

Chapter 111 - Submitting to My Best Friend's Dad by Scarlett Rossi

Becca.

A week had passed since my grieving had begun. The moment that I had lost Tally, I thought the pain couldn't get worse, but later on, when I found out that I had also lost James, I completely shattered.

Everything I once imagined was slowly fading away, and even though I had Neal by my side, I couldn't help but wonder how long it would be before I lost him.

Staring at myself in the mirror, I contemplated how I would get through the day. The black dress that I wore hugged my figure, showing off my protruding bump. It reminded me of James, and with the black veil covering my red-rimmed eyes I tried to hide my emotions.

To think that this was my life was not what I had expected

I still couldn't imagine the fact of James being gone. Yet, the reality didn't have to set in entirely in order for me to succumb to it. "I'll be strong for you," I whispered to myself as I rubbed a slow circle over my stomach. My child was my driving force to press forward.

I was a hollow shell of my former self, but my baby gave me the will to continue.

"Becca, are you almost ready to go?" Allegra said softly from the open doorway.

My eyes cast from the mirror towards her as I nodded. "Let's get this over with, shall we?"

Moving down the hallway, I said my goodbye to Sara who was quietly looking after the baby. He was too young to attend, and I didn't want to run the risk of someone getting him sick or better yet unwanted visitors to be there trying to take him.

Climbing into the car with Allegra and Neal, I tried to let myself fall into a dissociated state so that I would be able to get through the day. Only two days before, I made my rounds to the doctor. They had checked everything and said the baby was perfectly fine, but the doctor was concerned about my mental state.

They had offered to prescribe me medication to help me get through all of this, but I refused. I didn't want to be someone who had to take medication to cope. There was nothing wrong with it, but with the risks of medication, I didn't want to take them for the baby's sake.

I would simply have to put on my big girl panties and deal with it all.

"Everything is going to be okay," Neal said softly next to me in the car, his hand taking mine as he laced his fingers through my own. "I won't leave you."

Glancing at him, I nodded. "I know it will be. One day at a time, remember?"

Neal seemed a little taken back, but nodding his head he smiled. "Correct."

Silence consumed the car until we pulled up to the graveyard, and I saw the massive amount of people who were in attendance. I thought I could do this, but as soon as I stepped out in the humid air, I realized I couldn't.

My feet froze to the ground where I stood, unable to move forward.

"Becca... it's okay," Allegra whispered as she looped her arm through mine. "One step at a time."

James was a very well-known figure within the community of Miami, and with him being gone, more people here turned up than I could have ever imagined. The masses were not something I was ready to take on, but I hadn't been in James' life long enough to dictate that.

I was just another figure paying my respects to the fallen.

Some of the people said kind words to me, knowing that I had been with him. While others didn't know who I was but gave me nasty glares instead because they simply thought that I was here for attention.

I had half expected Allison to be whispering words to the people in attendance, but as I glanced around, I felt the small tug at my hand and saw Neal looking down at me with a smile. "She isn't here."

"Who isn't?"

"Allison." He replied, casting his gaze back towards the crowds. "She's awaiting trial for conspiracy to commit murder."

"What?" I gasped in shock not having heard that bit of information. "When did she get arrested?"

He hesitated for a moment turning his gaze back to mind. "The day of the shooting."

I vaguely remember that, but it was all a blur.

His words hit me like a bucket of cold water, and as we took our places at the side of James's grave, I felt more hollow than I had before. Two elegant black caskets were lined with roses and photos. A father and his daughter being laid to rest side by side.

The priest filled the air with his sermon as we said goodbye to Tally and James. My eyes filled with tears once more as I listened to his beautiful words. I had been able to keep myself together pretty well up until this point, but the moment they started to lower their caskets I fell apart.

How was I supposed to get through this?

How was Tally's child supposed to grow up without his mother and without his grandfather?

"Are you Rebecca?" a male voice said, as people started filing away. The voice caught my attention, bringing me out of my thoughts, and turning to my left, I saw the gentleman standing in his three-piece suit with dark-framed glasses on his face.

I didn't know who he was, and before I could speak, Neal stepped up to offer his hand and ask him who he was. "I don't think that we've met. I'm Neal. Is there something that I can help you with?"

The man took a moment, glancing at Neal before glancing back at me. "I'm Mr. Shavers, James Valentino's solicitor. I have business affairs to conduct with Rebecca in regards to Mr. Valentino's will."

"Sir, we just lowered him and his daughter into the ground and Becca is grieving. Is this really the time and place to take care of all of this?"

I knew that Neal was looking out for me, and as Allegra held me tight against her, I let a heavy breath escape me and shook my head. I couldn't have him constantly running interference for me. I couldn't allow them to constantly try to coddle me like I was a child. I was an adult, and I needed to take care of business.

No matter how f*cking hard it was.

"It's fine," I said firmly as I glanced at Neal. "It's fine."

"Are you sure?" he asked me softly, unsure that I should be doing this now.

"I'm sure," I replied as I turned to the solicitor before me. "If we could take these affairs somewhere else, I'd greatly appreciate it."

Mr. Shavers nodded his head as he gestured for us to head towards the vehicles. "There's a restaurant actually not too far from here, one that I visit often with clients. It has a private room, and we can enjoy something to eat while we discuss everything."

I didn't bother to argue with him. Instead, I nodded in agreement and followed behind as Allegra and Neal came in at my rear. There was no point in fighting what would eventually happen anyway.

Twenty minutes later, I found myself sitting across the table from James' solicitor. I honestly didn't have it in me to eat, but I knew that I had to for the baby.

"While we're waiting on the food, why don't we go ahead and get down to business? Mr. Shavers, I am sure that you have things you need to do with your day, as I have things I need to do with mine."

"Of course, Becca, I have the will right here." I was slightly surprised that no one else was going to be present for this.

"Mr Shavers, is there nobody else that needs to be present? I mean, usually there are tons of people who are present for this kind of thing."

His eyes met mine as he pulled out the documents he needed, "I'm afraid not. You are the only one that this pertains to."

"Not even his ex-wife, Allison? Won't she be able to contest this?"

"No, she will not. This was done so that it was uncontestable, and anybody who did contest the will would still receive nothing," he explained, causing me to glance at Neal and Allegra, who both seemed just as confused as I was.

"I see," I muttered. "Please continue."

I watched him intently as he flipped through the papers in his hands. "It says here that before his death, James did go ahead and make changes to the will that he already had in place. When it comes to the entirety of James's money, that is both in stocks and bank accounts... he has left it all to you."

"What?" I gasped with an edge of confusion. "What do you mean he left it to me? How much money is that?"

"It would seem that from those financial aspects, the total came to about eleven million."

"Holy shit. That's way too much money. There has to be a mistake?" I whispered trying to wrap my head around what he was saying. "It has to be—"

"I'm sure it isn't. Shall I continue?" Mr. Shavers added, staring at me with concern.

"It's okay... I'm sorry."

"It's all right. I can see this is hard for you to go through," he replied with a kind smile.

"It honestly is harder than one could imagine," I added as his smile fell, and his eyes went back to the paper in his hands.

"When it comes to the question of Mr. James Valentino's estates which total ten... those have also been left to you. Except the New York location... That you are the executor of."

"What do you mean?" I questioned not understanding why I would be the executor.

"That property has actually been left to his grandson. However, since you are the executor of those decisions, that would be left up to you."

So other people benefited from the will. I wasn't quite sure why he had left that apartment specifically to his grandson, but I would ensure that if that is what James wanted, it would happen. "That's fine. Continue, please."

"As far as Valentino Imports," Mr. Shaver sighed, "James left this business to you under one condition. He wants you to sell the industry, completely dissolve it, and keep every penny you make off it. He has left a note here saying, Neal is to help you accomplish this."

It was clear that James wanted his business completely gone. It had been nothing but a pain from the moment that it started, with so much blood that

had been spilled over it. James didn't want it to be any more than it was, and I agreed with him.

"That's fine," I replied, squaring my shoulders. "The company needs to be destroyed."

I wasn't quite sure what I would do with everything I had just inherited, but I would make sure that both James's child and Tally's son would be forever taken care of, never having to want for anything.

"Is there anything else that I need to know?" I asked softly, trying to keep myself from breaking into tears.

Taking a moment, the man looked through the paperwork and nodded his head slowly. "Actually yes, there is... it seems he has left three letters. One for each of you."