

## Chapter 97 - Submitting to My Best Friend's Dad by Scarlett Rossi

James

I wasn't sure what to think about the meeting that I ended up having with Katrine. Yes, I had f\*cked her senseless, made her scream for me multiple times, and every single bit of it was out of hatred. However, it had to be done. I had to make her and her father believe that I was on their side, and now with Sergie happy, he was adamant about another meeting.

A meeting that, honestly, I didn't want to have.

But it was exactly the response that I needed to help Greg be able to bring Sergie down. The problem was that all I could think about was that I had betrayed Becca by sleeping with Katrine, even though we weren't together.

The photo of her with Neal in New York, happy, smiling and kissing, had just torn my heart apart. She was happier than she had been in a while, and it wasn't because of me that she was happy.

No, all I did was upset her. I was a f\*cking fool in so many ways.

I didn't understand why it was that I felt the way that I did. But under the circumstances, I knew that I would have to end up letting her go because with everything going on, there was no way I was going to be able to mend the relationship that she and I had had.

Glancing down at my phone, I looked at Neal's number and debated on whether or not to call him. I knew it was childish of me to act the way I was, considering I was a grown man, but at the same time, everybody had their flaws.

My biggest flaw was that I wanted to smash Neal's face in with the f\*cking baseball bat and pray to God that he remained crippled for the rest of his life.

Was that harsh? Of course, it was.

Was it completely petty and childish? Of course, it was.

But then again, one can't help but wonder if oftentimes jealousy makes us want to do things that are typically out of character. I wanted him to feel the pain I felt, but I knew that wasn't fair because I had created this chaos. I had made things turn out this way.

I had no one to blame but myself.

Against my better judgment, I dialed his number, held the phone to my ear, and waited. "James.. I would say this call is a pleasant surprise, but it's not. What do you want?"

It wasn't the hello I was hoping for, and it seemed that he was rather more irritated with me than I was with him. "Hello to you as well. I was wondering if I could spare a moment to speak to you about something."

"I don't see why you needed to speak with me. We have nothing to discuss." He replied in a snarky tone.

"Neal, if you would, please, I am not in the mood for childish attitudes. I need to speak to you about Becca. It's important."

Scoffing on the other end of the phone, I gripped the phone tighter as I listened to his response. "There is nothing we need to discuss when it concerns Becca. She is no longer yours to worry about."

"Actually, there is. There's a lot of things going on, and she could be implicated, and it's very important that I speak to you," I replied, trying to show him how serious I was.

Silence filled the phone, and for a moment there I thought I'd lost him. But looking at my phone, I could still see that the call was connected. He simply wasn't speaking.

"We'll go ahead and talk then. What is it that you need to tell me about that has to deal with Becca?"

"I was hoping that we might be able to do this in person. That was why I was calling. Are you planning to be in Miami anytime soon?" I asked him, hoping that the answer was yes, because a part of me did want to see Becca.

"No, we weren't planning on being there," he replied, making sure to emphasize the "we" part of the equation. "However, lately Becca has been asking to go down so that she can see her father and then stop down further to see Allegra. So there is a possibility that within a week or so, maybe close to Christmas, I might be able to accommodate a meeting."

Hearing that Becca was taking Neal to see her father made me realize how serious the relationship may have been.

"If you could possibly fit me into your schedule, I would greatly appreciate it."

"I don't understand why it is that you can't just speak to me about this over the phone, James." Neal sighed into the phone. "You know, the last thing I honestly want to do is see you in person if I'm down there on vacation visiting my family."

He had a point, and honestly, I didn't want to see him in person either. However, I just assumed that this conversation would be better done in person than over the phone.

"Well, if you're adamant, then I suppose I can go ahead and have this discussion with you now," I said to him, choosing not to argue with him. It was probably better that I just got this taken care of now.

Taking a moment to clear my throat, I thought through the things that I needed to say to him. There was so much on my mind, and knowing me, the conversation probably would't end up turning out as well as it would if it was done face to face.

"I know that you and Becca are together, and as much as I want to kill you for that... I want to thank you as well. It's obvious that I couldn't make her as happy as you can, and I do appreciate you being there for her when she needs somebody."

"So, you're thanking me for being a good person?" Neal chuckled, as if trying to make sense of what I was saying.

"In a way, I suppose. Honestly, I'd rather smash your face in for even looking in her direction, however, I know that Becca would not appreciate that, as it seems from the photos that I've seen of the two of you that she does care for you."

"Photos?" Neal said with slight hesitation. "What photos are you talking about? Do you have people spying on us now?"

"No, you f\*cking idiot. I don't have people spying on you. Just because I'm upset with you being with her, that doesn't mean that I would waste precious resources and have her followed and photographed just so that I could see what she's doing," I snapped in anger and absolute disbelief that he would actually think I would pay for someone to follow the two of them.

"If that's the case, then who took the photos, James?"

"That brings me to my next problem." I sighed as I ran a hand over my face. "I'm sure you've heard of the issues that I have with the Russian mob."

"Yeah, my sister filled me in on all of that. What about it?"

"They are backing me into a corner, and at the moment, things could potentially get dangerous, which is why I've been considering sending my daughter away. However, that may be, I just want to say to you that if for some reason, things go sideways with me to get Becca the f\*ck out of this country, get her to safety, and keep her protected."

Hearing myself tell Neal to protect Becca was like a knife to my heart.

That was a job that I had taken on. I had promised her that I would never let anybody hurt her, that I would take care of her. No matter the situation, I would always be the one there for her.

Yet, I hurt her and put her in danger without realizing it.

I was literally going back on that promise by giving that obligation to Neil because for once I was not sure if I would be able to protect her, and the thought of something happening to her was more than I could handle.

"So she is in danger, then?" he asked hesitantly.

"Yeah, there's a very good possibility," I replied in frustration. "No matter how small or large the possibility that there could be, I don't want to take that risk."

"So, are you saying that I need to get her out of the country now?" he asked me, and for the first time, the conversation was normal between the two of us. Well, as normal as it could be, considering everything.

"I would say for the next few weeks, things should be fine. The head guy is out of the country visiting family in Russia. However, I wouldn't put anything past him. So if you're going to come down to see your sister, or perhaps go see her father, I would do it sooner rather than later," I explained, hoping that he would get the hint.

"I can't believe that you were stupid enough to let shit come to this. How deep are you, James?"

Neal's question was one that I had refused to answer to myself. I didn't want to admit that I was six feet under and being buried alive, but I would be lying to myself if I didn't.

I would be lying to everyone if I didn't admit the truth.

"My grave's been dug."

"F\*ck," Neal snapped. "You have NO IDEA what you have done, you f\*cking idiot!"

Neal's sudden outburst caught me off guard, and having him speak to me like that sparked anger inside me that I hadn't known laid dormant. "Just because I'm being civil right now with you, Neal, doesn't give you the right to speak to me that way."

"Shut the f\*ck up, James," Neal scoffed. "You have no idea what's been going on the last two weeks, and honestly, you just made it a lot more complicated."

"Just do as I asked you," I snapped. "If shit gets bad, protect her and keep her safe."

"Yeah. I f\*cking heard you the first time," he replied as the sound of glass crashing in the background caught my attention. "You don't have to ask me to keep her safe, James. I f\*cking love her and will do what I need to, to protect her."

"You aren't the only one who loves her, Neal."

"No, but I'm the only one who gave a f\*ck about what she wanted," he replied before the phone call disconnected and I was left in silence.

Neal wasn't wrong about what he'd said, but at the same time, he wasn't right. I did care about what she wanted and who she was. Even if I hadn't always shown it. The problem was that even if things had happened differently with us... she would have still been caught up in my issues.

The only problem then would be that she may not have had someone like Neal to protect her.

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