## Chapter 76 - Submitting to My Best Friend's Dad by Scarlett Rossi

Two days later, I fell back into a normal routine. The last thing I wanted was to sit around and preoccupy my mind with things I couldn't change. Instead, I had to focus on school and all the different exams coming up soon.

Like a paper I had to write for one of my classes that was literally almost a mile long.

To say I had a complicated situation would be an understatement. However, the coffee was finer at the cafe down the street from my home, and what better way to study for the long exam than to surround myself with a comforting atmosphere?

## I embraced the coziness with coffee, a muffin, and warm inviting aromas of

the local cafe.

For someone in my situation—alone—this was the perfect place for me to be. I was glad for the atmosphere, and tapping on my keyboard, I searched for the answer I needed.

At least that was what I was trying to tell myself.

Part of me wished it was a glass of whiskey I was drinking right now, considering how stressed I was. While the other part of me just kept telling me to chug along like the little choo-choo train that could.

What's that saying... buckle up, buttercup... or something like that?

What honestly was I supposed to do with my f\*cking life?

Letting a heavy sigh escape me, I shook my head, pinching my brow as I tried to contemplate what sentence I was going to write that filled the description of what I had to work with.

Why couldn't things just be f\*cking easy for once?

As the chime and chatter of the cafe and the aroma of coffee swirled around me, I tried to find solace. Yet, when a distinctive voice cut through the glitz and glamor of casual conversation and pierced my ears like a never-ending warning, I froze.

"Can you believe it, Tracy? I just can't absolutely believe that he actually got that little bitch pregnant and then brought her home to me like I was supposed to do something about it."

Holy f\*cking shit.

If my day couldn't get any worse... it was about too.

Chad's mother and her posse had just walked into the cafe. Which only meant one thing. Chad was back in town, and if Chad was back in town, his mother was going to be here for the next week, which also brought further complications. Damn my life.

She didn't notice me at first, and as I tried to bury my head behind my laptop, pulling the hood of my sweatshirt over my face to make myself invisible I listened. "Oh, honey, I know. I feel so bad for you having to be put through this."

Her friend's comment made the woman smile a little, and as she did, I couldn't help but grimace.

I hated that woman. She was an absolute nuisance, and the entire time I'd dated Chad, she saw me as beneath her. But Chad kept me around as if I was the toy he appreciated. It was probably because I was on the Depo shot though, and she knew there would be no way I'd get pregnant by him.

Thank God I never did. I could only imagine how that conversation would have gone.

Lost in my thoughts, I didn't realize her gaze had landed upon me until it was too late. "Look who it is," she said as she grabbed her coffee and beelined straight for me with her posse right behind her. "The little slut who thought she could get into my family."

"Excuse me?" I said with confusion completely taken back by her comment.

The disgusted look that crossed her face as her eyes scanned me up and down did no justice to the anger building within me. "You heard what I said."

Taking a deep breath, I slid my hood down and closed my laptop, placing it back in my bag as a scoff left my lips before a slow smile appeared. "Barbara, it's lovely to see you again as well. Did you get Botox done recently? I have to admit your doctor is amazing."

Wide-eyed with shock, she gasped at the insult I'd thrown her way. Her cheeks turned red as her posse tried to hide their amusement. She had actually thought I gave a f\*ck about what she had to say, and that was more than amusing.

"I don't understand what it is you're doing here. I could have sworn I heard through the grapevine that you weren't coming back to Yale this year."

"I am not sure who you heard that from, but that is definitely not right. It's my last year, so I will finish with honors as I started. Gotta make sure that I get those grades, and then I will take myself onto bigger and better things. I wish I could say the same for your son."

Another jab. Her narrowing eyes were lit with fire as she stared at me intently. "Excuse me?"

Speaking up against her wasn't something I had ever done before, but considering everything that had happened to me lately, I was tired of being nice to everybody.

"Oh, didn't you know?" I said, faking shock. "I was the only reason your son was passing before. I truly hope he finds someone smart enough to do his work. Lord knows he can't do it on his own."

"How dare you!" she exclaimed, drawing the attention from other people around. "To sit there and insult me. Who do you think you are? I came here

"You came here to what?" I snapped giving her a pointed look. "I have been here for hours, and you accosted me in this cafe for your enjoyment? Everyone here, including the owner, is familiar with me. I insist you leave and go elsewhere."

A small smirk crossed her face as if she was looking at me for the very first time. "Too bad that you didn't show this kind of fire in you before. Perhaps then I would have been more inclined to consider you a match for my son."

"As much as I would have liked that before, Barbara," I scoffed with a smile, "that will never happen now. I'd rather be single than with an arrogant prick who likes to beat on women... but what can I say—like father, like son."

The hushed murmurs of her posse caused her smirk to fall and anger to shoot through her gaze. "I could have you expelled, you know."

It was my turn to find amusement as I laughed. "You can try."

There was no point in carrying on the conversation with her, but I would not be the one that yielded in this situation. After a moment of tense silence, Barbara turned and made her way from the cafe with her friends following behind her.

The many eyes of people in the cafe, and their whispers surrounded me.

My eyes cut towards the manager as I mouthed the words, 'I'm sorry,' grabbed my things and heading for the door. It wasn't every day you got to say how you really felt and put a cruel woman in her place.

And as the cool mid-day air hit my face outside, I took a deep breath and exhaled, closing my eyes. "F\*cking hell—"

Opening my eyes, I looked down the road, glad Barbara and her posse were far down the sidewalk in the opposite direction from me. I would have to take the long way towards my house, but that was fine. It was better than having to carry on a conversation with that woman again.

Pulling out my phone, I sent James a text message letting him know I had run into Chad's mother and that Chad was in town. Which should mean Tally was in town as well. There was finally a silver lining of hope to finding her.

'I'll be there tonight,' he replied back, causing a small smile to grace my face.

I could finally see him, and though he would be preoccupied with finding Tally, I could spend some type of time with him. Making haste, I picked up my pace and headed towards my apartment building that sat gleaming against the sunlight in the distance.

I was glad I didn't live too far away from everywhere I needed to go because walking was something I actually loved to do so I always had an excuse not to drive. If I could, I would be perfectly fine with only using my car twice a month, and that was to go to the grocery store.

Otherwise, I preferred to walk everywhere.

The closer and closer I got to my building, the more an uneasy feeling settled in my stomach as if something was wrong. I wasn't quite sure what it was, but perhaps it was the adrenaline finally subsiding in my system after having that conversation with Barbara.

I walked inside and waited for the elevator behind two other people who seemed to be going up as well, one of them whispering about the different things they had heard going around campus with the head of students. My ears perked to attention as I heard he had been caught doing things he shouldn't have.

It made me wonder if the day he got caught was the day I had seen him on campus and had a run-in. After all, he seemed a little unnerved because I was on campus, even if I was just simply taking something to one of my teachers.

The plot was quickly thickening, and like Nancy Drew, I wanted to know exactly what was behind the mystery.

As the elevator chimed, allowing two of the people to get off on their floor, I waited patiently for the doors to close. It took me by surprise as I found myself concerned with Tally's well-being. I hadn't seen her for so long, and I did not entirely hate her; I more hated the person she had become and the things she had done to me.

Even though she was a grown woman, she didn't understand things like everybody else, but I knew that was no excuse for the way she acted. Still, I wished more than anything that having this baby would help to change her for the better, to make her be the person she was once before.

Lost in my thoughts as the elevator doors opened on my floor, I stepped out, fiddling down in my bag for my keys, only to be stopped in my tracks as I looked up at the battered, bruised, and bleeding woman that sat on the floor in front of my door.

How she had gotten up there, I had no idea.

How the state of her had come to be, I had no idea.

But there she was, and with weeping eyes, she looked up at me, tears rolling down her cheeks and a large bump protruding beneath her shirt. "Becca, please help me."

F\*ck my life. "Hi, Tally."