

Chapter 112 - Submitting to My Best Friend's Dad by Scarlett Rossi

James.

What do you do when everything you have ever known has been taken from you?

Do you shut yourself away, and pretend not to care? Is there a place that you can go mentally to help heal the internal heartache that makes you feel like you're on the verge of death? So many times I had watched others around me suffer, but never was able to understand the suffering because I had never been part of it.

At least until now.

"Are you ready to go?" Greg called out from the open hospital room. The private room in one of their facilities had given me the time to heal while the rest of the world thought I was dead.

"Yeah," I replied as I shoved the last of my things into a duffel bag.

Two weeks ago my daughter died, and from what Greg and the rest of his department told the world... I had died too.

I wasn't going to have to go to jail due to everything that happened, but I wasn't going to have to go into protection. The way that Greg broke it down to me was that staying part of Becca's or the children's lives would only put them in danger. That if I loved them, I would let them move on.

There was no way that I would be able to move on.

I loved Becca too much and the children... she was pregnant with my child and raising my grandchild. How could I honestly let her do that alone?

Trying to shake the thoughts from my head, I moved with Greg from the room to god knows where. He hadn't told me much about what was going on, but I knew that this was the only way I could protect her... protect them.

"So, how long will I have to be in this?"

Greg turned to me with confusion raising his brow. "This isn't temporary, James. This is a lifetime change. If you're found, there are a numerous amount of people who would love to kill you to gain favor."

It didn't make sense... none of it made sense.

"They don't even know what happened at the house. We could plan it however we want."

"No," he sighed, shaking his head. "We can't."

Stepping into an elevator, we headed towards a sub-basement, the numbers quickly fading into one another until the elevator stopped and the doors opened. It was clear that the level we had gone into looked more like something from a management department.

The people working here didn't bother to even glance in our direction as we passed glass office after glass office until Greg finally stopped us at a corner office stepping inside. "I'm here to pick up Valentino's paperwork."

The older dark-haired woman glanced up between her thick-framed glasses in the middle of typing and sighed. "Of course, you are, Mr. Valentino, from what I heard, you got yourself in some trouble,"

Groaning with irritation, I let a heavy breath escape me as I glanced to Greg. "Is she being serious right now?"

Greg did nothing but shrug his shoulders with a smile. "I'd answer her."

What was I fucking two? I had to answer to mommy once again.

With irritation, I turned to the woman and pushed a fake smile upon my face. "Yes, I did. Can you help with that?"

"Of course, I can," she replied as her frown turned into a smile of pleasure. "I have a packet here for you, James. It contains your new IDs, new place of residence, car, insurance... basically everything you're ever going to need. It's there."

"So basically, you're recreating the entire person of who I am?" I asked her with a very dumbfounded expression, tired of the bullshitting with her, wanting nothing more than to go back to the life that I had.

"Yes, Mr. Valentino, your entire life is gone. James Valentino is dead, and you are a new man." I was scared to look within the file to see the name that they had picked. And as I opened it, reaching inside to pull out the driver's license, I deadpanned. My eyes lifted to her's, where I watched, amusement dance within her gaze.

Lester Johnson. "You've got to be kidding me. Lester Johnson? That sounds like a freaking pedophile's name. You have to give me a different name."

Laughing, she shook her head. No. "I don't have to give you anything. However, you could always go by Lenny, Lenny Johnson. I mean, it does kind of give that suburban vibe to it. Oh, well... think about it this way...who's going to look at poor Lenny Johnson for doing the things that you did?"

I wasn't sure who this woman was or what her job title was, but it was obvious she was in charge of something important, and as I glared over the paperwork I gave in. Greg, who was holding back the laughter, straightened his shoulders, clearing his throat. "All good?"

"Go f*ck yourself," I snapped at him. "Let's go."

"Perfect. Now, if you will just follow me right this way, Mr. Johnson, I will get you into a car, and we will get you to the airport and on to your next destination."

Gritting my teeth, I shook my head in annoyance as Greg found my reaction amusing. I wasn't sure what was funny about this because I definitely didn't see the humor. "I don't know what you think is so f*cking funny."

"I'm sorry, James. You're right," he muttered quickly.

By the time we made it to the car outside waiting for me, our goodbyes had already been said. As far as I knew, I had a handler that would be waiting for me when I arrived in Japan. "What about Becca, Greg? Is she okay?"

"She is," he said quickly. "She actually just purchased tickets to head overseas."

His news perked my ears. I turned quickly to him as the driver took my bags. "Why.. where is she going?"

He sighed, shrugging his shoulders while shaking his head. "You know I can't tell you that. The less you know, the less it will hurt."

"She's everything to me, Greg," I snapped. "I have to know she is okay. Please... give me at least that."

There was a hesitant pause between us as his eyes searched mine. "Okay. I can't make you any promises, but I will see what I can find out. Keep your phone close."

As a small smile crept over my face, I hugged Greg. "Thank you," I whispered. "I know I can't have them, but knowing they are safe and seeing how they are growing will keep me sane."

By the time that I got into the car, my heart was pounding in my chest, and my mind was a tad bit clearer.

I wouldn't be able to see her the way I wanted, but perhaps others could help me to be part of everything. Perhaps, there was a way for me to make amends and still know she's okay.

I would do anything at this point. Anything to hold her one more time.

Becca.

Time seemed to be passing by fast, and everyday things did indeed get easier. I was still grieving, but at least now I was able to push through the feeling of crying. After meeting with Mr. Shavers, I took a few days to myself and stayed at the beach house I had seen Tally at once before.

Neal hadn't been pleased with my choice to stay at the beach house, but in the end, he respected my choice. As long as I took security with me.

"Of course, Dad," I muttered into the phone. My father had been trying to convince me to come home, and of course, I wasn't budging.

"Becca, you and the baby can just come here. You need time to heal."

"I appreciate the offer, I do," I sighed. "But honestly, I think I need to get out of town and go somewhere... tropical maybe."

My father's low groan was all I needed to hear to know that he wasn't pleased with my choice. "I don't know if I like the idea of you going abroad alone, Becca. You're pregnant, and you shouldn't be traveling like that."

"I'm not even that far along. I'm only in my second trimester." Laughing, I shook my head as I walked around the kitchen island to grab my wallet. I had to go meet Neal at James' company to sign the paperwork, even though that was the last thing I wanted to do.

"Okay, okay," he replied with a lighter sound to his voice. "So, what are you doing today?"

Letting a heavy breath escape me, I looked towards the security guard waiting patiently by the front door. "I'm about to head to James' company to sign the paperwork. Neal was able to find a buyer, and James made it clear that he wanted his company gone."

"It's honestly for the best."

He wasn't wrong there. The company had done nothing but caused issues over the years, from what I was told, and even though other people told me I was foolish to sell it because of the money I would lose—I didn't care.

I didn't care about the money, and even though I inherited a lot... I had no idea what to do with it. "Hey, I have to get going. I have to let Sara know what's going on, and last I checked, she was bathing the baby."

"Okay, sweetie. Call me later this week, okay?"

"I will." I smiled. "I promise."

Hanging up the phone, I took a second to collect my thoughts before making my way up the stairs towards one of the rooms where Sara was currently with the baby. "Hey."

"Oh, Becca. I was just getting the little guy dressed. Is everything okay?" she replied, with a smile as she glanced over her shoulder at me and then back towards the baby lying on the bed.

"I have to go to sign some paperwork.... Are you going to be okay?" I asked softly, feeling guilty about how she was taking care of the baby all the time, and I wasn't helping as much.

"Of course, this is what I do," she smiled. "I have told you before that you don't need to worry or feel bad. This is my job, and you have so much to take care of right now. So let me help you by caring for the child."

Nodding my head, I turned from the room and returned downstairs. No matter what I thought, Sara was right. I did need her right now, and as much as I didn't want to admit it to others.... I needed their help too.