gives us two lovable characters : Adler with no filter (I admit : one of his jokes made me laugh hard) but so in need to be accepted and loved and Layton, burned from a traumatic event from his past, and with knots in his stomach when faced with "big guys".

This is a slow, sweet, fun and a bit steamy dance, Adler so determined to win Layton's love and Layton slowly putting down the walls surrounding his heart.

Nothing "big" but exactly the kind of read that ends up satisfying. Not sure I want to read book3, but book4 is definitely one of my next reads.

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## **Cadiva says**

**I totally fell in love with this pair**

Adler and his lack of filter and ability to blurt out the first thing that comes into his head totally stole the show in this second offering from RJ Scott and VL Locey.

He truly was a wonderful character and perfectly suited to be the one who managed to break through Layton's much needed walls. Layton himself, oh how I wanted to hug him, polished and professional on the outside but still suffering from a truly horrific incident in his past.

Together they created a sweet and tender romance which was firmly rooted in emotions as much as it was in getting off. They never progress past frotting and mutual blow jobs and I have to say, I'm glad. Given Layton's past, it would have been a serious case of magic dick and something wholly out of keeping with the narrative.

I do believe they'd eventually get there though, Adler has an innate ability to work through Layton's fears, demonstrating kindness and love.

There's a wee glimpse into Ten and Mads' coming out from the other side and plot bunnies firmly out in place for book three.

Plus we still get on page hockey talk, great in a sports book to actually read some game play, and the cover is fabulous.

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### **Cammy Kelley says**

What a heartwarming love story! The Rainers hire a PR guru, Layton, to ready the players for any backlash involved in the coach and their teammate coming out. Adler, a rich boy, with no filter is Layton's worse nightmare. These two have backgrounds that vastly differ, which seems to draw them close quickly.

Adler helps Layton deal with past hurts and trauma, while Layton and his family show Adler what it's like to be included and loved by a big family.

Highly recommended, I can't wait for the next installment in this series!

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### **Jess A Jaye says**

That feeling when from the first chapter you know you're going to love the next book in a series as much as you did the first book, maybe even more.

As much as I have no interest in sport in real life I'm liking them in my reading more and more. I especially enjoy those sports we don't really have at home like baseball and ice hockey. I think its because they seem that much more exotic and also tap into my love of US culture.

What I also like about sports books is the fact that there is a whole host of side characters some of who are waiting in the wings for their HEA.

After Ten and Jared decide to come out as a couple after being a couple in book 1 the Raiders team management decide they need to hire a social media/PR guru to help them deal with what it means to have an openly gay player. And that's where Layton comes in.

Oh Layton! You know pretty early on that he's experienced some trauma in his past and when you discover

the truth it's brutal. It takes a lot of him to trust and open up to Alder.

Alder is a big guy with a big heart. He constantly says the wrong thing and puts his foot in it. His inner monologue is adorable and made me LOL at times. But deep down all he wants is to be loved. And boy does he deserve to be loved. Other than his best friend and his parents Alder has never had a family as his parents have only treated him with cold indifference.

Seeing Alder get the love and relationship he so desperately craves and Layton to trust and begin to heal will hit you in the feels.

First Season is another fantastic collaboration between RJ Scott & VL Locey, I only wish it was longer. I can't wait to see what else RJ & VL have up their hockey jersey shelves for the rest of the Raiders team.

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