

## Chapter 109 - Submitting to My Best Friend's Dad by Scarlett Rossi

James.

Throughout my entire life, I thought I had known pain. However, when I saw my daughter die before my eyes, I realized I didn't even know what pain was. The pain of losing a child isn't something that I wish any parent to ever have to go through.

The burning ache of losing my daughter was a feeling that would never be able to go away, a void in my chest that would forever remain empty. She was my pride and joy, my only child, my everything, and even though Becca was pregnant with my child, it was an idea that I still couldn't wrap my head around.

How could I process anything when my sweet Taliana was gone?

"James, I'm so sorry for your loss," Greg, the federal agent who had been working with me, said as he stood at the back of the open ambulance doors.

I was angry with him. He was supposed to have been here. He was supposed to have been my back up, and had he shown up, perhaps my daughter wouldn't be dead. "You promised that you would protect her. Where the f8ck were you?"

He was at a loss for words, lips parted, and a blank expression upon his face. "We did, but there were things that had happened. I'm so sorry, James. I didn't think that this would be the end result."

"You didn't think that he would kill my daughter? Are you kidding me? He would have killed us all, and you were nowhere around. How would you feel if that was your child that you just lost in there?" I screamed in anger, furious about how he could stand there, acting as if he had no fault in any of this.

"Let's get you to the hospital and get you fixed up," he mumbled as the two ambulance drivers came back and finished what they were doing.

I didn't want to go to the hospital, though. I didn't want to live.

"No, wait!" I cried out, trying to break free of the man who attempted to stick me with a needle. "My grandson--where's my grandson?"

My panicked tone caught Greg's attention, and as he glanced over his shoulder, I followed his gaze to see the nanny walking towards Becca, who stood in shock with Neal's arm around her shoulders. "According to the female over there, Taliana had written a will. The woman gave her that will, which clearly states that the child must be placed in Becca's custody."

Hearing this news broke my heart. My own daughter had decided that my grandson would be in the better care of her friend Becca than with me. Not that I really could blame her. I was more than likely still going to jail after everything that had happened.

I didn't even know if I could make it to my daughter's funeral.

As the tears poured down my face and my heart shattered into a million pieces. I watched the doors to the ambulance close, leaving me to the dim lighting of the truck and a million thoughts that swirled through my mind.

Sergei was dead and no longer a threat to my family.

But my life was completely destroyed.

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Neal.

The moment that I had walked into the house and had seen Becca in the position she was in, I didn't hesitate to fire the gun and kill the man who held her hostage. I knew who he was.

Sergei was a very well-known criminal back in my home country, and through everything that I had been through growing up, there was no way I'd let him take her from me.

The problem was, I didn't expect for James's daughter to knock the man out of the way and in return take the first bullet I had meant for him.

The shock of killing her haunted me. I hadn't meant for her to get caught in the crossfire, but the stupid girl thought herself heroic, and in the end, lost her life.

Allegra had told me to keep my mouth closed. To not say anything and leave the news for Becca to another day. She was right as usual, because seeing the pain in Becca's eyes was more than I could handle. She was broken, and she needed someone to be strong for her.

Considering she had lost not only Tally, but James as well... I couldn't let her lose me, too. I just hoped she would forgive me one day for what I had done.

"She's gone," Becca said softly, her whispered tone catching my attention as I wrapped my arm around her shoulder and pulled her in close to me.

"Are you Rebecca?" Both Becca and I gazed at the woman, who came walking forward with a baby in her arms and a grim expression on her face.

"Oh, my goodness, is this him?" Becca choked back a sob as she held her arms out to the woman, wanting to take the baby from her.

"Yes," the woman said softly, handing over the child. "I'm Sara, and this is Tally's son. She left this document for you as well. It's her will that gives you the legal rights to care for the child."

I wasn't sure what the hell was going on or what she meant, and as Becca gazed down at the baby, I knew that whatever it was, those questions would have to wait until later.

"Becca, I know that you're hurting right now, but we really need to move you away from the crime scene," I explained to her, watching as she hesitated for a moment before slowly nodding her head.

Glancing over my shoulder at my sister standing by a black sedan, I nodded. I slowly turned Becca towards the car as Allegra opened the door for Becca to climb in.

"Wait," Becca said quickly as she turned back to the nanny. "Come with us."

"Come with you?" Sara gasped as she stared at me with aging green eyes and graying hair.

"Yes. I'm going to need help because I don't know how to do any of this, and with everything going on....." Becca's words died off as she took a deep breath and met the woman's eyes again. "I will pay you. I don't want you to feel like you won't get paid. I know you didn't ask for any of this, but I could really use your help."

The woman seemed overjoyed by the idea of being able to stay a part of the child's life and also keep her employment. "Of course, miss. If you give me just a moment, I will go upstairs and collect our things."

It was an open crime scene, and I didn't understand how that would be possible. However, the man they called Greg, who seemed to be in charge of this whole thing, walked up next to Sara, placing his hand on her shoulder. "Come on, I'll walk you inside so you can get what you need."

As the two of them disappeared, I again turned my attention to Becca, who took her seat in the back of the car, cradling the child in her arms.

I had imagined seeing her like this for so long, and now that it was here, I wish it was under different circumstances. I didn't want my first image of seeing her with a child to be at a crime scene, but then fate has a funny way of making things happen.

"Everything's going to be okay, Becca. I promise."

Gazing up at me with red-rimmed eyes, she smiled. "She knew this was going to happen."

"What do you mean?"

"Tally, she knew this was going to happen," she replied softly. "Tally never planned ahead for anything in her life, but she made the will just a few days ago. It was like she knew she was going to die."

I wasn't expecting for Becca to tell me this, and honestly thinking about it had me considering if that were possible. It could have been mere coincidence that Tally had made the will just in case, but then again, if she had suspicions, maybe she did know.

As far as I knew, she wasn't part of our world, as James had made sure to keep her from it, but she was smarter than she had let people believe, and she had kept her mother away for a reason. So there was no telling what Tally had known.

Thinking that nothing else could get worse, I quickly found that I was wrong as I heard screaming and crying coming from the other side of the long driveway. Closing the car door so that it wouldn't distract Becca, I turned my attention towards my sister, who narrowed her brows and looked in that direction of the screaming as well.

Then, we saw Tally's mother, Allison, come running forth, dropping to the ground, causing all kinds of hysterics over everything that had happened, over losing her daughter. A daughter who she put in this position by working with Sergie.

"No! Where is she?" Allison screamed over and over. "My baby! My baby!"

At the same time this was happening, Sara, the nanny, came outside from the house carrying two large bags. Her eyes met Allison's and as they did, Allison got to her feet and ran towards the woman. "Where is my grandchild? Where is he?"

Sara looked terrified, and as Greg exited the house with two large suitcases, he gestured to two officers to detain Allison. Sara, however, didn't know what to do. "I'm sorry, ma'am, he is with Miss Becca. He is safe."

"What?!" Allison screamed as she looked towards where Allegra and I were standing next to the car. "Get him away from the bitch! This is all her fault!"

Attempting to break free from the men, she managed for a moment to run towards the car only to be met by my angry glare. "If you come near Becca, you will regret ever doing so."

Greg yelled at his officers to get Allison, but as she stared at me, I saw the hatred that brewed inside her. "I'm his grandmother. I have my rights!"

"Not in the state of Florida. There is no such thing as grandparent rights, and Tally had a will that gives Becca custody of the child."

"No! I'll kill that bitch! She ruined everything!"

"Mrs. Valentino, you're under arrest for conspiracy to commit murder." The officer said as he and another man arrested Allison where she stood in front of me. It was nice to see the woman getting what she deserved, but to know what it cost for it to happen wasn't something anyone wanted.

Allison went kicking and screaming as they dragged her towards a patrol car. Her screams of profanity and pain over losing her daughter were heartbreaking. However, she had no one to blame but herself.

"The bags are loaded." Allegra finally said as she placed her hand on my arm. I had been so lost in thought, I hadn't noticed the car had been loaded, and Sara had climbed into the back of the car with Becca.

"What do we do now?" I asked her softly, trying to manage my emotions as I remained neutral for everyone's sake.

"We go back to my house and try to relax after everything. It's going to take time to fix things, Neal, but in the end, everything will be okay," Allegra said.

I wanted to believe my sister, but honestly, I wasn't sure if I did.

So much pain had been caused today, and through it all, I was the reason why.