

## Chapter 83 - Submitting to My Best Friend's Dad by Scarlett Rossi

Becca

A few days into my visit with Neal and Allegra, I felt happier than I had in a while. We decided to meander the streets of New York, taking in the different sites and also visited a few of the museums.

Which, by the way, were absolutely amazing!

The entire day had been more than perfect, and though I knew it would only be short-lived, I couldn't help but relish how spending time with them felt.

Allegra and Neal had done amazing in making me feel better.

It was the first time I had felt some contentment in a long time, and as we rounded the corner near Times Square, I couldn't help but be astounded at the sights before me. The bright, colorful lights, the large screens, the revolving images that were there, not to mention the many people who meandered around as if they had no care in the world.

It was mesmerizing, and even though I was not the type of person that would ever be considered a city girl, I couldn't help but wonder what it would be like to live here in a city that never slept. Also, having something to do... somewhere to go, and something new to see.

"That was so much fun." Allegra squealed as we continued walking. "I've never really been one for going into museums, but I must admit that the museum we went to this morning was absolutely brilliant."

"I told you that it would be fun," I replied, giving her a side glance as the corner of my lips lifted into a smile. "History doesn't have to be boring. It can be magnificently interesting."

Neal chuckled at my comment as he looked toward Allegra and I. We had stopped in the middle of the sidewalk to admire a beautiful dress hanging in a store window, and as I tilted my head, I couldn't help but think that the dress was a work of art.

"I don't think this really counts as a history lesson. However, I do have to admit that the designer is an artist," Allegra said softly before her eyes cast toward me.

"I know. It's beautiful, isn't it?" I smiled as I turned towards Neal, who was making eye contact with Allegra as if they were having a silent conversation.

"What's wrong?"

Neal glanced toward me and shook his head with a grin. "Nothing. I was just wondering how it would look on you."

"On me?" I gasped before giving a small laugh. "Yeah, no... it wouldn't look good on me at all."

"Why not?" Allegra replied, and for a moment, I didn't realize why we were even having this conversation until it dawned on me.

"Oh, no no no." Waving my finger from side to side, I shook my head and continued walking down the sidewalk. "I don't need it, and you're not buying it for me."

"Oh, come on," Allegra whined as I looked over my shoulder at her to see her and Neal walking quickly to keep up with me. "You have to let me redo your wardrobe, woman!"

"Absolutely not, Allegra."

A hand reached out, stopping me in my tracks, and as I turned, I stared at them both. "Why won't you let us help you?"

"Because I don't need help. I'm perfectly fine the way I am."

The look on Allegra's face was not impressed, but Neal simply smiled down at me as he always did before nudging Allegra with his elbow. "If she doesn't want it, then she doesn't want it."

Allegra gasped at him in shock, causing me to laugh. "Look, I love you both, but I am honestly happier just spending time with you. I don't need material things to make me happy."

"Sometimes I wonder how it is that you managed to get this far in life."

Most people would have taken offense to what Allegra said, but I had known her long enough to know that she was simply teasing me.

"Oh, quit it. You both know that you're here because you absolutely love me."

They hesitated after the comment I made and looking at Allegra, I watched her eyes staring up at her brother, who, in turn, quickly smiled at me as he gestured with his head for us to continue walking.

I wasn't sure what the glance was for, but as we made our way down, we continued the conversations about who this supposed designer was and what spring fashion show was coming up next year that Allegra was supposedly modeling in.

I never realized she was a runway model, but it wouldn't surprise me considering how tall she was and how long her legs were. She was beautiful even at her age, and Fashion Week in Milan was going to be the biggest it had ever been.

Or at least that was what Allegra kept saying. Lord knows she was excited.

As we made our way down the sidewalk, my mind slowly drifted back over things I had been trying to forget. James hadn't tried to reach out to me all day, and the thought he had finally given up on me was slowly eating away at my soul.

Why should I let it bother me? I was the one who broke up with him.

I should be happy he wasn't contacting me... right?

With my mind a mess and lost in my thoughts, I turned the corner of a building and ran into a solid brick wall. Looking up, I stared into dark sultry eyes that I had not expected to see.

James stood before me and seemed just as shocked as I was.

"Becca?" he whispered as I stepped back, removing his hand from my skin where he had reached out to steady me from falling over.

"James, what are you doing here?" Allegra replied, stepping in front of me to block me from James and glancing over at Neal, whose lips were firmly met as if seeking guidance. His eyes were locked on James with tightened fists as if he was angry the man before him was even present.

"What I'm doing in the city is none of your concern. This was not planned if that's what you're thinking."

Hearing James say he wasn't actually stalking me, and he was here on business, made me hesitate in my next set of words. Because I had hoped that he was here for me.

Seeing him now. Watching him.

It made my heart shift uncomfortably as I realized I was no longer an interest.

How stupid could I honestly be, though? One minute I hated him, and the next...

I wanted him to ravage me.

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James

Having taken a plane to New York, I set out on a very important mission to get closure. It was to my knowledge Chad and his parents would be in New York

City for some type of grand event, and with many people around, it was the perfect opportunity for me to get what I wanted.

I had gone there to confront him and his parents, explain the situation, and then have my solicitor, who was with me, force Chad into signing papers stating he wanted no rights to the child my daughter is carrying.

That way, I could ensure he would never be able to get his hands on anything the child would have revolving around my company.

It didn't take much convincing to have Chad, almost in tears, cowering at his knees as I pointed out I would see to it he wouldn't see his next birthday if he didn't sign. His father was furious about the situation, but I didn't care.

He had spoken up and explained Chad would sign the agreement because he wanted nothing to do with the bastard child any way, nor a Valentino.

I was perfectly fine with that. I wanted them to have nothing to do with my family, either.

As soon as the meeting concluded, my lawyer and I left with smiles on both of our faces. I had done what I had come here to do. Needing some fresh air, I walked back to the hotel where I was staying, trying to wrap my mind around everything that had happened.

Somewhere in this city, Becca was enjoying herself and enjoying herself without me, no less.

Perhaps that was a conceited thought, but I couldn't help but be jealous.

I loved that f\*cking woman, and every single part of me screamed to find her. Little did I know fate would have an amusing way of making that happen because as soon as I rounded the corner, I ran straight into a petite brunette who caught my eye like no other.

She seemed just as shocked to see me, and as much as I wanted to wrap her in my arms, Allegra and Neal stepped in, making sure that wouldn't happen.

"I think it's time that we take our leave," Neal said firmly after our small, brief interaction.

"I need to have a moment alone with her."

"That's not happening." Neal quickly stepped in front of Becca and reached out to pull her further behind him. "Don't you think there's been enough damage done?"

I wasn't sure what exactly was going on between the two of them, but Neal did not want to pick a fight with me at this moment because it would be a battle he would lose.

"Why don't you step aside and mind your business?" I all but almost growled and the low, deep tone as I stepped forward. I would beat this little shit's ass if he kept it up. No one was going to stand in front of me getting to Becca.

No one.

"Enough," Becca finally said, speaking up. "James, anything that you need to say, you can do so in front of them."

She was serious, but as much as I wanted to tell her I loved her, I couldn't. Not in front of them. I wanted a private conversation, and her reluctance said no. The pain inside me was real, but squaring my shoulders, I nodded.

"No," I replied. "Perhaps, maybe another time when you're alone."

"She won't ever be alone," Neal's voice said clearly as he crossed his arms over his chest. "I will always be there for her."

Cracking my neck, a fake smile crossed my lips as I tried to reel in my anger.

"Very well. Another time then."

She didn't bother to say anything else, but I watched the expression on her face drop, and as I turned to walk away, I heard Allegra whisper to her. "Don't let him get inside your head."

Get inside her head... who the f\*ck did Allegra think she was?

I was doing exactly what she wanted me to do. However, it was only because I loved her I was walking away. It was clear she wasn't ready for a conversation with me.

Either that, or I had made a terrible mistake.