

Chapter 71 – Submitting to My Bestie’s Daddy Read Online

Filed to story:

That notion scared me more than anything.

Neal

More than once, I had thought about taking Becca. I wasn’t the type of man to be enraptured by a woman, but she was the first woman in my entire life I wanted nothing more than to simply make sweet love to.

She was beautiful in every way, with the largest heart I had ever seen, and yet, of course, fate be damned; she was in love with another man.

I had honestly thought when she left Miami I might have had a chance with her. The moment my eyes had laid upon hers, when she walked into my sister’s apartment, I was captivated.

Every single inch of her made me want more, and even though she didn’t know she was teasing me, I felt myself slowly losing control around her.

So the minute she’d turned around and told me with sorrow in her voice James had stood her up for the weekend, I took it as an opportunity. I had to see her.

I knew it could only be as friends, and I was perfectly fine with that. But even though I tried to keep my distance, I couldn’t. I had to be around her. Be close to her.

I had to know every moment of the day that she was safe. Even if she wasn’t mine to claim.

So the moment she stopped me from walking away and grabbed my shirt, begging for an answer that I couldn’t give her—I had to stop myself.

I wanted to kiss her. Pin her against the counter, and f*ck her until the only name she was saying was mine. Make her feel things no one but I could make her feel.

“I’m sorry,” she whispered as I made my way towards the sofa. My heart gripped at the fact she thought she had done something wrong.

“There’s no need to apologize, Becca. You didn’t do anything wrong.”

“I did though. I made things completely awkward and ruined the evening,” she replied, standing by the bottom of the stairs in the living room. Her long hair flowed over her shoulders as her big blue eyes looked at me with nothing but regret.

“Come here,” I said calmly as I gestured with one of my fingers for her to come closer.

There was hesitation in her eyes as she bit on her lip.

A plump lip I wanted to take between my teeth as I teased her, and then kiss till I swelled them from our desire. Slowly, though, she made her way towards me until her feet stopped in between my legs, and her eyes cast down at me with nervousness.

Leaning forward, I took her hand and pulled her close to me until her face was right in front of mine. “Nothing is your fault, Becca. Do you understand me?”

The soft fanning of her breath across my lips caused my c*ck to ache from the confinements of my pants. I could take her right here... right now, and I had a feeling she wouldn't stop me.

“I understand,” she whispered before I reached up and brushed my finger over her cheek.

“You have no idea the things I want to tell you, but I know you love James, and I won't put you into a situation that would cause you to be a bad person. No matter how much I want to.”

Gasping, I watched her throat as she swallowed, staring at me in disbelief. It was late, and even though we hadn't finished the movie, I knew it was time for bed. If I didn't go to the spare room right now, and relieve myself, I was going to take her on this sofa.

“I think I should get to bed,” she whispered as she pulled away from me.

“I think that's a good idea.”

Turning, she glanced over her shoulder at me once more, and hesitated before nodding her head. “I prepared the spare bedroom for you.”

Of course, she did. She was always thinking of everyone else, no matter what she went through.

“Thank you. Why don't you head up, and I'll clean up here.”

“It's okay, I can do it. You're my guest,” she blurted as she went to pick up the plate.

“I said that I have it,” I replied, a little more firmly than I should have.

Stopping in her tracks, she nodded in silence, and headed towards the stairs, disappearing from sight. It wasn't until she was gone I leaned back on the sofa and sighed, running my hand over my face. “The f*ck am I doing?” I muttered to myself before standing and picking up the living room.

This woman was driving me crazy, and as much as I wanted to take her, I couldn't.

I needed to listen to what my sister said. Allegra told me to move on or move in, and as much as I tried to preoccupy myself with someone else, I couldn't. Hers was the only face I wanted to see.

As soon as I picked everything up and put it away, I made my way slowly up the stairs towards the spare room. The only problem was, when I passed her door, I saw it was cracked and from where I was standing, I watched her naked body as she slipped the blush pink nightgown over her head.

The sight of her made my c*ck stand to attention, and before she could turn, I quickly made my way into the spare room, quietly shutting the door. Reaching down, I stroked my hard c*ck through my pants and groaned softly, imagining her lips wrapped around it.

Her beautiful face looking up at me from her knees as she stroked and sucked and teased me closer to the brink of exploding. I wanted—no, needed—her.

If James wasn't careful, I would take what was his, and make her f*cking mine.

Becca

Waking up the next morning, I couldn't stop thinking about how the tension between Neal and I was so high. Last night, he made me feel in a way I hadn't felt in a long time. I felt wanted and desired, and even though I was with James, I couldn't help but contemplate what a relationship with Neal would be like.

It was wrong of me, and I was so terribly wrong for even considering things like that.

The guilt weighed heavy on me, and I knew for a fact last night when I dressed my door was cracked, and I heard Neal's door shut, so I knew he had seen me, yet he said nothing.

Did that make me a whore for being in that kind of situation?

Did that make me a worse person because I allowed something like that to happen, knowing full well I wasn't single? God, everything happening to me was turning me more and more into somebody like Tally, somebody who couldn't be trusted, and it was horrible.

Standing in the kitchen in front of the coffee pot, I waited for the dark brew to flow into its container so I could try to find some solace in waking up.

Lord knows I didn't get enough sleep last night.

"Good morning," came a cheerful voice from behind me, causing me to startle as I slowly turned and looked over my shoulder with a smile at Neal.

"Morning, I'm making some coffee if you want some," I replied hesitantly as I turned my eyes back towards the coffee pot that was almost finished.

"Yeah, I'd love some. I do have to get on the road here shortly, so I won't be taking up too much of your time. I'm sure you have plenty of things that you need to do today."

There was awkward tension between us, and Neal stood on the other side of the bar top instead of coming into the kitchen where I was, which made me feel even more awkward.

I didn't know what to do with myself. I didn't want this to be a continuation where I would end up losing Neal because I made everything so complicated. But yet, deep down, even though I wanted James to be here, I wanted Neal to be here as well.

“Look,” I said, as I slowly turned back to him. “I’m sorry about what happened. I was out of line yesterday, and I shouldn’t have acted how I did with you. I do really appreciate you being here, but I also don’t want to make things complicated between us. Losing you would be awful.”

“Lose me. Becca, why would you lose me?”

Sagging my shoulders, I fiddled with the rim of my empty cup only for the ding of the coffee pot to go off, signaling it was done. “Um, because of how I’m acting. I can tell that you like me, and trust me, I like you too. But—”

Letting my words slip away, I turned to him, watching as he stood there, staring at me with a shocked expression on his face. His eyes were wide, and his lips parted as he seemed to ponder over the words he was about to say.

“You’re not a whore, Becca. I know you don’t want me like that.”

“But... I know you saw—”

“I saw nothing,” he chuckled, shaking his head. “I went to bed last night. I’m flattered that you think you’re acting inappropriately and worried about my feelings, but things are fine. Don’t worry about anything.”

I could tell he was just saying that in an attempt to try and make me feel better. Instead, I felt completely embarrassed and foolish about the comment I had made. I had sworn he had seen me, but the way he acted suggested it was the most amusing thing he had ever heard because, in fact, he hadn’t seen me.

Of course, that would be the case, and I opened my big fat mouth when I didn’t even have the facts. “Oh, well, I’m glad we are okay.”

“Don’t be embarrassed,” he said as he slowly made his way around the counter into the kitchen towards me. “Everything got a little out of hand last night, but trust me, I know my place.”

He knows his place. Hearing that broke me even more.

He had no idea where his place was because right now, if he knew his place, he would know I wanted him on his knees in between my thighs making me forget about all the troubles I had.

“Oh, okay,” I muttered as I turned my gaze from him only to have him turn me back to face him.

“Becca...” he whispered as he brushed his thumb across my jawline. “Don’t let it bother you.”

Nodding slowly, I pulled away from him and lifted the carafe of coffee, poured it into my cup, and then grabbed a travel mug for him and poured it in as well. “Okay.”

He said nothing as I turned back to him, handing him the cup. “So, since you’re leaving, did you want breakfast, or were you just going to catch something on the road? I don’t mind making you something.”

Awkwardness consumed us once again and as my eyes met his, I could see some unknown emotion brewing behind his eyes. “I think it’s best that I get something on the road, Becca.”

Those soft words made my heart ache, but I knew he was probably right. It would be for the best if he left. The longer we acted like this, the harder it was going to be to make things between us normal again.

“Okay. Did you leave the keys for me so that I can show those people the apartment?”

Nodding his head, he pulled the keys out and set them on the countertop. “They’re right here. Are you sure you’re gonna be able to do this? I know you’ve got so much going on, I don’t want to overwhelm you.”

“Yeah, no, it’s no problem,” I replied with a smile on my face as I shook my head and gave a soft laugh. “It’ll actually help distract me.”

“Well, I made the bed and everything upstairs, so don’t worry about that. I’m going to get on the road, but I’ll call you some other time.”

Nodding my head, I watched him turn to make his way towards the door. This might be the last conversation we could have based on the way things were ending, and thinking about that made my heart plummet.

I couldn’t lose him.

Running towards the door, I opened it and stepped out into the hallway just as Neal was waiting for the elevator. “Wait!” I cried out watching him turn back towards me.

“What’s wrong?” He took a few steps in my direction.

“This isn’t the end, is it? You’re coming back right?”

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I sounded almost desperate, and for a moment, I was.

Hesitating, he nodded his head with a small smile and pulled me into a hug. “Do you want me here with you?”

“Yes,” I replied, wrapping my arms around him tightly. “I don’t want to lose you.”

“You will never lose me,” he replied, pulling away as he looked down at me with a smile. “I’ll call you as soon as I get home. We can plan for another get-together maybe in two weeks. If not sooner.”

“Okay,” I replied softly as he stared at me.

As the elevator doors opened, I watched his eyes slide towards it and then back to me. Nodding without another word, he climbed into the elevator and disappeared from sight. I cared for him—significantly more than I should have cared for him.

With a heavy sigh, I stepped back into my apartment and closed the door, locking it behind me. The room still smelled of Neal’s cologne, and it created a comforting feeling considering everything going on.

Before I got the chance, though, to process everything, the phone rang, and I was scrambling towards it, thinking it could have been him calling me to tell me he was coming back upstairs.

It wasn’t Neal, though.

It was James, and as much as I should have been excited, part of me was slightly disappointed, and I wasn’t sure what that meant.

“Hey, what’s going on?” I said to him, waiting for the cool, smooth, sultry voice he had to wrap around me and wash away the thoughts I was having.

“Nothing. I just wanted to let you know that I’m going to be coming up there in a couple of days, and I wanted to see if that was okay with you, after the conversation we had.”

“Of course, it is. That’s not a problem at all,” I replied with a small smile that he couldn’t see. “Just let me know when you want to come up. I’m sure it’ll be perfectly fine.”

“Becca, I know that I’ve f*cked up lately, and there’s a lot that I haven’t explained to you, and I haven’t been fair. But I want you to know that when I come, we’re gonna talk about everything.”

About everything?

“Does that mean that there’s a lot more going on than just Tally being missing?” I asked him, able to hear the tension in his voice as he let out a heavy sigh.

“Yeah, there’s a lot going on, a lot more than I have told you, and I haven’t been completely honest about who I was in my past either, so all of this is going to be stuff that we need to discuss.”

Taking a moment to let what he said settle within me, I cast my eyes around the apartment and thought of the evening with Neal. His scent still lingered everywhere, wrapping around me, making me wish he had come back. “Okay, that sounds good.”

“Did Neal end up coming up to see you?” he asked, and it was a question I had been waiting for him to ask me.

“Yeah, he did. He left, though, for work and other stuff he had to do, so it was nice to just be able to make pizza and watch a movie. He left just a moment ago.”

“Wait, so you’re saying that he stayed the night there?” James said in a rather harsh tone.

“Yeah, in the spare bedroom. It’s not the first time that I’ve slept in the same building as him, let alone the same apartment. We didn’t share a room or anything. He slept in his room, and I slept in mine. He went to bed long after I did, and he got up and left first thing this morning. He had to get back to New York.”

I wasn’t sure why I felt I had to explain myself to him. He wasn’t my father, and lately, he hadn’t exactly been acting like my boyfriend. This was my life, and if he didn’t want to trust me or know I would never physically do anything to betray him, then maybe we weren’t meant to be together.

As much as I had enjoyed the small conversation James and I had had about him coming up. I felt a little upset he constantly made an issue about Neal being around. I could understand why, though, considering everything that had happened last night. It was quite obvious Neal wanted more with me than I to just be friends.

Accepting Neal wanted me, and part of me wanted him, but part of me was also loyal to James and I didn’t understand why was more than I could do at the moment.

“Fair enough. I’ll see you in a couple of days, alright?” he replied.

“Sounds good. I’ll see you then.”

Hanging up the phone, I ran my hand over my face. Aggravation laced me, but it wasn’t because of Neal, and it wasn’t because of James. It was because I was a mess, and I seriously had to get my shit together and figure out what I wanted.

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.

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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.”

At a loss for words, I stared down at Tally, who sat on the floor with a black eye, a busted lip, and a cut to her head. She literally looked like she went ten rounds with Mike Tyson and came out on the very bottom end of the pole.

“Oh, my god.” I ran to her, quickly unlocking my door and helping her to her feet. As soon as the door opened, I helped her inside and realized by the look of her, she was far more pregnant than she initially had thought she was.

“Tally, we have to call the hospital. You need an ambulance.”

Shaking her head, though, she took a seat on the sofa. “No, I can’t go to the hospital. I’ll be okay. This isn’t the first time I’ve gone through this, and he never hurts the baby, so it’s just me, my face.”

Stepping back, I stared at her in complete shock, not understanding how she had found me and how she had even gotten up here, considering you needed a key card to get in. “How did you find me?”

Staring at me, her mouth opened and closed before a heavy sigh left her lips. “It’s not that hard, considering the rumors trickling around.”

That didn’t surprise me.

Of course, my name still lingered on the tongues of people around me.

“You have to have a keycard to get up here.” I walked towards the downstairs bathroom, grabbed a wet rag, and returned to her.

“The girl down the hall from you let me up,” she whispered, taking the rag.

“I see,” I replied, raising a brow as I pulled out my phone. “Do you mind explaining to me who did this to you?”

Her eyes darted to the phone in my hand. “What are you doing—who are you calling?”

She seemed panicked, and I didn’t understand why as I hesitated before calling James. “Your father. Why?”

“You can’t!” she snapped, standing to her feet. “Please, you can’t tell him. I can’t have him see me like this.”

The last thing I wanted to do was lie to James or not tell him where his daughter was, but I was worried about her freaking out and leaving before he got here. Deciding lying to her was better, I sighed and shoved my phone back into my back pocket. “Okay.”

“You won’t tell him?”

Shaking my head, I smiled. “For now.”

The look she gave me was uncertain, but after a moment, she nodded. “Thank you.”

“No need to thank me. I haven’t done anything yet, and this doesn’t make us okay. However, I will not allow you to be out there in your condition. So consider my kindness towards the baby... Speaking of that, how far along are you?”

Biting on the inside of her lip, she ran her hand instinctively over her stomach. “About six months. Turns out I was farther along than I thought. When I went to the doctor, though... they said it’s a boy.”

Hearing she was having a boy made me smile, and as I did, I looked down at her dirty attire and frowned again. “Come on, let’s get you some clothes and a shower. You can stay in the spare bedroom.”

Taking her upstairs, I showed her to the spare bedroom and got her a change of clothes. She had nothing with her, and I wasn't sure where her things were, but I chose not to ask. When she was fresh from the shower and changed into something more comfortable, she came out of the bathroom hesitantly.

"Thank you again for this. I don't deserve it."

Crossing my arms over my chest, I let out a heavy breath and rolled my eyes. As much as I wanted to be cruel to her for everything she put me through, I couldn't. I would not forgive her, but the girl looked like she had been served karma.

"Let's not think about that right now," I sighed. "Just get some sleep. I'll order some food and let you know when it's here."

Nodding slowly, she climbed into the bed and quickly fell asleep.

Stepping from her room, I bit my bottom lip as I quietly descended the stairs, my hands quickly going to my phone as I turned on the living room TV to drown out any noise and walked out onto the small balcony from the living room.

My fingers fumbled through the phone as I hit James' number and listened to the ringing, begging him to answer the call.

"Hello?" he answered, breathless.

"Hey... are you okay?"

"Uh-oh, yeah. Just getting on the plane now," he muttered as he passed a few words to someone near him. "I'll be there in a few hours. I need to find Tally."

It wasn't that he was ready to see me or anything of that sort. It was he needed to get here to find Tally. I felt like I was being petty, and pushing that aside I sighed. "That's why I'm calling you."

"What do you mean? Have you seen her?" he asked me with concern etched in his voice.

"Yeah, you can say that," I muttered with sarcasm.

"Becca... where is she?" he replied sternly as if he didn't care for his attitude.

"There is no need for the attitude, James."

"Well, don't act the way you are. You said that you had seen her now. Where is she?"

The subtle tone he took with me made my heart sink, and I felt tears threatening to fill my eyes. "Upstairs in my spare bedroom, sleeping," I snapped. "You're welcome."

Hanging up the phone, I pushed it back into my pocket and gripped the balcony railing, taking a deep breath of fresh air as I stared out at the slowly setting sun.

“He didn’t mean to act like that,” I told myself as I tried to push the thoughts away.

At least, I hoped.

A few hours later, my front door opened, and James stepped in with a small frown on his face. Jumping from where I sat, I walked over to him, but before I could say anything or even give him a hug and a kiss, he spoke. “Where is she?”

Opening and closing my mouth, I lowered my eyes and stepped away from him. “Upstairs, sleeping.”

He didn’t hesitate to move up the stairs two at a time towards her. Not a single word was directed at me, and I felt my heart absolutely breaking with the situation. He said we were going to talk. Said he was looking forward to seeing me, and now this.

I was growing tired of it all.

“What’s the point?” I sighed as I turned towards the kitchen, making myself a cup of tea. My fingers scrolled through my phone as I waited for the kettle. Until I saw a photo of Neal and had the urge to call him.

Biting on the inside of my cheek, I hesitated and finished making my tea before heading towards the balcony to enjoy the cool evening air. I needed to get away. To clear my mind and figure out what I could do to fix things.

Shouting caught my attention, and looking towards the inside of my apartment, I saw Tally chasing after James, who was headed towards the front door. Bolting from where I sat, I burst through the apartment, looking frantic.

“What the hell is going on?”

Tally’s teary eyes turned towards me with desperation. “You have to stop him. Don’t let him leave.”

James was already out the door, and thinking fast, I burst from the door, watching the elevator descend. I hated the stairs, but I wasn’t sure what was happening. Busting through the stairwell, I took the stairs two at a time until I hit the bottom and pushed through the door, watching James exit the front door of the building.

I wasn’t an athletic person, and the fact this man had me running was something else.

As I approached him, I grabbed his arm, jerking him back out of breath as his eyes met mine. He turned to me with a sharp glance, gritting his teeth. “Stay out of this, Becca.”

“No. What the f*ck is going on?”

“It’s none of your business.”

“Seriously?!” I yelled at him, stopping him in his tracks as he tried to walk away. “You don’t get to do this to me!”

“Do what? Why are you making this about you? It has nothing to do with you.”

“I’m your girlfriend, James. We are supposed to be a team, and you involved me in this, so yes, it has to do with me. Your daughter is up there in my clothing, in my apartment, and after everything she has done to me, I gave her a safe place to be. Yet, it doesn’t concern me?”

He stared down at me with coldness, clenching and unclenching his fists. “Chad did that to her.”

Taken aback by his comment, I nodded. “So, you plan to go and beat him up? Acting irrational about this, that’s how you plan to handle it?”

“What do you expect me to do? Huh? Nothing?”

His aggravation showed clearly, and taking a moment, I laughed. “I expect you to act like a f*cking adult. Take your ass back upstairs and do the adult thing. Call the f*cking police instead of being some type of executioner.”

Laughter erupted from him. My steps quickly backed up as he pinned me against the cold brick of the building outside. “I’m not a good person, Becca. I’m dangerous and do dangerous things. You would do well to remember this. My life isn’t legal, and neither are my actions.”

I was slightly frightened, never having seen him like this. “That doesn’t mean you do shit without a clear mind. Right now, your judgment is clouded.”

“How the f*ck would you know?” he grimaced.

Speechless for the moment, I stared at him in disbelief. I didn’t understand how he was speaking to me the way he was. He loved me, I thought. We were a couple and meant to be together, but right now, he was acting as if I was some random girl bothering him.

“I know a lot more than you think,” I said with a broken voice. “How dare you speak to me like you are? How dare you act like this to me after everything—”

Chapter 74 – Submitting to My Bestie’s Daddy Read Online

Filed to story:

“Again, this isn’t about you,” he snapped. “You always think it’s about you.”

For him to say that tore at me because it was the farthest from the truth. If he wanted to act like this, then I was done. I was trying to be understanding of the situation. Knowing the anger he was showing towards me was because of what had happened to Tally, and not actually me.

So I changed my tactics.

“You’re leaving your daughter upstairs right now when she needs you the most. That isn’t what a father does, no matter how angry he is.”

This seemed to make him pause, and as he did, his eyes scanned up at my apartment balcony, where Tally stood, watching the scene below unfold. She had seen how he acted towards me and had seen the argument unfold because it was anything but quiet.

Taking a moment, he let his shoulders sag, and I saw his age and stress weighing him down. Then he slowly made his way inside, leaving me barefoot outside in front of the building. I wanted to cry and let the sob that tore at me escape, but I couldn’t.

I wouldn’t allow anyone the pleasure of seeing me break.

Instead, I took a deep breath and turned towards the door, making my way inside. I wasn’t sure what would happen, but the last thing I would do was let this go.

The way he spoke to me was the last straw. It was obvious he didn’t love me as he thought.

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.

Becca.

After everything that had happened with James, I let myself succumb to the lust that took over on very often occasions. I loved him, but loving him wasn’t good for me. At least, I wasn’t sure if it was. I wanted him to stay, but I was so far past having the effort in this anymore.

I just wanted to sleep. Curl up in my bed, and hide away from the world.

There was no point in exhausting myself mentally, emotionally, and physically by fighting for a relationship that just could not work. At least, not right now. Perhaps when everything was said and done with my schoolwork and Tally had the baby, and James had figured out whatever else he had going on... then he could work towards something more.

Maybe anyway... who knew what the future would hold?

Chapter 75 – Submitting to My Bestie’s Daddy Read Online

Filed to story:

Laying In bed naked, I stared at the ceiling, trying to move around all the vivid thoughts I had. James and I had once again done what we usually did, and with as many questions as I had, I wanted to know what the truth was. I needed answers.

As the bathroom door opened, and he stepped out in nothing but his underwear, walking toward me with a smile, I couldn't help but wonder what he was going to tell me. What was so important he had to speak to me in person about it?

"You are absolutely stunning," he praised as he crawled onto the bed next to me, his lips brushing against my cheek as he let his hand slide over my stomach. "How is it that a woman like you has captivated a man like me?"

I couldn't help but look at him with a questioning gaze. "Was that supposed to be a negative comment? That a woman like I can capture the attention of a man like you."

"I didn't mean it like that," he laughed. As I rolled my eyes, a smirk crossed my lips. I knew he hadn't meant it like that, even though he had said it like that. I wasn't the kind of woman to take something completely out of context and throw a fit about it, though.

"What was it that you wanted to talk to me about?" I asked as he stopped in his tracks, opening and closing his mouth. His mood changed quickly.

"We don't have to do this right now."

"No, I think we do." Watching him closely, his expression turned to one of irritation as he looked off, sighing heavily. His chest rose and fell as he hesitated to tell me what it was he originally wanted to tell me.

"I've done a lot of bad things in my life, Becca. One of them was doing shady things to build my empire. Illegal things that caused people to get hurt."

It's no secret James was far from innocent. Hearing whispers growing up about how the family was built on things better left unspoken.

It wasn't my business, though. Who was I to judge?

"Okay." I whispered. "I knew you did some things... it was obvious. Why not explain that to me though? To help me better understand."

"You knew?"

The sideways glance he gave me caused me to giggle. "Uh, yeah. Come on now, I wasn't born yesterday." Groaning, he ran his hand over his face before letting his shoulders sag in defeat.

"I made deals with a Russian leader named Sergie years and years ago when I was just a young man trying to build an empire. My business with him led me to do very shady deals, mix with the wrong people, and make a lot of enemies. Now that I'm older, I tried to pull away from the business dealings I did before, but now I have created an enemy of Sergie."

My breath caught as I tried to comprehend what he was saying.

He was getting mixed up with the Russians? “Do you mean like the mafia?”

Slowly, he nodded his head, and my heart all but sank into the pit of my stomach. “Yes, I mean the mafia. Because I’m refusing to resign new deals, they are making threats that could potentially risk the safety of the people around me.”

I finally understood how dire the situation really was. The Russians were well known within the country, and they’re not somebody you messed with, and the fact he was refusing their leader was worse.

“Am I in danger?” I whispered, barely able to get the words out.

“No, you’re not in danger.”

Glancing at him quickly with wide eyes, I stared in shock. “How do you know that, though? How can you know that I’m not in danger?”

“Because I wouldn’t allow them to get anywhere near you.”

I sat up quickly on the bed, my naked body calling for clothing as I suddenly felt too bare. As if the entire world could see me. “James, you’re not making any sense. You literally just told me that the mafia is after you, and you’re saying I’m not in danger because you wouldn’t let danger come to me. You do realize we live thousands of miles apart.”

“I will do what I need to protect you regardless of the distance.”

“Oh, yeah, ’cause that’s possible.” Jumping from the bed, I grabbed my robe and wrapped it around me. “I had a feeling what you did wasn’t great, but like... I didn’t think this.”

“Becca, you’re safe—”

Spinning around to face him, I shook my head in disbelief. “It’s fine. I’m going to make a cup of tea. Would you like one?”

“No. Go make your tea and then come back up here. I want to spend the rest of my few hours with you before I leave in the morning.”

“You’re leaving in the morning?” I asked, slightly shocked. “When were you planning on telling me this?”

“I’m sorry, Becca. I do have to leave in the morning. I need to get Tally back down there to get her to the doctor. She’s refusing to go to the doctor here because she doesn’t want to implicate Chad.”

I could clearly see his priorities, and he was her father, so I respected that and didn’t argue. Nodding my head, I gave him a small smile and continued out the door. I had little time to think of what I would do, but obviously, I had a decision to make.

Chapter 76 – Submitting to My Bestie’s Daddy Read Online

Filed to story: [???](#)

The next morning came quickly, and I prepared for what was to come as it did.

James had tried more than once while I was helping Tally get ready to force me to take money from him, but of course, I wouldn’t. I didn’t want him reimbursing me for anything. I did what I did for her because I had a good heart. Nothing more, nothing less.

Dressed in my loose sundress, I slid all my sandals and went downstairs to where James and Tally were currently talking in the kitchen. As soon as I came in, the conversations died, and both stared at me. “Good morning.”

“Morning,” Tally replied with a bright and cheerful smile as James came up to me, his lips pressing against the side of my head as I stood there smiling. What was I supposed to do... respond like everything was okay?

“Are you guys ready to go?” I asked cheerfully as I pulled away from him.

“Yeah, the car is actually downstairs. We were just waiting for you to come down before we leave.”

“Well, let’s not keep them waiting, shall we?”

One by one, we headed out the front door, into the elevator, and down toward the parking lot. It was quiet for the most part, and Tally finally had a small smile back on her face. I guess the idea of going home to your million-dollar mansion was better than staying up here at school.

From what I had gathered, Tally had decided that she would take time off school and perhaps look at online courses simply because she was going to be a mother now and needed to focus on that.

I didn’t blame her one bit. Had I been in her situation, I would have done the same.

I hoped she would take this opportunity and all the things that had happened to her and grow up a little bit, taking responsibility for how she acts and what she’s doing. After all, she was about to bring another life into this world.

It was a scary thought, but as we stepped out of the elevator, I saw how James and her smiled and laughed with each other. With his help, I did not doubt she would do fine. He was her father, and no matter the wrong she did, he loved her.

It's what made this all so hard.

I was ending this, and he had no idea that I was.

I never judged him for the things he had done in his past, even though there was a chance my life was in danger now because of it. The problem lay with his inability to manage what he had going on and how he acted towards me.

I had given him chance after chance, and while I loved him, I couldn't keep allowing this to bring me down. I couldn't allow myself to continue like this, knowing he wouldn't be able to give me everything he had.

He had other priorities to worry about, and I wasn't one of them.

No matter what he tried to say.

As the driver opened the door, I watched Tally climb into the car's back seat while James turned back towards me. "So, make time to come down during fall break."

"What?" I asked, confused with a curious glance. "Fall break?"

"Yeah, I want you to come down. We can spend some time together, and have fun."

As enticing as that was, and normal me would jump at the opportunity, I couldn't. "James, that is not a good idea."

He frowned at me while narrowing his gaze. "What's wrong?"

"I don't think we should continue the way we are."

"No, you're not doing this. We are better. I apologized to you," he replied, shaking his head.

"You don't have time for me, James. Honestly, you don't. Not to mention the distance causes a lot of issues. You were right before... there is no way for this to work. As much as I want to believe otherwise, I can't."

"Becca—" He stepped forward.

"No, James. Please... just go. Take care of yourself, and we can maybe talk in the future."

There were no other words that needed to be said. Turning around, I made my way back towards the apartment's main doorway and refused to look back at him. If I did... I wouldn't be able to say goodbye.

Becca

Two weeks went by before I was actually able to find myself in some kind of contentment. The moment I broke it off with James, I went upstairs and cried my eyes out, unable to focus on

anything, and even when Monday came around, and my classes fell back into session, I just couldn't get myself together.

Everything, instead, went by in a blur. I felt trapped within my mind, trying to pay attention but doing so numbly because I had ended things with the man I loved. I couldn't deal with the complications. I couldn't keep dealing with the unassured way my life was going, the chaos constantly consuming me.

That was no way for any woman or man to live.

And though he wanted to keep a hold of me, I couldn't do that.

Looking at my phone, I stared at my missed calls from the day. Every day he called me, he would call twice or three times, trying to get me to pick up.

Sending me text messages telling me not to do this, and I at first replied. But now?

Every time my phone rang or chimed with a new notification, my heart clenched, on the verge of breaking again because I relived the pain every time he messaged me.

I tried to move past my stage of grief and into one of anger. I had not expected my life to turn this way, and everything went to shit because I had a relationship with him.

The fun, exciting moments did nothing when it came to my own sanity.

Shoving my phone back into my back pocket, I made my way across the quad, heading for my apartment. I needed to get away, and I had been looking at plane tickets all day long, thinking about going to my dad's for the fall break. But at the same time, I wasn't quite sure if I wanted to bring this chaos to his home.

As soon as I made my way into my apartment building and up the elevator to my floor, I opened the door and closed it behind me, letting out the heaviest breaths as I tried to wrap my head around what it was I could do.

While others were planning vacations to islands and Caribbean coasts, I was trying to survive. Even if I didn't go to my dad's, I couldn't just stay holed up here for weeks.

In a few months, I would be done with school. I would be moving on to bigger and better things, and taking time for myself was something that needed to happen.

After taking the two weeks to mourn a relationship that really should never have happened to begin with, I was starting to think with a clearer mind. Life didn't feel as complicated anymore, and I didn't really have this many issues. It was honestly peaceful.

Taking a moment to ponder over everything, I walked upstairs, picking up the basket of dirty clothes so I could take them downstairs to wash them, when something inside the basket caught my eye.

Inside the basket was a band shirt, and not just any band shirt. It was one I had Neal wear while he was here, so he was more comfortable when he had stayed the night.

I hadn't heard from Neal in about a week and a half. He had business outside of the country and had been very busy. Not to mention, I wasn't exactly the best person to speak with after everything that happened with James. But perhaps hanging out with him would make me feel better.

Of course, it would be just as friends. I was not planning to get into any kind of relationship with anybody anytime soon. Lord knows that would be nothing but a disaster, and Neal was too nice of a guy. I would never allow him to put himself in the rebound lane.

Dropping the basket at my feet, I pulled my phone from my pocket, scrolling through until I found his number.

It didn't take long for the phone to ring before his happy and bright voice came through the phone, causing an infectious smile to spread across my face.

"Well, hello, good-looking," he said cheerfully, causing a small laugh to escape me.

"I don't know about good-looking."

"Oh, please, you know, you're absolutely gorgeous. Now, what is it that I can do for you?" He caused me to grin as I grabbed the basket once more and headed down the stairs towards my laundry room.

Chapter 77 – Submitting to My Bestie's Daddy Read Online

Filed to story: [???](#)

"I was trying to see if you were still out of the country."

"Me out of the country? I wish. I'm actually back in New York, sitting in my living room at the moment with a glass of whiskey, trying to debate if I want to go deal with these idiots at the main office or simply stay here and allow my assistant to rip them apart," he countered with a snort.

"Oh, are they being that delightful?" I set the basket on my washing machine, trying to figure out exactly where I had put the brand-new box of soap I had bought.

Opening the cabinets, I looked through, listening to him tell me about how the people in his office had done nothing but cause more damage than good.

"Perhaps you just need to find somebody else to manage them. I mean, your assistant has to go with you to these meetings overseas. So it stands to reason that the office manager just isn't doing their job."

He was quiet for a moment, and I heard him hum over what I had just said. “Perhaps you’re right. Maybe I need to look at hiring somebody new.”

“Would stand to reason doing so,” I teased playfully.

“Besides that, enough with me. What’s going on with you? I know that you were calling for more than just to find out if I’m in town.”

Neal was always vigilant, and he knew me very well. “Well, as you know, things haven’t been that brilliant over the past two weeks, and I’m trying to figure out what I’m doing for fall break. I considered going down to my dad’s, but I don’t know if I want to bring all this mess down there to him. I was going to see if you had suggestions.”

“Hmm... are you feeling better after everything?”

I was quiet for a moment. I wasn’t really feeling better, but rolling my eyes, I let off a soft sigh. “I’m better than I was. I’m trying to find something fun to do to preoccupy myself with.”

“I get it. I’ve been there before myself, but as far as doing something fun, why don’t you just come here? I mean, your fall breaks for what... like a week or two?”

“It’s two weeks, but I don’t want to impose on you. I’m sure you’ve got tons of work to do.” Neal began to laugh at my comment, and as he did, I knew what he would say.

“I have not had any fun in two weeks, and if you think that I am going to pass up the opportunity to have your lovely ass grace my presence so that we can actually enjoy ourselves, you are sadly mistaken.”

“Are you sure? I really don’t want to impose.”

“If you don’t get your sweet ass here so we can go enjoy ourselves, whether it be sitting in the house, eating pizza and watching movies, or actually going to have drinks, I will come up there and drag you down here myself.”

It was clear he was serious. I knew Neal pretty well by now, and there was no way he would allow me to back out of coming down. My plans were set, and even though I’d hoped to see my father, I could always visit him during Christmas time. After all, that was a special time I spent with my family.

“Sounds good. I will be heading down there on the weekend, then?”

“That sounds perfect. I’ll have everything done, and we can ensure that we’re brilliantly enjoying our weekend and your next two weeks here.” He was enthusiastic about me coming, and I wasn’t quite sure why, but he always made me smile, no matter the situation, so I was grateful for his acceptance and for letting me come.

“Hey, maybe you can actually talk to your sister and see if she wants to come up. I haven’t seen her in so long, and I miss her so much,” I replied, hoping that Allegra coming could divert anything serious from happening between him and me.

“Allegra... sure, why not? I’ll give her a call as soon as I get off the phone with you. And tell her to get her ass up here, too. I’ve got two spare bedrooms, so there’s plenty of room.”

As soon as I hung up the phone with Neal, I felt ten times better about my situation. Yes, I was still sad about James, but at least I wouldn’t be sitting in my house the entire fall break wallowing in self-misery because the man I loved was more complicated than a horse’s ass.

Instead, I would be having fun with Neal and Allegra, enjoying New York City. There was still so much there I hadn’t properly enjoyed before. Which was crazy because I had been going to school here for years and never took the opportunity to go.

Closing the washing machine, listening to it fill, I flicked open my phone once more and glanced through my photos of James and I. There weren’t many pictures, but the few I had made my heart stop. I was happy with him, and even though I associated a lot of our relationship with hurt, I couldn’t forget how he made me feel.

I did love him... more than anything. The problem was that he lived a life I couldn’t.

No matter how much I tried to find right in it all, I couldn’t overlook the danger. I couldn’t overlook the complications, and I couldn’t overlook how he belittled me when all I did was try to help him.

It was time to try and put this behind me and look forward to the future I had planned.

Who knew, maybe my time with Allegra and Neal would allow me to reflect on it all and realize that there was no way I could have continued down a path with James.

My place was to be independent... even if it hurt.

Becca

The weekend came quicker than I imagined and before I knew it, I was in my car driving to New York City. Even though Neal had absolutely refused for me to do so. He said he would have me flown down here, but I enjoyed driving.

It gave me time to clear my mind and relax in the scenery.

That is, of course, until I actually got into New York City and then reminded myself why I did not enjoy living in a city, nor driving in one. It was nothing but utter chaos.

The bumper to bumper traffic was crazy, and nobody knew how to drive. Nobody used turn signals. People just walked right out in front of you in the middle of the road like they owned the damn place.

I don’t know how many times I had to slam on my brakes because I almost hit somebody.

But as I pulled into the parking garage of Neal’s building and found the lovely parking space he had reserved for me, I couldn’t be happier.

This was going to be an absolutely amazing vacation.

Regardless of how the past few months had gone.

Twenty minutes later, I was standing in Neal's open doorway with my suitcase in tow, smiling at him before a very excited Allegra came barreling towards the door. She wrapped her arms around me, smiling and laughing with more excitement than I had expected.

"Oh, my god, it's so good to see you. It feels like it's been ages."

"It has been ages." I laughed as I hugged her back. "I'm so glad that you're here, though."

"I am too. I'm so sorry I haven't been able to come see you sooner," she replied, letting her smile fall slightly. "Things have been so crazy, and I was out of the country. Speaking of which... I'm sorry to hear about James."

The mention of James's name caused an ache in my chest to grow.

My smile fell, and I nodded slowly, but only until Neal spoke up.

"Hey, I'm endorsing a new rule in my house for the next two weeks. There is to be no mention of that man or his daughter or anything that happened before today while she is here." There was a seriousness in his eyes that caught me by surprise.

I could see he was only trying to make sure I didn't spend my vacation upset, but still I wondered, why was he so good to me?

"Seriously," Allegra said, cocking an eyebrow at him with her hand upon her hip.

"Yes, seriously. These next two weeks are about having fun. Nothing depressing at all," he replied, looking between the two of us with a grin on his face.

"Okay, okay. Let me take my suitcase and go get unpacked. That drive took absolutely forever."

"Well, I did tell you I would fly you down here, but you were so insistent on driving," Neal chimed in as I grabbed my suitcase and wheeled it towards the bedroom I had stayed in before.

"Yes, but the scenery was amazing," I called out over my shoulder, listening to Neal and Allegra laugh at my comment.

The moment I stepped into my room, I felt at peace. Almost like I was home, in a sense. I knew I had only stayed here for a short period before, but it felt peaceful because it was the closest thing to home with my dad that I had.

I didn't have to worry or stress about anything.

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I didn’t have anybody harassing me 24/7 about not having the right outfit to see somebody or someone was acting out of place. I didn’t even have the toxicity of wondering if I was good enough or enough for someone to love me when they said they did but then didn’t show it.

It was just... peaceful.

As I unpacked my suitcase, I was looking forward to the things I wanted to do while I was here for the next two weeks. I heard footsteps across the wooden floors, heading directly for my open doorway. Sure enough, as I looked over my shoulder, Neal stood there, leaning against the door frame with his arms crossed over his chest and a grin across his lips.

“Are you finding everything okay?”

“Everything’s great. Thank you so much for letting me come,” I replied, trying to show him I was sincere in what I was saying. “I’m really glad to have you and Allegra here.”

I appreciated him, and even though we had had our own past, I would not let that stand in the way of us having a great time while I was here on vacation.

“Tonight, I thought that we could order some food in and just kind of hang out.”

“That sounds great.” Pushing a smile on my face, I looked around the room, taking a moment to think about food. “How about we order pizza? I honestly don’t think I should cook it.”

Neal laughed at my comment as I thought back to when he had visited me. “Yeah, I don’t think that pizza turned out the way we were planning for it to turn out.”

“Definitely not. At least it was edible, though, otherwise we both would have starved.”

The eruption of laughter that came from me wasn’t something I had heard for quite some time. I was actually smiling, and when Neal took a step closer to me, I felt heated tension burning inside me.

“Thank you for everything,” I whispered.

“You don’t have to thank me, Becca. I wouldn’t have it any other way.”

Giving a small smile, my cheeks tinted with pink, I looked away, only to hear him clear his throat after a moment of silence.

“All right then, I’ll call the pizza and have it delivered. Just come on out whenever you’re ready.”

Nodding my head slowly, my eyes met his again, and without another word, I watched him turn to leave.

Neal

When Becca called me and asked about finding something to do during her fall break, I didn't hesitate in asking her to come to my place. For two weeks, I had done nothing but think about her, and when she had called me a couple days after she had broken it off with James—I was overwhelmed with joy.

Even though I felt bad she was hurting.

That piece of shit had broken her heart after she gave him another chance. The man didn't deserve chances with her. A woman like Becca was rare, and because of that, she only deserved the best.

I knew she loved him, and I wouldn't ever be able to replace him. But part of me couldn't help but wonder if I could make her happy. That once she had time to get over him, she might be interested in me.

Letting a heavy sigh escape me, I made my way out into the living room, only to see the scrutinizing gaze of my sister on me. "So, are you finally going to tell her?"

"Tell her what?" I asked, hoping she wasn't referring to a conversation she and I had after the last time I had left Becca's apartment. Yet, as she rolled her eyes, I knew what she was talking about.

"You know exactly what I'm talking about, Neal. You need to be honest with her. Now that she's not with James, she's fair game."

"She isn't a game, Allegra," I replied, trying to ignore her. My sister had a tendency to overwork a situation, and even though she and Becca were very close, it didn't change the fact Becca only wanted James right now.

I wouldn't allow myself to be the rebound guy.

"They aren't together anymore, and you're infatuated with her. Grow a set and tell her."

"That's irrelevant, Allegra," I snapped in a whisper. "She isn't ready for that, and she doesn't want me. If she did, she would have chosen me."

"Things were different then. James had her so conflicted about what she wanted, she didn't understand what she was getting herself into." Allegra's nonchalant attitude was irritating to no end. I wanted more than anything to tell her to leave, but she was my guest.

A guest for Becca—even though I wanted Becca to myself.

"Look, if she wants me, she'll say it, but I don't need you interfering in it. She just got over everything with James, and she needs time to heal."

A small fit of laughter escaped her as she shook her head. “No, what she needs is for someone to f*ck her until the only name she remembers is theirs. Then, she won’t care about James anymore.”

“Allegra...” I said with a heavy sigh as I pinched the bridge of my nose. “That may work for you, but she isn’t that kind of person.”

When my eyes met hers once more, she stared at me intently. I held her intimidating gaze well, and after a moment, she scoffed and rolled her eyes, crossing her arms over her chest. “Fine, whatever. We are going out, though, this weekend.”

“Going out?” I repeated with furrowed brows as I tried to understand why she was making plans for us when we hadn’t even talked to Becca to see what she wanted to do.

“Yeah, we’re going out. I ended up getting us into that nightclub. What is it called? Levox or something? Anyway, it’s usually only VIP and upscale clients, but I just called Emery and had her put us on the list.”

“You did what?” Taking a moment, I tried to comprehend what she was saying while also trying to remember what club Levox was. The realization flooded through my mind like a tidal wave. “Allegra, that’s a f*cking sex club!” I whispered in shock.

“Uh, yeah. I know.”

“Allegra... you can’t just make those kinds of plans like that.” My stunned response seemed to catch her attention and cocking her eyebrow, she shrugged her shoulders.

“Why not? She loved Club Velvet.”

“Yeah, with James,” I replied, shaking my head. “She came to relax here, not get her freak on. You can’t just do this. She isn’t that kind of girl.”

With a smirk spreading from ear to ear, she slowly stood from where she was sitting, and took the few steps towards me with nothing but determination lingering in her eyes. “Look, you know Becca in a certain way, and so do I. She may not like to go out, but I promise you she will have so much fun at this club this weekend. It’s what she needs to do to loosen up.”

I wasn’t sure about this, but I couldn’t argue with her. If it backfired, I would just blame everything on Allegra and hope that Becca took my side. The last thing I wanted was for her to be angry at me.

Guess only time would tell if I made the right choice.

James

It had been two weeks since I had spoken to Becca. I still couldn’t believe the moment I was leaving, she found comfort being able to just call it off with me.

Maybe I should have tried to force her to stay with me or something. I didn’t know what the f*ck I was doing or thinking.

At the end of the day, I'd just let her go. I let her say goodbye to me. Even though it killed me, it was happening. I had done so much for her, and she didn't seem to want to make it work. She just wanted a way out, and as hurt as I was—I was angry.

No matter how many times I'd called, no matter how many times I texted her—nothing.

Only twice did she respond, and those were vaguely a conversation. Her response was just like the other times we'd argued. She told me I had priorities I needed to situate, and she wasn't one of them. That perhaps in the future, things would change.

I was angry, on edge, unable to focus on a goddamn thing because she clouded every single moment of my waking mind.

It was as if the woman had put a spell on me, and there was no way for me to break it. I could only focus a bit when I was helping Tally with baby things. As soon as we got back, I'd taken her to the doctor and got her checked out.

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Thankfully, the baby was okay, and Tally's due date was fast approaching.

As soon as Chad found out Tally had returned to me, he called and threatened her. It was a situation I took seriously, and his threats struck me to my core. He was going to try and take the baby... told her he hoped they both died.

The little prick didn't realize what he was saying. Nor did he understand who I was.

Regardless of what Tally had done in the past, she was still my daughter. I would never understand what it was Becca and Tally saw in that idiot, but he would get what was coming to him one day. That was a promise.

I had promised her I would leave it alone, and for now, I would.

It was far from over, though. Far from ever being over.

I had other plans and means of taking care of things, and one of them happened to be a trip I was making to New York where I would be confronting a specific somebody and making things very clear to them I wouldn't settle for the bullshit.

Sitting behind my desk at work, I tried to busy myself with everything going on. Sergie had made a point to threaten me more than once, and while I had security teams doubled up on a Tally, I couldn't help but contemplate if I should have taken things more seriously with Becca.

I wanted to protect her, but if we weren't together, then technically, she wouldn't be in any harm. Not much I would need to worry about, and even when Allison found out we broke up because of Tally... she seemed dubious about whether to actually believe that.

I didn't want the woman anywhere near my daughter, the house, or anything else, but she seemed to keep trying to slink her way back in.

At least this time, Tally was handling the situation better.

The moment Allison started her shift, Tally told her to get the f*ck out of the house. She didn't want to hear anything bad about Becca. The only thing she wanted was, I believe, a jar of pickle juice and a box of saltine crackers.

Not that I could say that was weird. Her mother craved far worse.

Tally had grown huge. Not fat wise, but her stomach, the baby growing, had made her far larger than I had ever seen a woman. She was showing as if carrying twins, but in reality, only one very large baby boy grew in there.

I had always wanted a son, and unfortunately, I never was able to have one. At first, Allison hadn't even wanted Tally, and the thought of ruining her figure for another child was out of the question. The woman was beyond selfish in every way.

I was excited, though. I would have a grandson I could give the family name to. A grandson who could carry on traditions. One I could teach and watch grow to take over my business one day, but at least this way, it would be in the right direction.

It wouldn't be a business built on shady dealings and crooked people.

It would be wholesome and legit.

Perhaps this child would be enough to change how things were now and make the future better.

Even the name she had picked out for him was beautiful—Alessandro.

Pulling out my phone, I couldn't stop thinking about sharing these joyous moments with Becca. To see her face smiling back at me from my phone screen. My heart broke, knowing it wasn't possible. Knowing she wouldn't even speak to me after everything I had done.

But there was somebody I could call who she did speak to. Someone who could let me know if she was okay. So instead of dialing Becca's phone number, I called Allegra and hoped she wouldn't scorn me for everything that had happened.

"This better be good for you to call me right now," she answered in a sour tone.

“It’s nice to talk to you as well. I just wanted to call to see if you had heard anything about Becca.”

“She isn’t your concern anymore, James. You f*cked things up not once, but twice. Why are you worrying about what or how she’s doing?” Irritation was clear in her tone, and holding myself back, I took a deep breath, trying to remember she was simply acting like this because I had hurt her friend.

“I’m curious because I care about her regardless of what you or anybody else thinks. I still love her and know I will fix things with her one day. One day, I will bring her home and marry her.”

“Yeah, I highly doubt that. But it’s sweet that you still love her,” Allegra hummed. “Piece of advice, though... she’s healing for once, James. Don’t you think it’s time to let her go?”

Hearing Allegra say I needed to let her go just made things worse.

How was I ever going to let her go?

“I can never let her go. You don’t understand it because you’re not in my position, but I love her, and all that matters to me is making sure she’s safe and happy.”

When I said that, I heard giggling laughter in the phone’s background and knew who it was. That was Becca’s laughter. Becca was with Allegra?

Was she here in Miami?! Or did Allegra go there...

“Allegra, what are you doing? Come on, we’re waiting for you,” Becca said softly in the background. My heart lurched, wanting to speak to her, but I knew Allegra would not let that happen.

“Look, I have to go. She’s waiting for me.”

“You went to go see her? Please, just tell me she’s okay,” I asked quickly before she could hang up the phone.

With a groan of protest, I could tell Allegra didn’t want to tell me anything, but after a moment of reluctance, she did. “I’m not in Connecticut, okay. I’m in New York, and I’m at my brother’s house. Becca’s on fall break right now, and she came up here to spend two weeks with Neal and me.”

Hearing his name made my jaw clench with anger, my fist turning white as I held my phone to my ear. I should have known as soon as something happened, Neal would swoop in to try and steal her from me.

“What is your brother trying to do? Get into her bed just because she’s not with me?”

“Excuse me? Are you really seriously making those accusations?” she snapped. “First off, you don’t have the right to say shit like that. At least he is trying to make her smile. All you have done for weeks is make her cry.”

“Why else would your brother ask her to come there? It’s well known he cares for her, that he is in love with her, and wants her there for himself. Two weeks. It’s been two weeks, and he’s already f*cking trying to worm his way into her life.”

I could hear shoes tapping on the floor before a door closed. “Listen to me, you f*cking prick. She is still wrapped up in you, but she is slowly getting better every day you are away from her. She asked to come here and asked for me to come up. She wanted to spend time with us. It wasn’t my brother’s idea. It wasn’t mine. It was hers. She isn’t interested in being with anybody, including you. The only thing she wants to do is to be normal and have fun.”

As if I had been slapped in the face, I realized I had misjudged the entire situation. Not that I didn’t have my reservations about the fact that Neal wanted to be with her.

“Allegra—” I said before she quickly cut me off.

“No, you don’t get to do this. Don’t you dare, Allegra me. You have become a very selfish f*cking man, James Valentino. You need to think about what you really want. Now that you don’t have her there as a complication or leverage, take the advantage to fix your f*cking mistakes so you can actually be with her if that’s what you want.”

Allegra confused me. One moment she was looking to ring my balls and hang me by my feet from the ceiling, and the next minute she told me I needed to be the man Becca needed.

It was like she was on my side one minute and then wasn’t the next.

“I will be everything she needs.”

“Perfect. Then do it without f*cking calling her every day. She doesn’t need you to call or text her all the time. Once a week is fine if you want, but at the end of the day... she’s not your girlfriend, and you need to learn to let her go.”

With the click of a phone, I realized the conversation was done, but the last thing Allegra said kept ringing through my mind repeatedly.

Becca was not my girlfriend anymore.... She wasn’t my anything.

Not only that, but Allegra said I needed to let her go.

As if that was even possible.

Becca

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Filed to story: [???](#)

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.

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.