

Chapter 78 - Submitting to My Best Friend's Dad by Scarlett Rossi

James

Anger coursed through my veins as I stared at Tally sitting on Becca's living room sofa. I hadn't expected to see her in Becca's living room, but fate had other plans. Instead of me coming here to search for her—she found her way towards me.

"Thank you for not going out there," Tally whispered, staring at her feet.

I wanted to wring her neck and tell her how stupid she was being. Before I could, the front door opened, and Becca walked into the apartment slowly, her eyes not meeting mine.

Casting her eyes towards the floor, she passed by me, making her way towards the stairs. Guilt rolled through me at how I had spoken to her. I realized now I was wrong for speaking to her as I did. She wasn't the reason I was angry, but she was the only outlet I had when I unraveled.

That was no excuse. I had been a complete asshole.

"Becca—" I said, grabbing her arm gently, stopping her in her tracks. I didn't get a chance to continue as she held up her hand, stopping me from continuing, and shook her head. There was nothing she wanted to say to me, and releasing her, I watched her ascend the stairs.

Letting out a heavy breath, I slowly turned my eyes to Tally again. The child I had helped create was causing issues between the woman I loved and me.

"You need to start from the beginning and tell me everything that happened."

My stern response made her gulp as she looked at me with wide eyes, nodding slowly.

"When I left Miami, I went with Chad back to his parents' house for a few weeks, but his mother didn't want us to be together. His family tried to force me to get an abortion even though I didn't want to. They realized when I went to the doctors I was further along than we thought, and that's when things got bad."

"How far along are you?" I asked with a questioning gaze.

"Six months."

My daughter was six months pregnant. She had been doing all kinds of partying, drinking, everything else, not being careful. And this entire time she had been pregnant, my mind reeled with the possibility that the baby was actually okay. I couldn't believe how stupid she had been.

"Do you understand the complications of what you've done with all the partying and drinking, the damage you could have done to that child? How stupid could you actually be?"

She didn't respond to me right away. Instead, she looked down at her feet, her lips trembling as if tears were about to pour down her face.

"I'm sorry," she replied with a trembling voice.

"You're sorry?" I scoffed, absolutely astonished that was her go-to. "Do you have any idea of the worry and panic you put me through because of what you did? Running off like that, not telling anybody where you went, throwing a f*cking tantrum because you couldn't have what you wanted?"

"I know," she cried out as her eyes met mine again, tears streaming down her cheeks. "I know what I did was wrong. I'm sorry for all the shit that I put you and Becca through. I didn't mean for any of this to happen, but I thought he loved me."

"You thought he loved you?" I scoffed.

"Yeah," she snapped as she held her arms out, gesturing to her body. "And this is the repercussions of what my love has done. He beat me because I

wouldn't get an abortion. He told me he would have nothing to do with me, and I was nothing but a whore."

I could see the sincerity in her eyes, and it was the first time I had seen such sincerity since she was a child. Since before Allison and I had divorced, this little girl looking at me right now was the same one I remembered before she turned into the demon she acted like.

There was no way I could easily forgive her—regardless if I were her father. What she had done caused more damage than she could ever comprehend.

"You don't need to tell me you're sorry. You need to be saying that to her," I replied, pointing upstairs. "She gave you everything when you were younger, was your closest friend, was your shield when you were upset or when someone tried to hurt you. She took care of you. Becca treated you like a sister."

She stared at me with a dumbfounded expression. "So you're not angry at me because I'm pregnant or because I ran off with Chad? You're angry at me because of everything that I did to her?"

"Yeah, I am. I'm extremely angry," I snapped at her. "And yes, I am angry that you ran off with Chad, a man you shouldn't have been sleeping with in the first place because that was your best friend's f*cking boyfriend."

"I didn't mean for it to happen—"

"Stop," I snapped again, giving her a stern glare. "Don't you dare say that. You're a grown woman, Tally. Responsible for yourself. Never say you didn't mean for it to happen."

Allegra had been right. Tally was an adult, and I couldn't coddle her. Not anymore.

She had to figure this shit out on her own. At the end of the day, though, if I was going to have a life with Becca, she would have to learn to respect our wishes.

I didn't know what else to really say to her about what happened. She looked like she had been in a fight and lost. "We need to get you to a doctor."

"No, I don't want to go to a doctor. I don't want to have him arrested," she whispered as she looked away towards the window.

"It doesn't matter what you want. The baby could have been hurt, and I want you checked out. You don't have to tell them who did it if you don't want to, but we're still going."

My word was final; knowing this, she didn't continue arguing with me. I told her to get her things together and that I would be back downstairs in a little while, and quietly I made my way up the stairs to talk to Becca.

Some things needed to be discussed, and an apology needed to be given.

As I pushed open Becca's bedroom door, I quietly stood there, watching her sitting in the chair by the window, looking out of it with a confused expression on her face.

"Becca—" I sighed, but she didn't bother to look at me. Closing the door behind me, I took a few steps toward her. "I need to apologize to you. I shouldn't have spoken to you like that downstairs. I was just so angry by everything that happened about what Chad had done to her I lost control of myself, and I lashed out at the one person I shouldn't have."

She stared at me with confusion, shaking her head. As she gripped the arm of her chair, her knuckles turned white. "That doesn't excuse what you did, regardless of being angry. I am not the one that you should lash out at."

"I know," I said with a pleading glance. "I hate myself for how I treated you."

"I don't know what you expect me to say," she replied. "Everything has been chaotic since the moment I met you this summer, and even though we're together and have had amazing moments... it's becoming nothing but toxic."

Toxic? Was she calling me toxic?

"What are you trying to say?" I asked her, unsure if she was trying to tell me she didn't want this relationship anymore. That she didn't want me.

"I'm saying that I can't keep going on like this. I can't keep fighting with you and arguing. It's pointless."

Pointless. That was the word she used to describe the relationship we had.

And hearing her say it left a hole in my chest.

She froze as I came closer to her. I wanted to touch her, hold her, kiss her, and tell her how sorry I was, to give me another chance. I knew she had already given me multiple chances to get this right.

But I didn't want this to be a toxic situation. I just wanted to make her happy.

Kneeling down to her level, I brushed my hand across her cheek, pushing a loose strand of hair behind her ear as she stared at me with those big blue eyes. "Don't give up on this or give up on me. I can make you happy."

"How?" she asked, looking at me as tears brimmed her eyes. "How can you make me happy when you have so much that you're dealing with? How are you going to be there for me when we have the distance between us... and now with Tally... she needs to go home, James. She needs to return to Miami to get the care needed for the baby."

Becca wasn't wrong about that. The distance between us was an issue, and I knew she still had months left of school or at least until her internship started in the winter.

"We can make this work. We will figure it out as we have been."

She shook her head, though. Her eyes left mine as she looked down at her feet. "You don't have time to make this work, especially when you have to pencil me in your schedule even to have a simple conversation."

Taken back by her response, I knew what she was saying was true.

She was talking like she wanted to call this quits. I didn't want to let her go, though. No matter how much I knew she deserved better, I couldn't let her go. I needed her.

"I won't accept that," I replied, shaking my head as I stood to my feet.

Quickly standing, she stared at me sternly, her lips thinly met, narrowing her brows. "You don't have a choice in this."

"Don't tell me what I don't have, Becca. You can't tell me after everything that you want to let this go." Clearing the space between us, I pressed my lips against hers. She tried to fight it at first but then quickly melted into my touch with a soft moan leaving her lips as her hands furiously grabbed at my clothing.

If she wanted to end this, then so be it. But I would have her one last time.

One last time to hold her.

One last time to kiss her.

One last time to remember everything we had and hopefully change her mind about not wanting to be with me.

I couldn't lose her.

Through everything negative happening in my life right now, she was the only thing good.