

ILLYANA AND SHAW BONUS SCENE  
FROM SAVING ILLYANA

“We should go to our room,” Shaw murmurs against my mouth.

“You know, this whole apartment is ours. We don’t have to worry about anyone walking in anymore.” I wrap my leg around him and bring him down on top of me on the couch.

We finally did it. We moved out of the compound and got our own place.

“I love how your brain works.”

“Shaw,” I say, breathlessly.

“Yeah, babe?”

“Hurry up and kiss me again.”

The familiar jingling of our work phone going off cuts into our personal time.

I groan. “It’s our night off.”

“Might be important.” Shaw climbs off the couch and grabs his phone. “Whoa, that’s an understatement.”

“What?” I sit up.

“The president is calling. Not the boss. The *president*.”

I reach for the phone and roll my eyes. “Please, he’s still my uncle.” But even I know this can’t be good. “What’s up, Uncle Tate?”

“We need you.”

“Call the boss.”

“I did. He said to call you. It’s your night off, so I need to do some begging, apparently.”

I sigh. “What do you need?”

“There’s something major going down tonight. We need you to meet with the special ops team at your mother’s house to go over territory and strategy. And don’t think I can’t hear the grumbling in your head over the phone, Illyana.” Uncle Tate: the telepath and pain in my ass.

“Uh-oh, my full name. It’s serious huh?”

“This will probably be the biggest case of your career, kiddo.”

“Can you still call me kiddo when I’m almost twenty-six years old?”

“I can do what I damn well please. I’m the president now. Or haven’t you heard?”

“Yeah, yeah, Mr. President. We’ll be over in an hour.”

“No, you’ll leave your place now.”

Shaw snatches the phone off me. “On our way.” He hangs up and arches an eyebrow. “Move your ass.”

Before I get a chance to get up, the phone rings again.

Shaw throws the phone back at me. “You know who that’ll be.”

“What?” I snap when I answer it.

“Come on, princess. Chop, chop. Stop trying to entice Shaw to be late with your feminine ways. I’m expecting you to be here within twenty.”

“On it, boss.” When I hang up, Shaw’s disappeared. “Where are you?”

He appears in the doorway of our bedroom, changed into his black cargo pants and tight black shirt. “Was it Linc?”

“Of course.”

“He needs to get a girlfriend.”

“He has several,” I point out.

Shaw laughs. “True. But seriously, he’s in his thirties. When is he going to grow up and leave my woman alone?”

“Ah, the biggest mystery of them all. When will Linc grow up? I don’t even think the universe knows that one.”

When I stand, Shaw eyes my sundress I’ve been wearing all day.

“You don’t even have time to change. We’ll take your clothes with us.”

“Weapons?” I ask.

“In the car with the go bag.”

“Let’s do this then.”

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My childhood home is lit up like a Christmas tree when we pull up. It seems every light in the house is on.

The street is packed with cars, but being family, we take the driveway.

“Just how big is this mission?” I ask.

Shaw shrugs. “Must be pretty big if your uncle’s in on it and the AFP want our help.”

“Let’s get this over with then, yeah?” I say.

“Aww, those are the words you said the first time we ever had sex.”

I shove him. “Shut up; I so did not.” Opening the car door, I try to get out, but Shaw grabs my arm and pulls me back in.

He cups my face and brings my mouth to his for a brief kiss. “I love you, Illy. Always have. Always will.”

“Let’s hope this meeting’s short, so we can go back to what we were doing before we got the call.”

He grins and releases me.

We walk to the front door hand in hand, but when we cross the threshold, there’s no one in sight.

“Where is everyone?” Panic starts to set in. Everyone should be in the living room. That’s where any important meeting happens in this house.

Shaw shrugs, as if there’s no reason to worry, and leads me down the hallway to the doors to the backyard.

As soon as he slides the door open, the backyard lights up, and a million people scream “Surprise!”

I grip onto Shaw’s hand tight and jump back which makes him chuckle.

Dragging me onto the back porch in front of every single person I know, he leans in and whispers, “Happy anniversary.”

I step away from him. “It’s not our anniversary. We got together at the end of summer.”

He grins. “Not that anniversary, babe.”

Before I can think, or even catch my breath, Shaw’s lowering himself to one knee.

“Oh, holy fuck no.”

Everyone laughs.

“Language, princess!” Linc calls out from somewhere in the large crowd. “There are kids here!”

I give him a mock salute that turns into the finger.

More laughter.

Shaw grips my hand and clears his throat. “Ten years ago today, you literally fell into my life. Linc dropped you into my lap when he shoved you into our van. You, of course, didn’t notice me. You were too busy freaking out at the fact we’d kidnapped you.”

I lean down slightly and whisper, “This isn’t the most romantic proposal I’ve heard.”

He laughs. “We had a weird start—”

“The weirdest.”

“But we’ve accomplished all the shit we wrote down on that piece of paper nine years ago, and you always said that once that list was complete, we’d fulfil the last goal. Get married and have a happily ever after. And even though we’ll still have a happily ever after whether we get married or not, after ten years, I think we’re both ready to take that step.”

The list is something we wrote when I graduated high school. It was stupid stuff mainly. Like take a holiday up north, kiss under a waterfall, pull an all-nighter ... a long list of stupid adolescent crap that made us into the adults we are today.

Everything on the list was an experience my parents said we should have before we became serious.

One of them, we turned into a training op. The team was split up into groups of two, we were dropped in the middle of nowhere, and we had to find our way back. The couple who got back first won.

What started out as a competition, turned into three days of camping under the stars with Shaw. We laughed, we fought, and we came in last. But we didn’t care. The experience brought us closer together in more ways than one.

“Illyana Persephone Daniels-Harrison, *Ace*, will you be my wife?”

With tears in my eyes, I can’t bring myself to croak out a yes. I nod and wipe my nose instead.

“Snot makes a romantic answer to match my romantic proposal,” Shaw says dryly.

“Hey, I’m pretty sure you just proposed to me using the word shit.”

He grins. “Yeah, I did.” He stands and takes my face in my hands. “So, how about it?”

Now that I’ve had a chance to calm my heart and wet my dry mouth, I give him my proper answer. “Took you long enough.”

He shakes his head with a laugh and brings me in for a kiss.

The clapping and cheering doesn’t even deter us.

When he comes up for air, there’s nothing but love and adoration in his eyes. “Welcome to your engagement party.”

“*Our* engagement party.”

“Let’s go, future Mrs. Mackenzie.” He starts to drag me towards the stairs, but I pause.

“If you think for one minute I’m taking on that ridiculous tradition, you’re crazy. I’m a Harrison and always will be.”

“It starts already,” Shaw grumbles.

“It never stops either,” Dad says from the bottom of the porch steps. “Allira’s still technically a Daniels.”

Shaw holds out his arm and gestures to the backyard. "Beer awaits."

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"Okay, okay, okay, okay," Mum calls out over the crowd. "Everyone take a seat. We'll get speeches out of the way before us old folk take the grandkids for the night and the rest of you can party on."

Shaw and I sit at one of the tables set up in the yard. Mum and Dad have hired caterers and decorators, and I don't think there's a single tree in the backyard that fairy lights haven't thrown up on.

My fiancé's arms wrap around me. "Things are about to get awkward, aren't they?" he asks in my ear.

"Oh, you have no idea."

"After ten years, I think I have a fairly good idea."

"I know you two are slower," Mum says to Nuka and Sasha who are waddling over to our table, "but move those pregnant butts already."

"I swear this is the last one," Nuka says, rubbing her giant belly as she takes her seat next to her husband.

Sasha scoffs. "That's what you said last time."

Brett pulls Nuka into his side. "We're going to keep going until we get a boy."

"Here's hoping I'm growing a penis then," Nuka says.

Shaw and I burst out laughing and are met with four glares.

"Just wait," William says. "You'll have your turn. You'll be fighting over baby names before you know it."

Shaw and I both screw up our faces. "Eh," we say in unison and laugh again.

"Besides, names are easy," I say. "If it's a boy, Harrison Mackenzie. If it's a girl, Mackenzie Harrison. Mac for short."

"I like that idea," Shaw murmurs.

Mum calls for the crowd's attention again. "Now. Anyone who's known this family or been in this family for long enough will know that we're not exactly conventional. So here we are, welcoming yet another into the ranks."

I nudge Shaw. "Don't worry, I'll teach you the secret handshake later."

“Heard that, Illyana,” Mum singsongs.

Everyone turns to look at me, but I shrug them off.

“It’s no secret I wasn’t Zephyr’s biggest fan when he first came into our lives. He was the boy who stole our daughter away from us. And not just her heart. He literally stole her away from us and then pretended to kill her.”

“She makes it sound so much worse than it is,” I yell out.

Everyone laughs.

“But Jayce and I can say ... we were wrong. Zephyr is Illyana’s other half. Anyone who’s spent any time with them can see that. But that didn’t stop us from making them come up with that stupid list when they were eighteen.” She laughs. “They’ve always had an intense and strong connection, and all we were doing was trying to deter them from get married fresh out of high school. We didn’t think they’d take it seriously and spend almost ten years trying to get the damn thing done.”

I smile, not because Mum and Dad think they tricked us into postponing getting married until we were older, but because that list was the best thing Shaw and I ever did. It was a silly list, but we gained experiences from each item, we learnt from all of them, and we became a stronger couple because of it. Now, when we look back, we’re not going to wish we’d done stupid or crazy things before we settled down with a family. We’ve always known we’d get to this point, so we figured there was no rush in getting here.

Mum finishes her speech by officially welcoming Shaw into the family, even though he’s already been a part of it for ten years now.

Dad’s up next.

“When Illyana first disappeared, none of us knew what to think. We didn’t even know how to move past the loss. And when she came back to us, it was as if we were meeting her for the first time. She was only gone six months, but in that short time, she became a woman. She was no longer my little girl who I tucked in at night and wished her sweet dreams. She came out the other side a strong, independent woman who happened to be in love with a boy named Shaw. Or ... Zeph as we know him. She refused to tell us about him, but one night, I went into Illy’s room and demanded she tell me everything. Her mum didn’t know about this, and until this day, I’ve never uttered a single word of that conversation.”

“Oh, God,” I say. “He’s going to do it, isn’t he?”

“Do what?” Shaw asks.

“Just wait.”

“She basically told me to get lost,” Dad says with a laugh. “You all know her, so you know that’s definitely paraphrasing her words. But when I told her whatever she said would never leave that room, she opened up to me. She asked me why our family was always going to be a target. I said we live in a world where people have different beliefs, opinions, and ideologies. There were always bound to be those who would lash out at others who didn’t stand for what they did. I basically told her ‘Shit happens. Deal with it.’”

“Great parenting there, Jayce,” Mum says.

“Illy said I’d painted her world in a shitty grey colour, and I told her she needed to find her light to make her world colourful.”

I try not to get choked up at the memory of Dad sitting on the edge of my bed, trying so hard to listen to me while tamping down his daddy instincts.

“After mumbling how lame I was, she looked at me in a way that said she’d already found it. Zeph coloured her world. As a father, the last thing you want to hear your teenage daughter say is she’d already found the man she wanted to marry. I told her ... What did I tell you, hon?”

I clear my throat. “You said you were always going to hate the boy who stole my heart, but if he was worthy, you wouldn’t break his legs.”

Everyone laughs.

“And I meant every word,” he says threateningly.

“Thanks, Dad, but I’m pretty sure I’d prefer Shaw’s legs to remain intact.”

“Just say the word, and I can fix that for you,” Dad says and holds up his glass for a toast. “To Zephyr’s intact bones.”

As everyone takes their drink, Shaw leans into me. “That wasn’t as bad as I was expecting.”

## I L L Y A N A   A N D   S H A W S   L I S T

- holiday
- kiss under a waterfall

- pull an all-nighter
- abseil off Mt. Lookout
- camping treasure hunt
- dance under the stars
- ride a horse
- eat as many pancakes in three-minutes as you can. Loser does the dishes. The winner will probably throw up
- paintball war
- ~~watch Line fall in love~~ witness a miracle (more likely)
- fall in love with each other over and over again