

Chapter 65 - Submitting to My Best Friend's Dad by Scarlett Rossi

Becca.

If I had to describe how the current set of events were going with James, I would have to describe them as odd. Two days had passed with flying colors, and James and I did the things normal couples would do. Shopping, sex, and so on.

Yet, it was different from how it was before. It didn't feel the same, and I wasn't sure why.

Standing in my kitchen, I looked around at my new apartment. Furniture deliveries came late yesterday, and boxes from the movers still lined the walkways. I had a lot to do to get set up, but I was missing one very important aspect.

James Valentino.

Twenty minutes ago, I was shedding tears because he was telling me he had to leave. Twenty minutes ago, I was going through a rush of emotions, trying to reassure myself we could make this work and that everything was going to be okay. Twenty minutes ago, everything changed.

The moment he walked out of my front door after kissing me goodbye, I burst into tears, wanting to run after him, telling him to come back. It was in that specific moment I questioned who the hell I was.

Never in my damn life had a man made me feel that way, and when I slapped myself back into reality and had a 'what the f*ck' kind of moment, I realized I needed help.

"Get your shit together, Becca," I murmured to myself, trying to come to terms with James being gone and me being a strong independent woman who didn't need anyone.

At least that was what I told myself repeatedly.

My phone ringing had me jumping at the chance to answer it. I wasn't sure if I hoped it was James saying he was coming back or perhaps just the need to talk to someone. "Hello?"

"Becca, it's Allegra. How are you doing?"

Her voice brought a smile to my face and tears to my eyes. "It's going okay, I guess. James just left and is heading back south."

"I bet he is after the shit this morning," she laughed.

"What do you mean? Did something happen?" A slowly growing pit in my stomach rose at the sound of Allegra's comment. Was there more going on than I knew?

"Oh, damn babe. Did he not tell you?" Allegra sighed. "You need to check your phone. You have made national news, sweetie."

What the f*ck?! I screamed internally as my breathing came in rapidly and I fumbled with my remote to turn on the television. As soon as the screen turned on, there was a photo of James and I together inside of the convention with smiles on our faces.

The caption read, "Mystery woman snags Millionaire."

"Oh, f*ck me!" I cried out. "It even has that I go to Yale, Allegra. How the hell would they even know?"

"The paparazzi have been after James' love life for a while up in New York. Not long after he and Allison split, James was seeing this woman for like two months. Everyone assumed he had an affair with that woman, and that's why he and Allison got divorced. Of course, we all know the truth, but the paparazzi ate it up, and so did the media."

"So you're f*cking telling me I'm their new target?! I'm not even in New York!" I cried out in disgust. Why the hell had he not told me that before he left this morning?

"Calm down, Becca," Allegra said. "It's not a big deal. In a few days, they will be on to something else, and you won't have to worry about anything."

As wonderful as that sounded, I doubted that being true. Taking a moment to sit upon my soft sectional, I curled up with my cashmere blanket and tried to let this sink in. It would not be that bad.

"At least they don't know where I live," I said with a sigh of exhaustion.

"Oh, they can find that out if they want to. Lucky for you, Neal put you in a building where your floor can only be accessed with a key card."

"No, he didn't," I said, with confusion. "I didn't use a key card for anything."

Silence filled the conversation and slowly fear filled within me. "Does this mean they will try to break in or something? I mean, what do I do?"

A knock on my front door froze me to my spot in the living room. I couldn't move, and could barely breathe, terrified of who was on the other side. "Mrs. Wood. It's Kevin, the building manager. I'm just dropping something off to you."

"Becca, go answer the damn door," Allegra said in my ear as I slowly slid from my place, and made my way towards the front door. Peering out the peephole, I could see that, in fact, it was the building manager standing there, waiting for me.

Taking a deep breath, I opened the door and stood smiling at him with my phone to my ear. "How can I help you?"

"I was told to give this keycard to you. From now on, there are new measurements with the security of the building. Doors and elevators to this floor are only accessible with a keycard."

Kevin wasn't a pleasant man. He had a disposition about him that made me question if I was in trouble by the way he stared at me. "Oh... thank you."

"Yes, well, it's clear to see who has favoritism here. Don't make this a habit," he sneered as he rolled his eyes dramatically and turned and walked down the hallway.

Standing shocked, I could hear Allegra laughing on the other end of the line, but I wasn't laughing because it was only my third day in the apartment and already I was being bitched at.

Closing the door, I locked it and sighed into the receiver. "I don't think that guy likes me."

"It honestly doesn't sound like he does, but I see Neal got those keycards after all."

"Allegra," I groaned, running my hand over my face. "Can we focus, please?"

"Alright, what has you worked up? I mean, this will all blow over soon."

I could almost picture her sitting on her sofa looking over her nails as she sipped on a Bloody Mary, preparing for another long day of running errands and sorting through job offerings. The last thing she wanted to do was worry about this.

"You're right. I'm sorry. I just don't know why he didn't tell me anything about it. I mean, he must have known when he left an hour ago."

"Oh, he definitely knew," Allegra laughed. "Maybe he didn't want you to worry."

Rolling my eyes, my lips met, forming a thin white line. I was beyond pissed off, but I had to learn to control the inner hormonal urges I had. If I wanted a solution to something or needed to speak to James about something, I had to do so like an adult.

Not some irritated, naïve woman who didn't know how to handle a situation like this.

"I will just wait until he lands and message him then. Maybe you're right about him not wanting me to worry. For now, I will just hang out at my new place and not on getting it sorted." Pushing a smile to my face, I looked around the room and saw much to do.

"I can't wait to see your place," Allegra said with an exaggerated sigh. "I bet it looks absolutely darling. Did you call your dad yet to tell him you're back up there?"

At the mention of my father, I started thinking about his reaction to the news, and for some reason, my thoughts drifted to Allison. "Oh, shit..."

"What's wrong? Did something happen?" she asked quickly, with a sense of urgency in her tone.

"I just realized that with the news being this big, it means that Allison and Tally would have seen this by now—"

A loud groan came from the other side of the phone line, and I knew without a doubt that whatever Allegra was about to say, I wasn't going to like it.

"When are you going to stop worrying about that dreadful woman and her pathetic daughter? I mean come on.... Who cares if she knows?"

Allegra was right, but I cared if she knew because she threatened to ruin my life, and with how crazy that woman was, I didn't doubt that she would do it. She would ruin me at any given moment if it meant that she could get me away from James.

"I know, I know." I moved from the sofa towards the kitchen. "I get what you mean, but at the same time, you can't blame me for worrying. The bitch literally threatened to get me kicked out of school."

The memory of that conversation caused me to grimace. She was a hounding bitch and got on my nerves, and I wished nothing more than for her to find something else to preoccupy her time with.

At least if she had something else to do, James and I could be somewhat normal, and I wouldn't have to constantly look over my shoulder.

"Becca, it's a simple photo. It doesn't even look like you guys were doing anything."

Looking over my shoulder at the photo on TV, I sighed. She was right. It wasn't a photo of us kissing or anything like that. It was simply the two of us standing next to each other, and Neal was actually there to the side, as well as two other people.

"True, maybe she won't think anything of it then."

"See. You're worrying for nothing, but I have to get going. I have a salon appointment in an hour, and I still have to get ready," Allegra said, as we quickly bid each other goodbye.

Having spoken to Allegra, I felt better about the situation, but I still questioned why James had not messaged me about it.

Taking my phone, I texted James.

'Call me when you can. I just saw the news, and I'm concerned.'

I wasn't sure when he was going to be able to reach out to me, considering he had a long flight and probably other things he had to tend to. It would go figure once I thought that things were getting better, other complications would arise.

My life wasn't capable of being conflict free. My life was full of twists and turns.

All of which were pieces to a larger puzzle I was trying to figure out.

Hopefully, with school starting soon, and things getting on the right path, my life would become clearer. For now, though, I would have to settle with what I have been given.

As my phone chimed, I was quick to pick it up. All my troubled thoughts cleared with the excitement of hearing from James. I had thought that it would take longer for him to get to Miami, but I was pleased nonetheless.

That was, until I read the message and all but almost dropped my phone.

The text was from an unknown number, and its message was clear.

'I warned you before to stay away from him. I suppose I will have to keep to my threats and show you how dangerous I can be.'

Fu*k. It was from Allison, and what I was hoping wouldn't happen was going to happen.