

wonder under summer skies

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/75533861) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/75533861>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Heated Rivalry (TV) , Game Changers Series - Rachel Reid
Relationship:	Shane Hollander/Ilya Rozanov
Characters:	Shane Hollander , Ilya Rozanov
Additional Tags:	Fluff , Domestic Fluff , Vacation , Established Relationship , Humor , Anxiety , even though they're blissfully in love anxiety waits for no one i fear
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2025-12-15 Words: 4,738 Chapters: 1/1

wonder under summer skies

by [bluerosebouquet](#)

Summary

“Do you really need all these pins?” Shane asked, watching Ilya carefully select the fourth box back in the row, which apparently gave him more luck, “You’ve already gotten like five boxes.”

“But I want the dog,” Ilya said, looking at Shane as though he was the one who had lost his mind.

“You got a dog!”

“No, I want this dog,” he tapped the box impatiently, “What is his name?”

“Pluto,” Shane said automatically, “He was my favorite as a kid.”

“See? That is one I want.”

Notes

And if I tell you this entire tooth-rotting thing was born because my friend was in Disney and we couldn't stop talking about Hollanov? And I ended up writing little drabbles in our instagram dms? No one judge me for that please.

Also I have never been to Disneyland and am not a Disney adult, but I do inexplicably get a lot of tiktoks from Disney influencers so this is all my best guess from those videos lmao.

Same with Sequoia National Park, although I would LOVE to go there.

Timeline wise - this is canon divergent from the books; I just felt like kinda making up my own background for them in this one!

Anyway, love them hugely, and, as my beloved Elena says, they deserve sunshine <3

Title comes from [this song](#)

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

California was scorching.

Shane had been here a few times over the years, but never in the height of summer. The sun beat down on his shoulders, burning the skin of his neck and his arms as he squeezed between the hordes of people crowding the main street.

It was a little overwhelming. The noise, the heat, the crowds of people, Shane was happy to be here, sure, but he still had that little knot of anxiety in his chest.

“You okay?” Ilya’s deep voice broke into his thoughts, and Shane looked over at him, smiling slightly.

He really looked unfairly good. His skin turned golden in the sun, his arms exposed in his black tank top, his curls hidden in a Raiders baseball cap, and his hand skimming along Shane’s lower back every so often, reminding him to stay grounded.

“Yeah, just- It’s hot, isn’t it?”

He couldn’t see Ilya’s eyes behind his sunglasses, but he felt the pressure on his back, steering him away from the crowds of families to one of the many stores lining the street. They stepped inside, immediately hit in the face with a blast of cool air, and Shane shivered at the change in temperature.

“Better?” Ilya asked him, taking off his sunglasses, and looking around the place.

If you had been in one store in Disneyland, you had been in all of them. Shelves stacked with bright merchandise as high as the ceiling, and displays organized by movie in the center, making the space nearly cramped with how much *stuff* there was in the place.

The novelty of these stores had not worn off for Ilya, and he pulled Shane forward by the hand, towards several towering shelves of boxes.

“Look at these,” Ilya looked up at them, taking one of the boxes off the rack, “They’re pins.”

“How do you know which one you’re getting?” Shane asked, his head listing to the side as he looked at the hundreds of boxes lining the walls of the store.

“I think you just try to get lucky,” Ilya was turning one of the boxes over in his hands, looking at the pictures on the side, “See? Look here.”

Shane looked over his shoulder. It looked like you could get a total of twelve pins, all of them different animals from Disney movies that he vaguely recognized.

“I’m getting one,” Ilya said seriously, and Shane laughed, even as he took the box and marched right up to the very nice person behind the register, who was probably judged on how wide their smile was by the end of the day, slamming it on the counter and paying with a swipe of his card.

Shane rolled his eyes theatrically as Ilya guided him back outside, back out into the blazing sun, and tore into the box at once. Inside, were two sealed black plastic bags, which Ilya shook at Shane, who evidently was not excited enough about the pins for him, and tore the first one open with his teeth.

The pin fell out onto his palm, face down, and he turned it over eagerly.

“Which one is this?” he cocked his head to the side, glancing up at Shane, who leaned in.

“No idea.”

“Hollander, you’re supposed to help me here,” Ilya complained, but stuffed the unknown pin in his pocket all the same, and tore open the second one.

“That’s Goofy,” Shane said immediately, “I know that one.”

“I need all of these,” Ilya said tossing the now crushed box into the nearest trash can, “I should go buy more.”

“You absolutely do not need all of these,” Shane chided him, “And you should not go buy more.”

But Ilya didn’t pay him any mind. Throughout the day, he dragged Shane into any store he could find that had pins, buying a box each time, and ripping into it the moment they were back outside.

“Look!” he would exclaim every time he pulled out a new one, “Is one I don’t have yet.”

Shane wanted to make fun of him, but he was so obviously overjoyed by the pins that he couldn’t quite manage it.

“Do you really need all these pins?” Shane asked, watching Ilya carefully select the fourth box back in the row, which apparently gave him more luck, “You’ve already gotten like five boxes.”

“But I want the dog,” Ilya said, looking at Shane as though he was the one who had lost his mind.

“You got a dog!”

“No, I want *this* dog,” he tapped the box impatiently, “What is his name?”

“Pluto,” Shane said automatically, “He was my favorite as a kid.”

“See? That is one I want.”

“Where are you going to put them?”

Ilya shrugged, seeming unconcerned.

“Who cares, I want the Pluto dog.”

Shane sighed. This particular store was packed, and he was starting to feel a little claustrophobic. He looked around, spotting a little drink cart just outside, and some blessed shade next to it. He turned back to Ilya, who was now shaking the boxes, as if that would help him figure out which one had Pluto hiding inside it,

“If I go outside, do you promise not to come out of here with fifty boxes?”

Ilya seemed to consider him, then shrugged.

“Not sure. Depends on if I get Pluto dog.”

“Ugh,” Shane threw up his hands, pretending to be exasperated, “I’ll be outside.”

“Get me a Coke?” Ilya asked, planting a kiss on his cheek, and Shane was proud of himself that he didn’t even look around, see if anyone was watching them.

“If I’m feeling nice,” he sassed, brushing their fingers together as he marched out of the store, and back into the blinding California sun.

He pulled his baseball cap lower over his eyes, and walked over to the cart, buying a bottle of ginger ale for himself, and a bottle of Coke for Ilya. He managed to find an empty picnic table in the shade, and sank down, waiting for Ilya.

It was still strange, to be out in public with him. But California wasn’t Montreal or even Boston, and hardly anyone had looked at them twice in the three days they had been here.

It had been Ilya’s idea. A vacation for just the two of them, a place neither of them had ever been, and somewhere that, secretly, Ilya had always wanted to go. Shane had nearly laughed when he suggested it, until he saw the edge of embarrassment in Ilya’s eyes, and decided to agree wholeheartedly, with the caveat that they go up north to see the Sequoias when they were finished in Anaheim.

He loved spending time with Ilya out in the open, even if it made him anxious every time he saw someone with their phone out, pointing in their direction.

Not that they were a secret anymore.

But still, old habits were hard to shake.

He opened the top of his ginger ale, taking a slow sip, letting the bubbles of the carbonation slide down his throat.

It was cold, a welcome contrast to the heat beating down around him. Fuck, he didn’t know how people lived out here. He started sweating every time he stepped outside. At least, when it got cold, he could put on layers, but there was only so much he could take off.

He knew Ilya would laugh himself stupid if he heard him say that.

Only a moment later, Ilya was sitting down next to him, laden with plastic bags.

“Oh my god,” Shane couldn’t help the exasperated noise that came out of the back of his throat, “How the fuck do you plan on getting all this back to Boston?”

“Some of it will go in your suitcase. I will be there in two weeks.”

Shane smiled at the idea that Ilya was coming to visit him for the rest of the summer before he blinked back into the present. To the bags Ilya had set on the table.

“Don’t distract me,” Shane said, pointing a threatening finger at him, “This is crazy. Are these *all* those pins?”

“Some of them are, but I got something for you too,” Ilya rummaged in the bags, before finally pulling out a pair of Mickey Mouse ears. He held them out to Shane, who took them, turning them over in his hands.

One side of the ears was painted with a bright red crown, and the other, written in pretty red cursive, was the word,

“*Princess?*” Shane looked at him, half incredulous, half annoyed.

“Yes,” Ilya’s smile was wide and so sharp it could cut glass, “Because you are.”

“A princess?”

“Yes, my princess.”

Shane tried to look annoyed or angry, but he couldn’t quite manage to keep the grin off his face.

“Whatever. I’m not wearing them.”

“You don’t have to wear them here,” he waggled his eyebrows, “but later.”

Shane flushed hotter than the California sun.

“We are in a children’s theme park!” he hissed, looking around, mortified.

Ilya looked around too. The area around them was deserted for at least ten feet in every direction.

“There is no one.”

“Still,” he huffed, checking behind him again, “Keep it in your pants, Rozanov.”

Ilya’s smile was fond, and he reached out, his fingers skating gently along the side of Shane’s face. He closed his eyes, leaning into his touch, floating a little at the fact that they got to have this.

Be together, out in the open, not caring if anyone was watching.

“No promises,” he said quietly, and Shane felt his mouth tilt up again.

“Alright,” he pushed him away, not having any interest in a public indecency charge in Disneyland, “What else did you get?”

“I got more pins for me,” he pulled out at least seven more boxes, ignoring Shane’s noise of protestation, “And because I am the greatest person ever, I got something for Pike’s wonderful children. Nothing for Pike.”

Shane laughed.

“What did you get them?”

They spent the next thirty minutes sorting through Ilya’s many purchases, sipping their sodas, and watching the people sinewing all around them.

And if there were cameras in their direction, Shane didn’t pay them any mind.

As the sun set, they wandered through the park, hands brushing as they walked.

“I want that,” Ilya said, pointing to a comically large array of electric blue cotton candy.

“The cotton candy?”

“Yes. I have never had it. I want it,” and without another word, he walked over to the stand, and came back a moment later with a carefully wrapped blue cotton candy in his hands.

“You’ve really never had this?” Shane asked, biting back the quip that he longed to throw at him. That cotton candy was nothing, literally nothing but sugar and food coloring.

“No,” Ilya unwrapped it, grinning at how huge and ridiculous it was, “I always wanted to try it.”

He pulled off a piece, and popped it into his mouth. He grinned.

“That good, huh?” Shane smiled back.

“Is good. Have some.”

Shane shook his head, more content to watch Ilya eat as dusk settled across the park, making it cooler and more bearable to be out with the crowds of people.

Ilya ate the entire thing of cotton candy, and seemed so happy and content that Shane couldn’t even be snarky with him about eating half a pound of dyed sugar.

He caught Shane’s eye, beaming at him,

“Come here,” he pulled Shane towards him, and he tried to dodge him, but it was a halfhearted thing, and Ilya’s kiss was sticky and sweet like the cotton candy that had stained his tongue blue.

Their hands tangled together when he pulled away, and Shane felt that contentedness settle in his chest, like it always did when he was with him.

“We should leave early tomorrow,” he said later that night, when they were walking back to their hotel, “So we can see the park before it gets dark.”

“Okay,” Ilya sounded a little sluggish, almost like he was a little drunk, though they hadn’t had anything to drink the entire trip, “I love you.”

The words slipped so easily out of his mouth, and Shane ducked his head, pulling him closer, the sounds of the park growing distant behind them.

“I love you too,” he paused, knocking into him as they walked, “I’m not wearing those stupid ears though.”

Ilya laughed with his head thrown back, and Shane grinned, thinking to himself that there was nothing on earth more beautiful than him when he laughed like that.

“I have one more box,” Ilya pulled it out of his pocket when they were ensconced in their hotel room, shaking it so the pins inside clacked around.

“How can you possibly have one more?” Shane poked his head from around the bathroom door, staring at Ilya, who was splayed out on the bed, his feet sticking off the end, “I thought you bought every box in the park.”

“Come here, so we can open it together.”

“Why?” Shane moved out of the bathroom obediently, rubbing a towel over his face.

“Because I want to,” Ilya scooted forward, patting the space beside him on the end of the bed, and Shane sank down next to him, leaning into his arm.

Ilya handed him a wrapped pin, and Shane took it wordlessly, watching as he tore the black plastic off his own pin.

“This stupid duck again!” Ilya lamented, tossing the offending pin over to the desk in the corner of the room, “You go.”

“Will you hold it against me if it’s not Pluto?” Shane asked him, looking over into Ilya’s face. He was smiling widely, like nothing in the world could make him happier than having Shane open his sixtieth pin of the day.

“No,” he shook his head, even as his free hand ran up Shane’s thigh, “But if it is Pluto dog...”

He let his sentence trail away delicately, and Shane tried to pretend like he wasn’t blushing at the implications.

“This still feels weird, with where we are and all.”

Ilya pulled back, his mouth hanging slack, like he couldn't believe what he was hearing.

"It did not bother you so much last night, Hollander," he pressed a kiss to the side of his face, "Stop thinking so much and open the fucking pin."

"Fine," Shane shoved the pin through the packaging, and turned it over in his palm, "Holy shit."

"Is Pluto dog!" Ilya said delightedly, "Fuck Hollander, I love you!"

He tackled him onto the bed, peppering his face with kisses as Shane positively giggled and tried, without really trying, to get away.

"Get off me," he said, laughing so hard he couldn't catch his breath, "You're crushing me."

"My good luck charm," Ilya was saying, his voice muffled against Shane's skin, "Got me my Pluto dog."

"Take your Pluto dog," Shane shoved the pin towards him, gasping for air, "You're gonna kill me."

Ilya hopped up, holding the pin in the air like it was the Stanley Cup, and walked over to his bag, tucking it tenderly inside an inner pocket, so it wouldn't get lost.

"My good luck charm," he repeated, turning slowly back to Shane, who could practically see the wheels turning in his head, "Come here."

"Ilya, don't-" Shane started, but Ilya had already done a running leap onto their bed, back on top of Shane, tangling them into a mess of limbs and quiet laughter as the fireworks went off outside their window.

They had rented a car to drive from Anaheim to Sequioa National Park the next day, and Shane had relented and let Ilya rent one of the most conspicuously ostentatious sports cars he could find.

But that didn't mean he wasn't going to complain about it the whole time.

"How are we even supposed to fit our bags in here?" he eyed the neon blue car the moment Ilya pulled up in it, sunglasses on and looking like he was made to live in California.

"Don't complain," he chided him, opening the trunk with a click of the key fob and shouldering his own bag, "We will get there in half the time now."

"You are *not* going to speed," Shane blanched, "I told you you could rent whatever you wanted, not that you could-"

"Relax, Hollander," Ilya took Shane's own bags from him, throwing them in the trunk with his own, and making a show of opening the passenger side door for him, "Come on."

Against his better judgement, Shane clambered into the car, feeling like his knees were behind his ears.

“This car is ridiculous,” he said as Ilya sat down next to him, looking much more at ease than he felt.

“Is not so bad, you’re just boring.”

Shane huffed, immediately on edge as Ilya seemed to floor it, so that he was pushed back into the seat of the car.

“I’m going to kill you,” Shane said through gritted teeth as Ilya smirked next to him, “Slow down!”

“Any slower and I will be stopped, Hollander,” he said, glancing over at him, “Calm down. Will be better when we are on the highway.”

It was not, in fact, better when they were on the highway. Shane still felt like they were going at least a hundred miles per hour over the speed limit, and pressed an imaginary brake every three seconds. Ilya seemed to think this was very funny, and weaved in and out of traffic so that, by the time they parked in front of their Airbnb, Shane nearly fell out of the car and kissed the dirt.

“You’re never driving me anywhere again,” he said shakily.

“Don’t be a baby,” Ilya rolled his eyes, “You said you had code for the keys, what was it?”

“Uh,” Shane scrolled rapidly through his phone. He had never stayed at an AirBNB before, and the whole thing was out of his comfort zone, “Here, it’s 1221.”

“Fitting,” Ilya grinned at him, and Shane flushed, watching him enter the code and snatch the key from the little box.

He stepped back, making another sweeping gesture for Shane to go inside.

“Asshole,” he stepped into the space, looking around, “Okay, it’s nice.”

He had booked the place specifically for the location. It was right next to the entrance to the national park, which meant less driving in that horrible car, and had beautiful views of the forest all around them. It was secluded and peaceful, so the only noises that Shane could hear were the birds and the sound of the wind in the leaves.

To be honest, he hadn’t paid much attention to the cabin itself.

“This place is haunted,” Ilya said the moment he stepped inside.

“It’s not!”

“Yes it is, look at it. It looks like something out of those movies you won’t watch with me.”

Unfortunately, Shane had to admit that he probably had a point. The inside of the place was kitschy and outdated, covered in floral prints that clashed magnificently with the knotty pine that was visible everywhere.

“The location is great,” Shane said after a pause, and Ilya laughed.

“Is fine, as long as there’s a bed.”

Shane stood in the center of the living room as Ilya retrieved their bags from the car. He chewed his lip, hugging himself and staring around.

“Hollander,” Ilya’s voice in his ear made him jump, “Is fine. Look, they even left us a little book of rules.”

He handed Shane a spiral-bound notebook, with a photo of the cabin on the front. He flipped through it, his eyes scanning the pages as Ilya looked over his shoulder.

“Nothing too weird,” he said, glancing over at him. Ilya pressed a kiss into his hair, and Shane leaned into it, unable to help himself.

“Is fine,” he said again, “Is still early, we could go to the park if you wanted.”

“I do,” he was excited, finally going to see the sequoias in person, “It’s a short drive.”

They changed into hiking clothes, Shane cringing at the state of the bedroom, which Ilya called “spooky,” and drove to the central museum for the park.

It was still hot, but the trees provided enough shade that Shane didn’t feel like he was going to melt.

They stopped at the trailhead, each of them carrying a backpack and wearing their respective team hats.

“Ready?” Shane asked him, patting his pockets for his phone.

“Hang on, Ilya said, digging in his own pockets and pulling out something that glinted in the sunlight.

“You brought the pin?” Shane laughed at him, then, as Ilya moved towards him, “What are you doing?”

“You wear it, for luck,” he pinned it onto Shane’s hat carefully, “But if it gets lost, I will cry Hollander.”

“Don’t put that on me-”

But he was already marching off down the trail, leaving Shane hurrying to keep up with him.

The path was wide and crowded, filled with tourists that were taking photos every few feet. Shane kept his eyes up, staring at the canopy of trees, until finally,

“Look!” he pointed down the path, towards a massive pillar of bark and leaves jutting up from the ground.

The tree was so huge it took Shane’s breath away. He stared up at it, surprised at the stinging in the corner of his eyes. it was just so- Beautiful Shane had always wanted to see them in person but it had never felt right going on his own. And now he had someone to go with.

After a while, he looked around for Ilya, seeing him just behind him, his phone raised.

Shane reached out, lacing their fingers together and pulling Ilya forward.

“Thanks for coming with me,” he said, not caring if it sounded stupid. Ilya’s smile was soft as he kissed him gently.

“They are beautiful. Maybe not as exciting as pin hunting, but beautiful.”

“Whatever,” Shane couldn’t stop grinning, his face hurt with it.

They wandered down the trails until nearly dusk, taking photos of each other and laughing.

Ilya bought them sandwiches at the little counter inside the visitor’s center, and drove them back to the little cabin.

“We should have a fire,” Shane suggested, looking at the fire pit set into the backyard, “Have a fire and eat dinner out there.”

“Whatever you want,” Ilya said, watching Shane with such a tender fondness in his face that it made his heart race.

It took them a while to get the fire going, and they argued over the best technique, before finally resorting to a YouTube video that proved Shane’s idea was the best way, and he rubbed it in Ilya’s face for at least ten minutes, until Ilya threw a handful of kindling in his direction.

Finally, after nearly forty-five minutes, they were sitting in lounge chairs by a merrily crackling fire, eating the sandwiches, and enjoying a quiet silence.

“I like it out here,” Ilya said, “Even if you do murder me.”

“If I were going to murder you, I would do it in the alley outside my building, no better place,” Shane smiled at him lazily, feeling full and tired and content, like he could sleep here in this chair, his fingers brushing Ilya’s, “It’s too nice here.”

“Not nice that you don’t want to murder me in a nice place.”

“You’re saying the alley behind my apartment isn’t a nice place?”

“Leads to a nice place,” Ilya sniffed, “But no, the alley itself is not a nice place.”

Shane laughed, so loudly that it echoed in the trees.

Later that night, as the fire died down, Shane got a notification on his phone, breaking him out of a light doze.

“You tagged me in something?” he asked, looking over at Ilya, who was stretched out next to him by the fire pit in his Adirondack chair, sunglasses over his eyes again, even though it was pitch dark all around them.

“Yes, to commemorate.”

“The trip?”

“Yes.”

Smiling slightly, Shane swiped on the notification.

He had expected a series of photos, but it was just one. Ilya must have taken it when Shane hadn’t been paying attention. It was him, turned mostly away from the camera, so he could see only about a quarter of his face. His head was tilted up, and the sequoias were visible in the background of the photo. There was no mistaking the awe and joy in his face.

And on the side of his cap, glinting in the sunlight, was Ilya’s Pluto pin.

Shane couldn’t explain it, but it was evident that the person who had taken the photo loved him down to his very bones.

He looked down at the caption, taking in just two words,

Lucky Charm.

He looked over at Ilya, whose face was still pointed towards the crackling fire pit.

“I love you,” he said quietly, trying not to disturb Ilya’s little bubble. He looked over at him pushing his sunglasses up to the top of his head. He looked almost dopily happy, a wide smile stretching his mouth as he responded,

“I love you too.”

Shane stood up, walking over to him, and cramming himself onto the chair with him, curling in his lap. The plastic of the legs creaked ominously, but he didn’t mind if they both ended up on the ground; he just wanted to be as close to Ilya as possible.

Ilya’s hand carded through his hair, and Shane hummed, burrowing closer to him as his blunt nails scratched his scalp.

“You always turn into a puddle when I do this,” Ilya said, his voice a little muffled against Shane’s hair, “Always have.”

“It feels so good,” he murmured, pressing his lips to Ilya’s collarbone, “You’re good at it.”

“Mmm,” Ilya shifted as Shane’s hands worked lower, down to his sweats.

It was slow work, but it made Shane dizzy all the same.

“We should go inside,” Ilya’s voice was low and sweet like sugar in his mouth, “Unless you want to put on a show.”

“What show did you have in mind?” Shane asked, wiggling his eyebrows in a way that made Ilya snort with laughter.

“You know what show, Hollander,” he ran his knuckles along the seam of Shane’s sweatpants and kissed him, swallowing the moan that caught in the back of his throat, “Come on, and we can put one of those spooky, creepy beds to use.”

Shane crawled off of him carefully, and waiting directly next to his chair as Ilya stood up, stretching languidly.

“Should we-” Shane glanced at the fire, now only embers smoldering in the fire pit, “I don’t want to start a forest fire and be like- Responsible for the destruction of the sequoias.”

Ilya looked over at him, in a half exasperated, half fond sort of way.

“You listen to the American bear too much.”

“What American bear?”

“The one on the billboards,” he adopted a low, growling voice, that shouldn’t have been as attractive as it was, “Only you can prevent forest fires.”

Shane stared at him.

“I think you’re the one listening to this American bear too much. You can go inside, I’ll do it.”

Ilya rolled his eyes, scoffing, before moving into the house. Shane could see him standing in the kitchen, looking down at something. He came back less than a minute later,

“The little book says to just make sure it’s mostly burned out and then to put the lid on,” as if to make his point, he picked up the heavy lid of the fire pit and set it down on top of the remnants of their fire, looking at Shane the entire time.

“You’re an asshole,” Shane said, smiling fondly, drawing closer to him, like a planet orienting itself to its sun.

Ilya grinned at him, pulling him in, kissing him. He tasted like smoke and their sandwiches and so perfectly like Ilya. Shane pulled himself closer, as close as he could, and Ilya walked them back into the house, towards the bedroom.

Shane felt like he might be the happiest he had ever been in his life, even in a definitely haunted Airbnb.

If he was with Ilya, he felt that contentment that he had spent so long thinking just wasn't meant for him. And he was starting to think that maybe, just maybe, it was after all.

End Notes

Using this space to say that, this time last year, I was very afraid of turning a year older and leaving my twenties behind. But this year has been a lot easier in that regard, and I just wanna be a little sappy and say thanks to all of you who've taken the time to read my stuff well...ever really. It's such a labor of love for me, and I appreciate every single one of you <3

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