

Chapter 72 - Submitting to My Best Friend's Dad by Scarlett Rossi

James

As soon as Becca hung up the phone, I felt nothing but guilt and remorse over the way I had acted. This is a girl who had been nothing but good to me and time and time again, I did nothing but become a complete d*ck to her.

She had never given me a reason to question her or doubt I could trust her. Instead, she had done everything right, and all she wanted was a chance to prove herself to me. And yet, I was the one who was constantly feeling as if I was unsure of the situation.

Staring out the window of my office, I looked across the green grass leading to the small railing overlooking the ocean. I was a complete mess, and the fury of worry flowing through my veins had done nothing but hinder my ability to think straight.

I was being unfair to her, but I wanted to protect her. Once upon a time, I lived a life of criminalized activity. I'd messed with the wrong people; I'd made shady deals, and I'd cut corners. Through everything, I ended up pissing off the wrong people, leaving a wake of issues in my path.

Even though I'd tried to turn myself around for the last ten years, I was not good. I had cut ties with anybody who could have been a future complication. I didn't want my daughter to grow up in a world surrounded by nothing but violence.

The young man I had been before is not the same man I am now, but all of those problems were coming back at me, and now, I was going to have to reap what I sowed.

Now, not only was my daughter in danger, but, potentially, so was a woman I cared deeply for. A woman I loved. I never wanted anything bad to happen to her, and I reminded myself because of my actions, she was in danger.

Especially since Allison had gone to Sergie and explained to him I was not thinking straight. I knew in my mind she wouldn't have told him Becca was the reason I was not agreeing to his terms. Even though that wasn't true, she wasn't the person who was clouding my judgment, as she liked to call it.

On the contrary, this was a decision I had made long before I had ever slept with, or even touched Becca, for that matter. I wanted freedom.

I wanted a way out and more times than once, I had contemplated selling off everything I had. Taking my money and my daughter and moving abroad somewhere else to start over. Somewhere where nobody would know who we were.

I wasn't sure where that place would be. But now, with Becca in my life, everything was complicated. Even more so because there was no way I would tuck tail and run, leaving her defenseless.

Letting out a heavy sigh, I lifted my coffee cup to my lips and continued to stare. There were many routes I could take in order to fix this, but one thing was for sure. After the conversation with Becca, there was no way she was going to allow me to escape her.

She was right, though. I would not have this conversation with her over the phone. It was going to be a conversation I had to have in person and as much as I wanted to be entangled in her every second of the day I was with her, this had to be a serious moment.

I had to tell her the truth.

The truth about my past and who I was.

I had to explain to her there were things about me I was hiding.

People would not be safe if things went wrong, and slowly but surely, the vines I had tied securely together were loosening, and with that, my problems were showing.

The soft echo of feet on the floor sounded in the distance, with soft murmurs of women speaking. I wasn't sure who it was, and with an angry scowl, I stood and made my way towards the door.

I half expected to see Allison standing there, demanding to speak with me, demanding for me to fix things. But I looked into the eyes of Allegra, and her expression spoke nothing but disdain.

"What are you doing here?" I asked her as I pressed forward.

"Came to see you. You didn't like me approaching you at work, and with everything I heard that's been going on lately, I'd figured you'd be here. That, and your car is parked out front rather oddly, so you must have had a rough night yesterday."

Allegra was a mysterious woman, and even though we didn't have the greatest of friendships, she had become close with Becca, so if she was here, I could only assume it was because of Becca.

Gesturing for her to follow me, I took her outside onto the back patio terrace area. "Don't pretend to act like this is just a casual meeting to see how things are going. I know very well that the only reason you are here is because of Becca. We would have no other business to speak of."

A smile crossed her lips as she stared at me. "That is true. However, first I want to know what is going on with you before I tell you why I'm here. So why don't you explain why you're still in Miami and not up there with the woman you love?"

"You are seriously going to play that line with me?" I laughed as I watched her shrug her shoulders as if to say she would do as she wanted, as she always did. "If you must know, I had come down here to take care of business, which Becca knew. We agreed on it. I was supposed to go back to visit her this weekend. I have a very large client that I was closing on. However, while being here, complications arose."

"Complications, you say. Pray tell, what are those complications?"

"One would be Allison, of course. Another would be Tally, and then, there is my criminalized past coming back to haunt me like a distant chill on a warm, sunny day," I quipped as I sipped upon my coffee, savoring the rich deep taste.

"Well, let's start with the first issue you seem to have. Allison. How does she fit in all of this? I thought you got rid of the woman when you decided you loved Becca, and you were going to be with her."

"That would be correct," I replied, nodding my head as I cast my gaze off into the distance. "However, she seems to have made friends with somebody from my past, and therefore, caused more complications."

"You keep saying complications, but yet you don't explain what those complications are. I am not here for a casual visit. I'm here to fix a problem, as I always do. Now, if you don't mind, what are those complications?"

Staring at her with a fixed gaze, my brows narrowed. I wasn't sure if she was someone I could trust to tell this kind of business to. Even though we had known each other for quite some time, it wasn't like she was somebody I would confide in on certain issues.

Regardless, I gave in. "I dealt in shady dealings, and I had to pay for that. However, that may be because Allison has made friends with my enemies due to the fact that I reject her continuously for Becca. She has now, more than likely, been explaining that Becca is the reason I won't sign the deals, which, of course, isn't the truth. But then again, when is Allison ever telling the truth?"

"What are you saying? That Becca is in danger?" Allegra asked, her eyes wide and concern laced in her tone.

She would always care for Becca. Regardless of the one intimate moment that they had while we were at Club Velvet, Allegra and Becca had become very close friends.

"I don't think so, but I can't be sure."

"I see. Well, it seems to me you have a problem there, something you need to figure out. Because if Becca is going to be in any sort of trouble, I need to be made aware, as does Neal and Becca. But that really should be something that comes from you."

There was a seething warning within her tone that let me know she was serious. Shrugging it off, though, I continued the conversation I was having, seeing as Allegra was so determined to know what exactly was going on in my life.

"On top of all of this, it's come to my attention Tally has gone missing. And not only has she gone missing, but she's also pregnant. Things have become a lot more complicated than I have wanted them to."

"So what is it you plan to do, then? You can't simply sit here in your house in Miami and sulk. You need to be looking for your daughter, and if you can't find her, she is a grown adult and needs to take care of herself," she scowled, leaning back in her chair.

"She is still my daughter," I replied with warning in my tone.

"Yes, and a grown adult. While you're worried about her, you have a woman up there who loves you, who has gone through hell and back to be with you, and given you more chances than she should have. One that could be in danger."

To say Allegra was angry would be an understatement. She was holding herself together very well, composed, as she always was, but deep down, she was a pit of fire, wanting to lash out at me for how I had been acting.

"I understand the reasoning behind your statement. However, I do have to find Tally. Regardless if she's an adult, she is still my daughter. I have to make sure she's okay and that my grandchild is okay because, as we all know, Tally is not the most self-sufficient person."

The conversation with Allegra went on for an hour, and by the time we were done, I had gained a little more clarity than I had initially had on the situations at hand. I needed to see Becca. Regardless of everything going on, I needed to clear the air with her and make her aware of the secrets I had been hiding.

That last thing I wanted was for her to find out from someone else, or worse, get hurt by the secrets I refused to explain.