

Chapter 91 – Submitting to My Bestie’s Daddy Read Online

Filed to story:

“Yes, more than anything.”

James

Over the past few days, I have worked with Greg and a few others trying to figure out a game plan in order to take down Sergie and his men. They were indeed watching me, watching my every move, and with that, I had to be very careful because if they had got wind of what I was doing, it would surely end bad for me and anybody I cared about.

Stepping up precautions, I hired additional security guards from an outside source. Some of the extra precautions were even undercover agents Greg wanted placed around my property to ensure they had eyes there should anything happen.

I wasn’t pleased about it, but what was I going to do, tell them no?

Leaning back in my office chair at my house, I tried to think over everything that had been going on. Since the day I met Greg, it had been nonstop work trying to figure out ways to catch Sergie.

I wasn’t quite sure why they thought Sergie would come out of the woodworks for me, but then again, it made sense he would jump at any opportunity to get back in my good graces and on all my books.

Even if Sergie thought he was doing me a favor by letting me work with him.

The arrogant prick.

Letting out a heavy sigh, I looked at my watch. I was patiently waiting for a meeting with some woman from the department who was going to inform me of our next steps in the process of all this bullshit. I didn’t like all these unfamiliar faces being brought into it, but Greg assured me each of these people were important to making sure this worked.

At the end of the day, I was going to end up going to jail. At least I wouldn’t be dead, though.

With that being said, I had a lot of other things I had to consider. Like making sure that my affairs were in order, and left to someone I could trust. Someone who would take care of shit and make sure it was done properly.

That person wasn’t Tally—even if she was my daughter.

If I had left everything to Tally, she wouldn’t know how to conserve the money or run anything. She would easily be pushed over, and eventually Allison would wiggle her way in to try to take it

all. Not that Allison could do it at first. According to Greg, she was looking at jail time, too, for conspiracy to commit murder.

My murder. The f*cking bitch.

At the end of the day, the only other person who I could think to do this for me was going to be Becca. We may have not been on the best of terms, but I trusted her, which was saying a lot, considering we didn't know each other very well until she came down for the summer and became my sex slave behind closed doors.

But she was smart, had a good head on her shoulders, and knew what she was doing.

I would simply have to put her down as the executor to my estate and all of my finances, including my company, and hope when the time came for it, she wouldn't look the other way. Hopefully, she would put the past aside and take care of things.

A soft knock at my door caught my attention, and as I looked over, I saw my housekeeper standing there with a concerned look on her face. "Sir, I just got word Tally has been rushed to the hospital."

I wasn't sure why my phone hadn't rung with this information, but quickly standing, I walked towards her. "What happened? She said she was going out shopping. Did something happen?"

"She's gone into labor, sir. Her driver called to inform me because he couldn't get through to you on your phone."

With the phone in my hand, I looked through it. There were no received calls, and suddenly, uneasiness crashed over me as I contemplated my phone had been tampered with. Either from Sergie and his men or possibly Greg's.

Either way, I needed a new phone.

"Tell my driver to prepare my car," I exclaimed as I quickly sent a message telling Greg I would have to reschedule our meeting. I didn't care who may have messed with my phone. This was my daughter, and I was going to be there.

My housekeeper didn't waste a second in pressing forward to do as I asked her, and as soon as the message was sent, I closed my office door and made my way through the house towards the front door where my driver was patiently waiting.

My mind was focused on one thing, and one thing only. Tally and her baby.

Everything else was irrelevant at that moment.

As the car pulled off onto the streets of Miami and headed straight for the hospital, I glanced down at my phone in my hand looking at the backdrop photo of Becca I had taken months before. Her smiling face looked back at me, taunting me to kiss her.

I wasn't sure if she would want to know about Tally, but opening my phone, I sent her a message.

'Tally went into labor early. Headed to the hospital.'

I wasn't sure why I would think Becca would care about this considering the past and everything that had happened, but my phone chimed with a notification, and looking down, I saw her reply.

'Keep me posted. Hope she is okay.'

It wasn't the reply I was looking for, but it was something.

Deciding not to press the issue with Becca, I looked up to notice my car pulling into the hospital parking lot and stopping right in front of the door. A very frantic Allison stood, waiting for me more than likely. Taking a deep breath, I stepped out onto the entryway, closing the door behind me only for Allison to come running up with teary eyes.

"They won't tell me anything."

"I'm not surprised. What the f*ck are you doing here, Allison?" I scoffed at her. "She told you to leave her alone. Did you cause her to go into labor early by stressing her out?"

Her mouth parted, and her eyes went wide at my comment. "F*ck you, James. No, I didn't. The security guy I have following her told me what happened. I know all about your issues with Sergie, and I had to make sure she was safe."

"My issues?" I laughed. "Issues you caused primarily. Get the f*ck out of my way."

Pushing past her, I made my way into the hospital, towards the reception desk, where a woman told me to go up to the third floor. Taking the elevators to my left, I did as she said and arrived on the maternity ward rather quickly.

The sound of Tally cursing everyone out traveled down to where I was standing.

"Sir, you can't be up here without a pass," a short, plump nurse said with her hands on her hips as she stood in front of me.

"That's my f*cking daughter, and if you don't get out of my way, you and I are going to have problems," I sneered as I stared down at her, waiting for her to make the right decision and move.

"Taliana Valentino, is your daughter?"

"Yes, she is. Now get the f*ck out of my way," I snapped.

"Sir, you can't go back there right now. She's getting ready to go to surgery. She needs to have an emergency C-section. It's for hers and the baby's safety."

Hearing this, my heart almost sank. "What happened? Is she going to be okay?"

"Yes, sir, she's going to be fine. Sometimes this happens. She is close enough to her due date, though, that there should be no major complications with the baby." Her reply was somewhat comforting, but I was still concerned, regardless.

If anything happened to her or my grandchild, I didn't know what I would do.

"Well, I still need to see her. I still need to let her know that I'm here."

"Unfortunately, you can't. Currently, she's being prepared for a sterile room, and if you go in there, you could contaminate it, which is what we don't want. If you want, there is a waiting room right around the corner. You can wait there, and as soon as she's done, I will come and let you know personally that she is okay." She sure was being nice to me for the way I'd spoken to her a moment ago.

The last thing I wanted to do was contaminate Tally or the baby and risk the chance of them getting sick or dying because I was impatient. So instead of arguing with her, I nodded and walked towards the direction she had pointed to wait for them to come tell me what was going on.

Waiting to hear something took the longest few hours of my life. I sat there waiting regardless, scrolling through my phone, trying to reach out to anybody I could think of that I needed to inform. The only problem being, we didn't really have much family. It was just us.

And Allison, of course, who sat on the opposite side of the room, refusing to leave.

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Why she had come, I had no idea. Tally had made it clear she did not want her mother present, that she did not want her mother involved. Yet, here her mother was, acting like the caring woman she should have been, when in reality it was all just a show.

The moment the doctor and nurse walked into the room, I was on my feet rushing towards them, Allison, unfortunately, not far behind me.

"Is she okay?" I blurted. "Is the baby okay?"

The doctor smiled at me, nodding his head. "Both mother and baby are doing well. Tally is out of recovery and being taken to her room. You will be able to see her in about thirty minutes. The baby, however, will have to stay in the NICU for a week or so to make sure that he is healthy, and will be okay on his own."

Hearing they were both okay was a weight lifted off my shoulders. Tears sprang to my eyes. I tried to wipe them away, and for a moment, I had completely forgotten that Allison was there. That was until she spoke like she had a place to and ruined the moment.

“Do we know if there’s going to be any major complications with my grandson?”

The doctor glanced from Allison to me as I nodded, showing him he could speak to her and answer the question. “As far as we know, the baby will be perfectly fine.”

“Do I need to take any precautions before I go in to see her?” I cut in, asking the doctor, not wanting Allison to speak any more on the subject.

“Yes, her nurse will help you with that. However, I do need to get going. I will check in with Tally in a few hours to see how she is doing,” the doctor replied, giving me a small smile, but before he could walk off, Allison grabbed him by the arm, stopping him.

“What about me? I’m her mother. I need to be back there, too.”

The nurse’s eyes narrowed at Allison as she reached over, releasing Allison’s grip on the doctor. “I can handle this, doctor. We will see you later.”

He didn’t bother to say anything and disappeared from the room. As soon as he did, though, the nurse’s narrowed gaze turned towards Allison and amusement ran through me. “As I told you earlier, Allison, your daughter doesn’t want you near her or the baby. So you may leave, or I will have you removed. The choice is yours.”

Ouch. The blow to Allison’s ego made a smirk cross my face that hadn’t been there in days.

“That’s ridiculous. I’m her mother. She doesn’t have a say—”

“Why don’t you just take a hint and get the f*ck out of here, Allison? Our daughter doesn’t want you here, and you’ve done enough damage to last a lifetime,” I said, cutting her off before she could finish her sentence.

At the end of the day, I didn’t have pity for this woman, and neither did anyone else. She would have to learn to lie in the beds she made and deal with her consequences.

Becca

The last thing I expected was for James to message me out of the blue while I was trying to get coffee and tell me Tally had gone into labor. I didn’t think I would care as much as I did, but the moment I heard, I panicked for her.

Tears sprang to my eyes as I thought of what could happen.

She may not have been a good person her entire life, but from what I saw and have heard, she was trying, and everyone deserves a second chance. She had been through so much, and this baby was a way for her to start over. To make amends for her actions.

I knew it was stupid for me to act this way, considering everything she had done to me, but I was only human, and a very caring one at that. So considering I had such a large heart, the last thing I wanted was for something to happen to her or the baby.

Trying to preoccupy myself until I got the news, I meandered around my apartment trying to catch up on homework, dishes, and anything else that needed done. My hands were wrinkly and red from cleaning everything in sight and eventually, when my phone chimed, I scurried to answer it.

It had taken hours to hear from him, but in the end, he messaged me to let me know she and the baby were doing perfectly fine. It was like a weight had been lifted off my shoulders, and as I texted him back, letting him know I was glad everything was okay. I couldn't help but wonder if I should have been there.

It was stupid, I know, but would anyone honestly blame me for letting that fleeting thought pass through my mind? To be conscious enough to know even though he had been a complete asshole, I still had been there for most of her life and she had nobody else?

Perhaps I was simply too caring for my own good.

"She's not my problem anymore. She's not my problem anymore." The mantra rang through my mind repeatedly as I placed down my phone and picked up the remote to my TV.

My exams were coming up quickly, and I was not prepared in the slightest. Now, with a baby on the way, I really had to think about where my life was going to go and what I was going to do. In seven months, I would have a brand new baby here that would need every part of me, because honestly... who knew if James would be there?

Why did my life have to be so damn complicated?

Laying back, I tried to close my eyes, my mind racing with the possibility of what my future was going to be and even how I was going to manage. The only thing I knew for certain was I was my mother's daughter, and because I was, I knew I could be strong.

I knew I could do this because she was with me everywhere I went.

She wouldn't let me do this on my own.

Neal

Jolting up in bed, my eyes scanned the darkened room before me. Sweat poured down across my skin as I tried to catch my breath. Another nightmare I couldn't escape. My mind often went back to the darkened hallways of the boarding school I had gone to when I was younger.

Allegra had been the bright star in our family, and with our parents caring more about themselves than us, I found myself growing up in VanDeacon's Preparatory Academy. A place that had good memories, but also terrible ones.

Pinching the bridge of my nose, I closed my eyes tight and tried to remind myself that that was years ago, and no one could ever hurt me again. No one would ever find out about what had happened there.

Pushing myself from the bed, I paced my bedroom before walking towards the kitchen to get a glass of water. Everything from the day had been a complete mess, and now with Becca pregnant, our future was even more unsure.

There was no way James was going to allow her to walk away. He was a possessive man, and god forbid she had a son. He had wanted one for years, and Allison had only blessed him with a daughter. A daughter who was sometimes out of control.

“F*ck!” I screamed to no one in particular.

How did I let this girl get under my skin like she did?

How did I allow myself to fall for her?

I was a f*cking mess, and there was nothing I could do to fix it. Even if I went abroad, and tried to forget about ever meeting her... it wouldn't be possible. I saw her face every time I closed my eyes.

Picking up my phone, I called the only person I could talk to about anything.

“Neal? What’s wrong? Why are you calling so late?” Allegra said sleepily into the phone.

Tears brimmed my eyes because of my confusion. “The nightmares are back.”

“Oh, sweetie,” she hushed into the phone. “When did they start?”

“A few days ago,” I sighed, running my hand through my hair before letting it slide over my face. “I thought they were gone.”

“Me too,” she whispered. “So they started after Becca left?”

I hadn't actually realized what she said until she said it, and hearing it now, I paused in reflection. The nightmares had been gone for so long, and the moment I started getting close to someone again, they came back?

“Do you think it’s because of her I’m having them?”

“No,” she laughed. “Not because she is close to you, but because you’re afraid of losing her.”

Laughing, I shook my head as I stood and walked towards the large bay windows of my apartment, glancing down at the busy street. It was crazy how, even at this time of day; the streets were busy, and the city was alive.

“I’m not afraid to lose her, Allegra.”

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She scoffed through the phone, and I could almost picture her rolling her eyes. “Yes, you are. I don’t know why you’re lying to yourself.”

“It isn’t like that, Allegra. This is completely different.”

“No, it’s not,” she snapped. “The doctor told you years ago that this could happen when you get close to another woman. The only way you’re going to fix this is to tell her the truth. Tell her you love her, and that you want her to be with you.”

Reflecting on the fleeting memory, I rolled my eyes, shaking my head. “She is pregnant, Allegra. I was going to tell her everything over Christmas break, but now her life is more complicated than ever. I can’t push myself on her, no matter how much I care about her.”

“A baby isn’t a complication, Neal,” she said condescendingly.

She was right. A baby wasn’t a complication, but the father of that child was. “He isn’t going to let the two of them go.”

“It isn’t f*cking about him, Neal. Stop worrying about what James is going to say or do. She is going to be with you or she isn’t. You’re simply making excuses.”

Maybe I was making excuses, but only because I was afraid of being hurt again. I was afraid once she found out who I was, she would run away from me. She would see how ugly I really was and I would lose her forever.

Often, I wondered if keeping her at arm’s length would be better.

“I’ll think about it,” I replied, trying to change the subject.

“No, you need to do something about it.”

That was my sister. So damn pushy, and so touchy when someone doesn’t listen to her. Yet, through the years, she has been the only thing keeping me grounded. Everyone else either left, or couldn’t understand who I was.

“Okay. I heard you. I’m gonna go. Get some sleep.”

Hanging up the phone, I laid it down on the counter, and stared off into nothing, trying to determine how I was going to make this work. How I was going to be able to get past the circumstances I was in to make a life I could be happy with?

It didn't matter how much money I had or how lavish my lifestyle was. I wasn't happy, and I finally realized the day I met Becca and saw how carefree and happy she was in Club Velvet with Allegra and I.

That, of course, was until James came in and stole her away from me.

"F*ck it," I snapped as I rushed towards my bedroom and straight towards my closet. I had a meeting the next day, but it was going to have to wait. There were things I needed to do, and priorities I couldn't put aside.

For once in my life, I would not push aside my feelings and be afraid of everything going on around me. For once, I had to take a leap of faith and do something that was going to make me happy, and that was being with Becca.

Becca hadn't just become a woman I had fallen in love with. She was slowly becoming my best friend, and a life without her wasn't one that I wanted. I knew very well how complicated her situation was, but if she let me, I would be there for her.

I would be the person she needed to lean on.

As soon as my bag was packed, I rushed through the living room grabbing my phone, keys, and wallet. The front door slammed behind me as I made my way towards the elevator and down to the garage.

I wanted to be there when she woke up.

I wanted to be the first person she saw every morning when she opened her eyes.

And I was going to make sure of that.

I was going to make her happy, even if it killed me.

Putting the car into reverse, I pulled from my space and made my way towards the main city roads of New York City. The drive would take a few hours, but that would give me enough time to think of what exactly I was going to say to her.

I was going in without a plan, which was something I had never done before, but for Becca it was f*cking worth it.

Becca will never know what it feels like to be alone.

Even if I had to get rid of James forever, I would do it.

I'd f*cking kill him to keep her, and that was a damn promise.

Becca

The sound of loud knocking woke me from my sleep in the middle of the night. I wasn't exactly sure at first where the hell the noise was coming from, but as soon as my mind focused, I realized

someone was pounding on my front door. Glancing towards my clock, I groaned seeing it was close to 5:00 in the morning.

“What the f*ck?”

Sliding from my bed, I wrapped my robe around me and made my way downstairs where the persistent knocking continued. The person on the other side was relentless in their endeavor to piss me off for waking me up at this hour.

Looking through the peephole, my heart stopped for just a moment. There on the other side of my door was Neal. His hair was disheveled as if he hadn't been sleeping. Not to mention he was wearing sweats and a T-shirt, a duffle bag in hand. “What the hell...” I muttered to myself as I opened the front door.

His gorgeous eyes locked with mine, and as they did, he stepped into the apartment, pressing his lips against mine as he shut the door behind him. The movement took my breath away, but I wasn't complaining. Instead, I melted into him.

“God, I missed you,” he whispered softly, leaning his forehead against mine.

“Neal... what are you doing here?” Looking up into his eyes, I tried to understand why he was here. The last thing I knew, he had a meeting this morning and was supposed to be flying out of town.

“I came to see you. Are you not happy to have me here?”

“No, that's not what I meant.” I laughed. “I'm very happy to see you. But I thought you had a meeting this morning, and you were supposed to go out of town.”

“Yeah, I did.”

“... But you decided not to go?” I asked when he didn't elaborate further.

“You're more important to me, Becca.”

I was confused about what was running through his mind. Neal had always been so guarded in a way, but right now, it was as if all his walls were down, and I was seeing him for the first time.

Vulnerable. Broken.

Running my hand across the soft touch of his skin, I wrapped my arms around his neck and pulled him closer. It didn't take a genius to figure something was bothering him, but deciding not to press the issue anymore, I kissed him gently. “Let's go back to bed.”

Nodding his head, he picked me up into his arms, causing a sound of surprise to escape me as he carried me up the stairs towards my bedroom. “Neal, what are you doing?”

“What does it look like?” He grinned as he continued on his parade.

“You don't have to carry me. I can walk.” I laughed.

“I know.”

Raising a brow, a smirk fell over my lips. “You know, but you don’t care?”

“Essentially,” he replied as he pushed open my bedroom door, and carried me towards the bed, laying me down gently. “I will take care of you.”

I wasn’t sure what his admission was about, but before I could ask, he stripped off his shirt, causing a pink tinge to cross my cheeks before he slid off his sweatpants, standing in my room in nothing but tight boxer briefs. His sculpted legs, and well defined—package—on full display.

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“Not tonight,” he whispered as he climbed onto the bed and pressed his lips against mine. “You need to rest. Growing a baby requires lots of rest.”

I wasn’t sure what had come over him or why he had driven hours to get to my place, completely rejecting all the things he had to do today, but I was too tired to argue with him. Too tired to contemplate what was going on.

It was best just to wait till morning, and as I snuggled into the crook of his arm, I felt a sense of safety pass over me I hadn’t had before. A sense of security that made my heart warm, and my mind clear of the fog it once held before.

I wasn’t sure what time it was when I finally woke up, but the streams of filtered sunlight streaming through my curtains let me know it was morning. Stretching in my bed, I glanced around, realizing I was alone. I was almost certain Neal had been here with me.... Did I dream up the entire thing?

Sliding from the bed, I made my way towards the bathroom to freshen up, and as I stepped inside, I saw his toiletry bag on the counter. I hadn’t dreamt the entire thing. Neal had really come to me in the middle of the night... but where was he?

Finishing in the bathroom, I made my way downstairs, only to stop halfway gazing into the living room where Neal sat with a cup of coffee and his laptop. He was typing away intently, his eyes never looking up, and it amazed me how he could have passed for a college student himself.

“Good morning,” I said softly, causing his eyes to gaze up at me from his laptop, a smile spreading across his face before he quickly stood up and cleared the space between us.

“Good morning, beautiful,” he said as he pressed his lips against mine. “Are you hungry? I made pancakes.”

“You cooked?” I asked with a wide grin and a raised eyebrow.

“Yes, Becca. I can cook.”

Rolling his eyes, he smirked at me as he made his way towards the kitchen and quickly plated me up some food. I wasn’t honestly sure how to react to this because I had never seen him act like this before. “Are... you okay?”

“Yeah, why?” he chuckled. “Do I look like something is wrong?”

Shrugging my shoulders, I smiled at him. “You drove hours to get here in the middle of the night, Neal. Can you blame me for thinking that something is wrong?”

He hesitated his movements before slowly turning to slide the plate of food towards me. There was no way he couldn’t see what I was talking about, and as his eyes met mine, I knew he knew it. “I just wanted to see you.”

He was hiding something, but whatever it was lurked beneath his gaze. As if he wanted to tell me, but was unsure if he could. Reaching across the counter, I placed my hand upon his and smiled at him. “I’m glad that you came, because I missed you. But I can tell there is something else going on... just know that when you’re ready to tell me, I’m here to listen.”

Neal’s face went blank for a moment before clearing his throat. “Do you want orange juice?”

Changing the subject.

“Yeah sure. That sounds great.”

Watching him walk around the kitchen, I dug into the food he’d made and was surprised how great it tasted. Lately I was lucky if I could manage a few bites of food with this morning sickness, and yet I was able to clear my entire plate.

“So I think we should talk about something,” Neal finally said, speaking up after moments of silence. “We need to talk about us—about the baby—the future.”

I hadn’t been expecting him to walk to talk about these kinds of things. As far as I knew, we weren’t together, and the baby wasn’t his. It was mine. So hearing he wanted a future or wanted to talk about the future confused me.

“Okay...” I replied hesitantly as he walked around the bar. Slowly, I turned on the bar stool, only to find his hands resting on the sides of my thighs as he stood between my legs.

“I know James may be the father of your child, Becca. But I don’t want you to feel like that means we can’t be together if you want to be with me.”

His admission took me aback. We had never talked about being together in full detail before, but hearing him say this touched me and brought tears to my eyes. “We aren’t even technically together.”

Smooth, Becca. I internally groaned at myself.

“Yeah, I know.” He smiled sweetly, “but I want us to be.”

With parted lips, I gasped. “You do?”

“Yes.” His hands slid over the side of my face gently. His body leaned into mine as he brushed his lips against me. “I spent a few days away from you, and I realized I didn’t like it. I want to spend everyday with you.”

I had waited forever for someone to say these things to me. None of the guys I had ever been with made me feel the way Neal did, and even though a part of me wanted to jump at the opportunity, I knew I couldn’t rush into things.

It wasn’t just me I had to think about now.

“I want that, too, but I don’t want to rush things. We need to make sure that this is what we really want. I don’t want either of us to think down the road that we should have waited.”

My words sounded almost like a rejection, which wasn’t what I was trying to do, but I didn’t want him to think I would jump right in with two feet.

To my surprise, though, he smiled at me as he kissed me again. “I thought you might say something like that, and I agree. We can take things slow and see how it goes. But I want you close always... if you accept that.”

“What do you mean?” Furrowing my brows, I tried to understand what he was saying. The statement having been able to mean a lot of things confused me.

“I’m saying that I want you to move to New York to live with me after you’re done with exams.”

“What?!” I exclaimed with shock. “Neal, I have to do my—” Holding his hand up, he cut me off and smiled.

“I know. You have to do your internship and you will.” He smirked. “You will be my intern. I actually need help in that department anyway, and you will have your own office. Be close enough to me, and you can even travel with me overseas.”

The offer was something I hadn’t been expecting, and honestly, it was an amazing offer.

He wasn't trying to rush things, but he was also allowing us to spend more time together while also taking my schooling into consideration. I knew very well James, at one point, had offered for me to go down there, but I also knew that he wouldn't have actually let me intern.

At least with Neal, he would let me do my job.

He knew how important my education and future was to me.

"Promise me you won't try to pay for everything all the time? That you will still let me be independent?"

Soft laughter escaped him as he cupped my chin, pulling me closer. "I wouldn't change who you are for the world, Rebecca."

"Okay... let's do it."

James

Just over a week later, Tally and the baby were finally home. The child was stronger than we could all imagine and pulled through regardless of being a few weeks early. We had been worried, though, that it would be weeks before he would come home, but he surprised us all. The doctor said it was a miracle; however, I knew it was the Valentino genes.

During the time Tally was in the hospital with the baby, I took the opportunity to get the nursery set up in my home. It wasn't what Tally initially wanted, but after I explained to her, this was the best way for her to get help, she agreed.

I had even gone through a list of people to find the right nanny to help Tally with the transition to becoming a mother, something she finally had admitted to me she was terrified of failing at.

It was a common thing, though, for new mothers to worry about this, and after a lot of reassurance and finally being home, she was more confident with everything.

Standing in the nursery's doorway, I watched Tally rock her baby back and forth. A soft tune came from her lips as she smiled down at him. It was a beautiful sight, and I still had a hard time coming to grips with my little baby having her own baby.

Turning, her eyes met mine, and she smiled at me. "How long have you been standing there?"

"Not long," I chuckled. "You look like you're doing better with everything."

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“I am. It’s hard, but the nanny has been a lot of help.”

Nodding, I let out a soft sigh as I thought over how much I wish I had someone to share this with. How I wished Becca was here right now to see how much things have changed. “I’m glad that you’re doing better.”

“Did you want to hold him?” she asked me as she adjusted him in her arms.

“Maybe in just a little bit, I have to run to the office for a meeting,” I replied, stepping forward to give my grandson a kiss on the head, my hand grasping at Tally’s shoulder as I smiled at her. “I shouldn’t be too long, and as soon as I get back, we’ll spend some much needed time together.”

She didn’t say anything at first as I turned to leave, but then, after a moment, her voice stopped me in my tracks. “You should call her.”

“Call who?” I asked as I glanced back at her from over my shoulder. I knew who she was talking about without even asking that, but it wasn’t a conversation I wanted to have.

“Becca... you should call her. I can see how much you miss her. You aren’t happy anymore.”

With a straight face, I nodded and turned, making my way down the stairs. It was easier said than done when it came to calling Becca. What was I honestly going to say to her to show her I was a fool for letting her go?

Heading towards my car, my driver waiting for me with my door open, I contemplated what she’d said. Perhaps I should call her... I mean, it couldn’t hurt anything.

After twenty minutes of trying to figure out what I was going to do, I arrived at work and wasn’t pleased when I saw a particular bright electric blue car parked out front of my building. “You’ve got to f*cking kidding me.”

I had held the meeting with Greg at my office because it was less conspicuous than having it at my home, but with this complication, that could not happen. Quickly sending him a text, I told him of the situation, and let him know I would call him when I was finished with her.

The one woman I didn’t want to see and dreaded greeting.

Deciding not to put off the matter any longer, I exited the car and made my way towards the front door. My receptionist quickly stood as I entered, trying her hardest to get my attention, but with a wave of my hand, I gestured her away.

I didn’t have time to deal with anything she had to say. I already knew who was waiting up there for me, and knowing Evette, she was probably having a fit right now because of the intruder more than likely being in my office.

Lucky for me, I kept nothing important in my office.

I was too smart for that.

As soon as the elevator doors opened to my floor, I hesitated and then stepped forward, making a move towards my open office door. My eyes gazed towards Evette, who looked at me with anger in her eyes as she glared towards the open doorway.

“She wouldn’t listen to me as usual.”

“Of course not,” I replied. “I’ll handle it.”

As soon as I stepped into the office, my eyes came face to face with none other than Sergie’s daughter, Katrine.

“Katrine... what are you doing in my office?”

“Oh, James. Is that really any way to greet an old lover? I know you missed me,” she replied with confidence as I made my way towards my desk.

“You mean miss you not being here... then yes, I do miss you not being here.”

Scoffing, she forced a laugh as she leaned forward in the chair across from my desk. Her blue eyes stared at me with amusement as she tapped her perfectly manicured nails against her chin. “Love and hate often go hand in hand.”

“I thought I’d clarified that I didn’t want to see on my office again,” I sighed as I showed the displeasure in my tone of seeing her.

“It isn’t like you really have a choice now, is it?” she smirked in her response. “Daddy wanted to come kill you, but I persuaded him to let me come see you instead.”

Staring at her for a moment, I tried to determine if she was being serious or not. Her eyes bore into mine as a flash of a smile crossed her lips. “Why would your father want to kill me over not giving him a contract?”

“Oh, that isn’t why,” she cackled. “He thinks you’re doing deals with the feds. I told him he must be mistaken, because we all know what kind of man you really are, so he sent me here to talk sense into you.”

“With the feds?” I smirked, shaking my head, trying to play it off. “Why the f*ck would he think that?”

“Maybe because you had two of them in your office recently.”

Clearing my throat, I scoffed with a smile. I should have known Sergie was having me watched, no matter how well Greg thought he was hiding things. Even he wasn’t that good. Sergie had eyes everywhere.

“Yeah, they came to ask me about an Asian import trying to come into my dock. I told them it wasn’t my company dealing with it to try the Rozzini’s instead.”

“The Rozzini’s? They are shit importers,” she laughed.

Nodding, I pretended to go over the papers in front of me. “Yeah, well, they must be stepping up their game, and we just weren’t aware. Perhaps your father can look into it. I don’t like competition.”

“Perhaps you can persuade me of your loyalty, and I will tell my father you are not someone he needs to worry about, James Valentino.”

There it was. She didn’t come here for no reason. She wanted me, and backing me into a corner was how she was going to get another piece of me. It was always games with her, no matter what I did.

Glancing up at her, I gave her the best seductive smirk I had and placed down my pen. “What did you have in mind?”

Taking in her provocative clothing and overly done makeup and hair, I knew what she wanted. She wanted me to f*ck her like I used to, because that’s who she was. “I’m pretty sure there is something that you could do for me. Some way you can show me I’m still the only woman you want.”

“And what makes you think you are?”

I was dancing with the devil on this one, and I watched as her smile fell for a moment.

“Well, considering you’re no longer with the prude bitch, I figured you would want to have fun with someone who really knows how to handle you. After all, she has moved on, so why can’t you?” she replied, catching my attention.

I had no clue what she was talking about, but the moment she said that, something clicked in her eyes. “Oh, shit... you didn’t know, did you?” she laughed.

“Know what?”

Pulling out her phone, she walked towards me while flipping through it. It only took a moment for her to come to a set of photos marked with Becca’s name. They had been watching her. I should have known I couldn’t rely on the feds to keep her safe. It was obvious they only cared about one thing.

“Look... she is with that realtor guy. What is his name—”

“His names’ Neal,” I replied through gritted teeth. Becca was seen kissing Neal in one of the photos, and my heart broke. I should have known she didn’t want to be with me.

“Makes one wonder if she wasn’t cheating on you with him for a while,” Katrine laughed. “I do have to admit she has impeccable taste in men.”

I didn’t want to hear anymore of what Katrine had to say. My mind fogged over with thoughts of Becca with Neal, and it took everything in me not to lose my shit over it. Not to go ballistic. The woman I loved, I cherished, was with another man.

The feeling inside me was just like the one I had when I found out Allison was cheating on me. Hatred, hurt... a mixture of emotions making me question my sanity and, through the mix of it, Katrine's hand slid through my shirt, rubbing against my chest.

"Let me make you forget about her," she whispered in my ear as she nipped at the lobe. "I can make you forget."

The only thing I wanted to do was hurt someone, and with Katrine near me, she was going to have to do. She enjoyed it anyway, and right now, what I was going to do wasn't going to be gentle.

Gripping her by the throat, I brought her face towards mine and sneered. "You want loyalty?" I all but growled, watching as she moaned beneath my touch. "I'll show you f*cking loyalty."

Becca.

Chapter 96 – Submitting to My Bestie's Daddy Read Online

Filed to story:

The moment I took my last exam was the moment I felt a huge weight lifted off of my shoulders. I couldn't believe after all the hard work I had put into getting my degree, I was one step closer to finally being done with everything. A smile filled my face as I walked out of those doors for the very last time and made my way towards my apartment.

I would move in just two days down to Neal's apartment to live with him while I did my internship with his company, something that, after much thought and consideration, I had accepted without hesitation because I felt it was the best move for me.

It was strange making those choices for me. For so long, I had followed in Tally's footsteps, but only because I had been so blinded by the truth of everything. For once in my life, I was doing something for me.

Not to mention being around Neal made me smile. Made me forget about... someone else.

"Hey there, gorgeous," a voice said from behind me, causing me to jump as I spun around to see Neal standing with a bouquet and a smile on his face.

"Holy crap, you scared me," I said, placing my hand over my heart. "What are you doing here?"

Laughing, he wrapped his arm around my waist and pulled me close to him, kissing the side of my head. "Did you really think I would miss out on your last day of actually being in the school?"

“I don’t know.” As I kissed the side of his face, I smiled and took the flowers from him. “I guess I didn’t expect you to be here. I thought we were going to see each other in two days.”

Roses were my favorite, and not just any roses. White roses. To see him with them made my heart warm with the thought that he’d remembered something small like that. They were beautiful, and as he took my free hand, he walked with me towards the apartment where I saw a moving truck currently set up with people coming in and out of the building.

“Jesus, people are already moving out, and school’s not even done yet.”

“Not people. Just you,” Neal replied with a chuckle, my eyes darting towards him as he stared at me with a raised brow and a mischievous grin.

“What are you talking about?”

“Well, considering that you had already agreed to move down in two days, I figured, why not push that up? Plus, I have a surprise for you I want to share, and the only way I’m going to do that is if I have you down in New York by tomorrow,” he replied as I stood absolutely dumbfounded by what he was saying.

“Neal, I can’t go tomorrow. I still have to clear everything with admissions for the internship,” I said as I looked around at the things being moved in utter disbelief.

“Oh, you don’t have to worry about that. I took care of everything. I knew you were stressing over it yesterday while trying to manage these exams, and I took it upon myself to send over all the paperwork. I told them I wanted you starting Monday.”

Most women would have thought he was overstepping his bounds, and a part of me slightly did. However, I also knew he was simply trying to help, and he wanted to make sure everything was perfect for me.

So regardless of being utterly surprised by all of this, I turned and kissed him with a smile. “Thank you for helping me.”

“Was I doing just a little too much?” he muttered against my lips with a small frown.

“Maybe just a little, but I appreciate it, nonetheless.” I giggled. “So I take it we’re leaving tonight?”

“Yes, actually we leave in an hour.”

Staring at his excited expression, I slowly questioned him. “An hour? That doesn’t even give me enough time to pack.”

Yet, by the look on Neal’s face, I had a feeling that he was well aware of this and also had a way to fix that problem. Before I could even ask another question, Neal turned to the black car sitting at our right and hit the button on his key fob.

“Got that taken care of, as well,” he said proudly, causing my eyes to go wide with shock as I questioned whether or not he was going way overboard.

More overboard than I initially had expected.

“How in the world did you know what to pack me?” Hesitation filled me with the idea he took it upon himself to go through my things and make sure everything private had been packed. I mean, I had slept with him, but even then, some things are left private.

“Oh, I didn’t pack any of that stuff.”

“You didn’t pack it,” I whispered in confusion. “Who packed it then?”

Before he could say another word, I heard my name being yelled from the balcony upstairs and as I looked up towards the balcony of my apartment, there stood Allegra.

“What in the hell are you doing here?” I laughed as I looked up at her. She was gesturing for us to come inside. Of course, this girl would be here with him.

“You two have been plotting, haven’t you?” I questioned with a raised brow as Neal closed the trunk of the car and smiled at me.

“Perhaps,” he said, shrugging nonchalantly, We walked towards the building. I wasn’t sure what to expect heading up, but knowing the two of them, they had something up their sleeves.

As soon as I stepped inside, I was wrapped in Allegra’s embrace, her smiling face glancing at me as I looked around the apartment. It was quite obvious they must have gotten here this morning right after I had left to go take all of my exams. There were boxes piled everywhere, as well as wrapping paper for things that were fragile and plenty of packing tape.

“You were in on all of this?”

“Technically, yes. I took a red eye flight this morning, so I’m extremely tired. However, I have been drinking a lot of coffee, which is something I rarely do, just to make sure that I could get everything packed for you to move down with my brother,” she rambled, not able to stand still for more than a minute.

“You really have had a lot of caffeine, haven’t you?” I laughed as she nodded her head and continued packing away at a box sitting on my coffee table.

“But I’m completing a lot. I’m to stay here under the strict order of my brothers to make sure that the movers have everything packed properly, and then I am to take a flight back home.”

Slightly confused, I furrowed my brows, looking at Neal. “He had you come up here to pack my apartment and then turn around and leave? Allegra, that’s a lot.”

“Oh, heavens no. I have a lot of things to do, but I actually volunteered for this position, and I’m glad that I did, because let me tell you, you have some naughty, naughty things in your bedroom.”

The statement she made caused my cheeks to flush red as Neal chuckled behind me. It was obvious the two of them were overly excited about me moving down to New York City and living with Neal.

However, we were only going to be friends with benefits per se until we were one-hundred percent sure a relationship between the two of us was exactly what we wanted. Honestly, I was happy he had agreed with that because after everything with James and now being pregnant with his baby, I wasn't sure if I was ready to take anything super serious.

I only wanted to take things one day at a time, and if things did blossom between Neal and I, then I would be thrilled with the turnout.

"Alright, you two," Neal said with a sigh as he interrupted our conversation. "Go ahead and continue your little gossip. I'm going to hurry downstairs and make sure that the guys know the agenda for everything."

Neal disappeared from sight before I could even say anything regarding his comment. Every time I saw him, he surprised me, and it made me wonder what else he had planned for me.

"I'm so glad that everything is working out with you two," Allegra said, pulling me from my thoughts.

Turning to her, I shook my head and took a seat on the sofa. "Well, don't get overly excited. We're taking things one day at a time."

"Oh, I know, sweetie. Don't worry. He filled me in on everything. However, I want you to know that you need to do what's best for you. Don't worry about hurting anybody's feelings. At the end of the day, it's what makes you happy that matters." Her motherly tone was warming, but I couldn't help but feel if Neal and I didn't work, I would lose her, too.

"I just don't want to lose you if we don't work out," I admitted, watching as she turned towards me with a frown.

"Oh, sweetie." She hushed me as she sat next to me. "You're not going to lose me."

Since she seemed sincere in her comment, I couldn't help but wonder if there was more to all of this. If the whole thing with Neal and I was... I don't know... official already?

It can't be, though. Not with my situation with James.

"Can I ask you something?"

Her eyes met mine with a smile as she nodded. "You don't ever have to ask if you can ask me something, just simply ask it."

Nodding, I hesitated for a split second, wondering if I should even ask about James. My mind had been swirling back to him over the last two days, and I couldn't help but wonder if things were well enough that I'd be able to tell him about... our baby.

Chapter 97 – Submitting to My Bestie’s Daddy Read Online

Filed to story:

“Have you heard anything about James or Tally?”

It wasn’t a question she was expecting, and as she straightened her shoulders, staring at me for a moment, she shrugged. “Yes, I have. Slightly... Tally had the baby, and she’s doing really well. It’s actually driving Allison insane because she refuses to see her. As for James... I’m not one-hundred percent sure what’s going on, but I know there’s something big brewing. I’ve heard whispers of issues with the Russians again, but I’m not sure.”

It wasn’t the response I was actually looking for, but hearing there may have been a possibility he was still tied up in all of that mess solidified me staying away from him. I would never keep his child from him, but I didn’t have to be with him for him to be part of his child’s life.

He would simply just have to understand where I was coming from.

I didn’t want to bring a baby up in that world.

The thought broke my heart. I was living with this mess, but I was glad I had Allegra and Neal here to support me. Without them, I don’t know what I would do.

Becca

I wasn’t sure what I had expected when I took Neal up on his offer and leave that night. However, it definitely wasn’t riding in his private plane all the way back to New York City, only to have a sleek black limousine pick us up from the airport. Nor did I expect him to proceed in taking me to a fancy dining restaurant I was completely underdressed for.

The moment we pulled up outside of Fratelli’s, I completely lost it.

I had wanted to go to this place for quite some time, and when I was back in New York visiting during fall break, we couldn’t get any availability, even with Neal’s social status. Yet, here we were outside of a very high-class restaurant, and I was wearing leggings with a cute, flowy top and my hair pulled into a ponytail.

“Neal, are you serious...? We’re eating here?” There was excitement and shock in my voice as I stared wide-eyed out the window.

“Yeah, last time we were here you were looking slightly disappointed that we didn’t get to visit it, so I made reservations, had some strings pulled just for you.”

It was incredibly sweet he would go through all of that trouble for me, but having a better heads up so I had time to change and actually look like I belonged in this place would have been nice.

“I’m so underdressed for this place, though. I’m wearing leggings, for heaven’s sake, and my hair—it’s a mess and in a ponytail!” Frantic, I felt myself slowly hyperventilating, knowing I wanted to go here, not wanting to disappoint him, but looking like complete shit.

Instead of getting angry at me though, for having my small mini meltdown, he slid over to the back of the limousine, pulled me close to him, grabbed my face and kissed my lips with such force it took my breath away.

“You are incredibly beautiful no matter what you wear, and as far as those rich snobs go, their opinion doesn’t matter. If that is what you are comfortable in, that is what you are comfortable in. I don’t care what you wear there. You could go naked for all I care. I would still take you in there on my arm to have dinner.”

His words were romantic and sweet as usual, and of course, he melted my heart with his comment. But at the same time, it wasn’t just about being seen with him like this. It was my confidence. I didn’t feel comfortable in what I was wearing, but perhaps he had a point.

I shouldn’t have to change who I am to blend in with society.

“Okay,” I replied reluctantly as Neal looked towards the driver who was watching us in his rearview mirror and nodded his head. The driver, knowing exactly what Neal meant, stepped from the car, walked around to our door and opened it for me and Neal to step out.

The air was cool this time of year, and I wished more than anything I had brought a thicker jacket. But because there was only a few quick steps from the limousine to the front doors of the restaurant, I made the most of it. Pushing back how cold I was, I walked forward with Neal, his hand lacing through mine as we entered one of the most prestigious restaurants in New York.

As soon as we entered the restaurant, I was greeted by the sound of classical music, the clinging of crystal glasses and, of course, the dim lighting of a very royal affair. The woman behind the receptionist’s desk stood there in pearls and a skin tight designer black dress I guaranteed probably cost more than I would make in a month working at a normal job.

“Welcome to Fratelli’s. How can I help you?” the woman said with a very snobby tone as her nose turned up and her eyes refused to look at me, but only at Neal.

“It’s under the name Neal. I have a seven o’clock reservation.”

Glancing down at the book in front of her, she scanned through before stopping. Her eyes, looking back up to Neal, and then finally glancing towards me. She seemed to take in my appearance with a smug smile on her lips before she turned back to Neal, who stood at my side.

“I’m afraid that there is a dress code for our restaurant, and unfortunately, your companion isn’t in the dress code.”

The moment she spoke, my heart sank to my stomach, and I felt completely embarrassed to have even walked in here. Of course, there was a dress code, and of course, they would refuse me service because of the way I was dressed. I didn’t quite understand why I would have thought otherwise, but regardless, I turned to Neal and shook my head.

“It’s okay. Can we just go? I didn’t really need to eat here, anyway.” I said softly, trying to keep my voice low because I didn’t want to draw any more attention to myself than I already had.

Neal, however, was not pleased with the woman’s remark, and in fact, I saw an angry glare upon his face I had only seen once before. With a small smile he spread just towards me, he turned back to the woman. “I’m afraid that you’re going to need to go and get Lola.”

The woman in front of me seemed a little taken aback and shocked by what he had said. I wasn’t sure who Lola was, but it was clear that whoever Lola was, this woman did not want her coming up here. “That won’t be necessary. I suppose we can make an exception.”

“I’m sorry. I don’t think you heard me correctly. I would like you to go get Lola,” Neal said once more, with a little more enthusiasm and venom in his tone.

Looking slightly nervous, the woman picked up the phone. She dialed a number and after a few short whispers, she hung up. “Lola will be here momentarily. Would you like me to take you to your table?”

Neal didn’t respond to the woman as he turned to me. He pulled me closer. “It’ll only take just a second, sweetheart, and Lola will make sure that we are taken care of.”

A few moments later, a regal woman with long blonde hair and bright pink lipstick walked up to the hostess desk wearing a two-piece cream colored suit. She looked like a Barbie that had just stepped out of a package and as soon as her blue eyes landed on Neal, she squealed with delight.

“Neal, I’m so glad you finally made it,” she said excitedly as she walked over and air kissed both sides of his cheeks before turning to me. “Oh, you must be Becca. It’s a pleasure to finally meet you.”

To say I was confused would be an understatement. I had not a single f*cking clue who this woman was, but obviously, Neal had told her because she was overly excited to see me. “It’s nice to meet you as well.”

“What are you guys doing out here? Why haven’t you been shown to your table?” Lola asked, knitting her brows together as she looked over at the receptionist, who looked a little faint.

“Well, it seems that your hostess seems to think that it’s okay to turn away guests simply because of their appearance. I do understand that there is a dress code; however, she believes that within that dress code, it reserves the right for her to rudely refuse my other half who just stepped off a flight.”

Lola’s eyes widened in shock before she narrowed her gaze and turned towards the receptionist. The once happy woman who was overly excited to see me had turned into a vicious predator, ready to rip the girl’s head from her shoulder.

“I am so sorry that happened, Neal. Let me take it upon myself to show you to your table and then I will deal with her appropriately afterward.”

With a ghosted white face, the woman watched Lola take Neal and I around the corner into the restaurant, my heart absolutely frantic because I didn’t think that for one minute I was going to

pass through, and now that I was, the delicious aromas of every single food they offered hit me all at once.

I felt beyond exceptional, and even though high society life wasn't something I ever cared for, it was moments like this I really was glad I had friends who were part of that life. Otherwise, I would never have been able to strike off one of the things that I had on my bucket list.

As soon as we reached our tables and took our seats, Lola said her apologies once more and quickly disappeared, leaving us with menus and a meal completely on the house.

"Who is that woman?" I asked Neal as soon as Lola was completely out of earshot.

He glanced up at me from his menu with a wide grin on his face as he chuckled. "She was a yoga instructor who I helped end up getting into the restaurant business. Lola owns Fratelli's. She is a longtime friend, and the last time that we came by, unfortunately, she wasn't here."

"Are you serious? She actually owns this place?" I was completely shocked I had literally just met the most brilliant woman in the world.

"Yes, I do. And before you go thinking bad things, no, we had nothing together. Lola actually prefers more feminine tastes."

In not so many words, he clearly explained exactly the kind of person Lola was. She did not like men. She had an appetite for women, which I didn't have a problem with. But it made sense why when she looked over at me, I felt slightly overwhelmed by the gaze.

"That makes a lot of sense, honestly," I muttered to myself, only loud enough for Neal to hear who laughed at my comment.

"Outside of this restaurant, she's very laid back. I'll actually have to see if we can have a get together sometime. She throws the wildest of parties. Of course, with your condition, I know you can't drink, but they are social gatherings that you might be interested in."

He wasn't wrong about that. I would have loved to get to know her more and also socialize with people who might be clients of mine soon.

The more I thought about my future, the more I considered actually starting my own business. I didn't want to rely on a man for the rest of my life, no matter who it was I ended up with. I was going to be a mother, and because I was, I had to think about the long-term goals I wanted to achieve.

Those goals included possibly opening my own business and making a name for myself.

Not just that, but setting up a future for my child they would be proud of.

Chapter 98 – Submitting to My Bestie’s Daddy Read Online

Filed to story:

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 wouldn'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 Neal 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.”

Chapter 99 – Submitting to My Bestie’s Daddy Read Online

Filed to story:

“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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Becca.

"What are you doing today?" Neal asked from the bed. We had spent another glorious night wrapped in each other's arms, and as much as he wanted me to stay there... I had shit to do.

"I told you yesterday..." I laughed as I peeked my head around the corner of the bathroom to look at him. His cool eyes stared back at me with his arms resting behind his head. "I have shopping to get done. Christmas is right around the corner, and if we're going to be leaving, I'm not going to leave people empty-handed."

"I'm not telling you that you have to leave people empty-handed. All I'm merely asking is, why do you have to do it today? Come back to bed."

Shaking my head, I rolled my eyes and continued finishing up the rest of my makeup. If I was going to beat the masses, which I highly doubt I was going to do, then I needed to hurry up and get my ass out there so I could get my shopping done.

Looking down, I stared at the small bump protruding from beneath my shirt. I was closing in on four months, and while I still dreaded telling James I was pregnant—I was planning on doing it soon.

I was wrong to continuously hold off on telling him the truth. He deserved to know he was the father. The problem was, I just hadn't had time to go down to Miami and tell him. And unlike some people who thought it would be perfectly fine to pick up a phone and tell him, that wasn't me.

Telling James he was going to be a father, again, needed to be done in person, not over the phone or FaceTime or anything like that. I found that to be so impersonal.

"Don't you have a meeting at eleven o'clock?" I called from the bathroom, pointing out that he had been denying what needed to be done. All because he wanted to stay in bed with me.

"Yes, I do, but I wanted to spend the morning with you."

"We live together, sweetie. You don't have to stay and miss work every single day just because you want to spend time with me," I replied as I stepped from the bathroom.

"I know we do." He watched me walk from the bathroom towards the closet. I had no doubt he would try and pull me back into bed if he got his way, but I couldn't let that happen. I was a woman on a mission.

The moment I bent down to grab my boots, I felt his arms around my waist. A smile spread across my lips as I stood up and felt his lips against my cheek.

“You look absolutely stunning.”

“Do I?” I whispered as I leaned my head back to let his lips press gently against mine.

He didn’t hesitate in deepening the kiss as his hand ran over my small protruding bump. “Yes, you do.”

“Well, be it as it may, I can’t get back into bed with you. I know what you’re trying to do, and it’s not going to work. I’m on a mission today, and I have a lot of ground to cover before the end of the day.”

With a groan of protest, he let me go with much reluctance.

“I suppose I should get ready for my meeting, then?”

Laughing, I stepped from the closet and smiled at him. “That would be the adult thing to do if you feel like adulting today.”

Understanding my sense of humor, he laughed, nodding his head. “Okay, okay.”

The last few weeks had been hectic, but now I was settled into Neal’s home and was preparing for the future, I found myself more relaxed by everything. It wasn’t my ideal situation, but I wouldn’t change a thing.

I was finally looking forward to having the baby. “I have an appointment with the doctor tomorrow, by the way.”

He stopped in his tracks, naked and gorgeous as ever, and turned his attention towards me. “Are you finding out the gender?”

“I don’t know... maybe? I thought about not finding out. Just waiting until the baby is born.”

“Really? No one does that anymore.” He chuckled. “Or do you want to have a party or whatever they do with the genders?”

I couldn’t help but chuckle at his comment. He was taking all of this very seriously, and even though the child wasn’t his, he still wanted to be a part of every aspect. “No party.”

“Okay. If that’s what you want to do, then I’ll support your choice. On that note, I got the flight booked for Saturday,” he replied, drawing my attention even more.

I knew what he was talking about. We were leaving on Saturday to fly down to Miami. We would spend a couple days with Allegra, and then we would turn around and fly up to my father’s for Christmas.

I was excited to see my father. It had been so long, and with him having a new girlfriend, I couldn’t meet her. She made my father happy, and that was what was important.

“That sounds perfect, which is all the more reason why I need to leave now to go get shopping done. Not to mention, there’s all the wrapping that has to be done as well, which is incredibly tedious, and I’m very meticulous about it.”

“You’re not seriously wrapping presents.” He looked at me, slightly shocked. “That’s what those gift wrappers are for at the stores to wrap your gifts, so you don’t have to.”

“You have never personally wrapped a gift yourself?”

“I’m a busy man.” He shrugged. “I don’t have time for that kind of stuff.”

“So you keep telling me,” I muttered with a smile. “Regardless, one day you’re going to have to wrap a gift yourself.”

“Perhaps, but that day is not yet happening, so therefore I will continue to allow those gift wrappers to wrap the gifts for me.” Leaning in, he pressed his lips against the corner of my mouth, kissing me before I quickly made my way to the front door.

“I won’t be too late, and I’ll call you as soon as I am on my way home.”

“You better. Otherwise, I’m sending security out to find you.” He leaned against the kitchen counter as he watched me go.

I knew he was giving me space to be my own person, but the last week he had been so adamant about me taking someone with me as ‘security.’ I wasn’t sure why, and I didn’t press the issue, but deep down, I couldn’t help but wonder if something was going on.

Something I wasn’t privy to.

A few hours and many stores later, I found myself satisfied with the gifts I had purchased.

The snow had slowly begun to fall once more, and stepping out onto the cold streets of New York, I made my way through the crowd in search of something warm to soothe my throat. The cold air wasn’t something I was used to yet, and even though I had lived in it for some time with school, I rarely ventured out into it.

Perhaps it was my warm southern blood protesting.

With no coffee shop insight, I decided to call the driver to come and pick me up. After hours of shopping, the bags were heavy, and, honestly, I was ready to go home. There was only one gift I still needed to get, and that was for Neal.

I had contemplated what gift I would get him for some time, and the only thing that kept going back to my mind were the stories he told me of when he visited his grandparents and how those were some of the happiest moments that he had ever had.

Chapter 100 – Submitting to My Bestie’s Daddy Read Online

Filed to story:

It was hard to buy for a man who simply had everything. Even though he told me I didn’t need to get him anything, it was Christmastime, and I wasn’t going to let him wake up Christmas morning without having gifts under the tree.

Perhaps that was just me being traditional.

After a moment, the driver’s car pulled up alongside the curb. He parked it, and stepping from the vehicle, popped the trunk and smiled at me. “I take it the shopping went well?”

“Yes, it did. Thank you,” I replied sweetly as I handed him over the bags and stepped towards the car, climbing in. The warmth of the vehicle enveloped me, and instantly I was hot but decided against peeling off the layers. After all, we’d be at the apartment in no time, and I’d be back in the cold again.

As the car pulled out into traffic, we drove down the busy streets of New York City, block after block, closing in on where Neal lived. When we stopped at a red light, I happened to look over at a particular watch store, and an idea struck my mind.

Neal had told me once before about a watch that his grandfather had owned. A pocket watch, to be exact, that he had loved as a boy. However, his father refused to allow him to have it when his grandfather died, and it was something that broke his heart, but he had learned to live with.

The idea of the gift slowly developed within the base of my mind, and with a smile on my face, I turned to the driver. “I’m sorry. Can we pull over, please? This store right here. I just want to pop into it and pick something up.”

“Of course, miss. I will wait right here for you to return,” the driver replied as he turned the corner and parked on the side of the street.

Within a matter of moments, I was stepping inside a shop full of red, green, gold, and silvers; the Christmas decorations completely warmed my heart as I felt at home within the walls of the building. There were so many different designs of watches, I wasn’t sure exactly which I wanted.

So as my eyes scoured the countertops and the different glass containers, I finally found what I was looking for. Remembering vaguely the photo Neal had shown me with him and his grandfather and the pocket watch he held on his waistcoat, I compared the details to the one in front of me.

They were very similar. So, without hesitation, I quickly asked the lady to let me purchase it.

At first, she was reluctant, explaining to me that the item was extremely expensive, but I assured her I had the money to cover it, and when I did finally check out, she was rather shocked and apologized to me.

Typically, I would have been the girl to say something to her, to tell her that she shouldn't judge a book by its cover. But I was so happy I had found the perfect gift for Neal, I no longer cared.

As soon as I was done making my purchase, I stepped outside onto the concrete path of New York City. My eyes were on the gift in my hand as I turned the corner and headed towards where the driver was waiting for me.

I wasn't sure what it was about. The feeling that slowly crept over me, that I was being watched, made me stop. But as soon as I heard a particular voice coming from behind me, calling my name, my body froze.

"Well, hello there, Rebecca. It's funny seeing you in these parts."

I knew that voice all too well, and as I slowly turned, I came face to face with the woman who had blonde hair and blue eyes and a name that I would never forget.

"What the f*ck are you doing here, Katrine?"

Becca.

I was frozen in place, unsure what to do or think as I stood staring at Katrine. She watched me with a smirk on her face as if she had me right where she wanted me.

The last thing I ever expected was to run into her while I was shopping in New York. However, here she was, as if seeing me was the expected.

Which it wasn't.

New York was so big that you could meet someone once and never see them again. So for her to find me or run into me like this... meant she was following me. Which also didn't sit well.

Glancing around, I took in my surroundings to find she was not alone. Two other men were standing nearby, trying to remain hidden, but as their eyes connected with mine, I knew.

Son of a bitch, I knew.

"What is it that you want, Katrine, and why are you following me?"

Her eyes shot up as the smile spread even wider across her face. "Honestly, I'm surprised that you even remembered me. I only met you once. Maybe twice, and that was in passing."

"Well, I make it my point to know exactly who the f*ck I need to stay away from. I'm not interested in finding trouble."

Nodding her head, she shrugged her shoulders as she stepped closer to me, making me take a step back from where I was standing. “Are you scared of me?”

Her question made me scoff. I wasn’t scared of her. That was wishful thinking on her part, honestly.

Now, was I scared of the two guys that were with her? Absolutely. Because I was pregnant and no longer on my own. So the last thing I needed was for them to complicate the situation even more.

“No, I’m not scared of you. I would just rather be anywhere but near you. So cut the bullshit, Katrine. What is it that you want?”

Staring at me for a moment before she let her eyes slide from my face down to my stomach, where my jacket was open, and my small bump was in clear view for everybody. “Oh wow, pregnant, are we? You’re what.. a few months along. Is it Neal’s?”

“The father of my child is none of your business. Now,` you’re wasting my time and everybody else’s. What do you want?”

Placing her hand upon her hip in a cocky way, she let a smirk grace the corners of her lips. “A little birdie told me that you were planning on going to Miami. I wanted to inform you that would not be the best of choices. And if you think that you’re going to be telling James that little child you’re growing is actually his and have him believe it, you’re sadly mistaken. Everybody knows you’ve been sleeping with Neal for quite some time now.”

Laughter erupted from me like I had never heard before. For her to sit there and say something like that, let me know right off the bat what this was. This was her way of asserting dominance and ensuring I didn’t go back to a place where James could possibly want me and not her. After all, she had been after him for months before we even started dating.

“First of all, my vacation is not to see James. It’s to visit family. Not that any of that is your business. Second of all, the father of my child definitely isn’t your business. Your business is doing what your daddy told you to. And the last time I checked, you were supposed to be in Miami, weren’t you?” I snapped, raising my brows to show her I would not flinch or waver in my motion to tell her to f*ck off.

“How dare you speak to me like that? Do you know who I am?”

Was she being serious?

Of course, I knew the f*ck she was.

Was this supposed to be some kind of intimidation tactic of hers?

“Are you being serious right now? Yeah, I know who you are, Katrine. But you are not the one to be afraid of. Your father is, and you may be his little princess, but that’s all you’ll ever be.”

“You f*cking bitch. Well, you should be scared because I’m just as dangerous as my dad,” she replied with a sinister sneer as she stepped closer, her fist clenched as if she was actually going to do something.

“Hitting a pregnant woman, Katrine, that is very low of you. The only thing that you are dangerous about is spending your credit limit.”

Perhaps I was a little off the top, and running my mouth probably wasn't the greatest thing to do. The men standing nearby, at least one of them, definitely heard the conversation between her and I and was snickering to himself as he tried to remain composed, causing her to glance over her shoulder at him with an angry scowl.

Deep down, though, I was terrified. I was terrified of what they could do to me because I was pregnant, and I didn't even have a single clue as to why they would want to come here. I was nothing to James, and I didn't understand why she didn't see that.

“You need to watch yourself. You're sadly mistaken if you think that you can get James or that he wants you. He's already been with me twice since you've been out of the picture, and he was more than satisfied both times.”

“Good for him. I'm glad you were able to do that. Now can I go?” I didn't care what she had to say, though hearing that did slightly stab the open wound that was already in my heart. I had Neal, and I couldn't allow myself to be affected by things, no matter how much it hurt.

“No, you can't go. I'm not done with you.”

Letting out a groan of protest, I ran my hand over my face, trying to calculate what I could say next to make her realize I did not care what she did. “If you want him, you can have him. I don't want him. What part of that don't you understand?”

“Don't try to play stupid with me. You will try to lay the pregnant card on him, and knowing him, he'll be too stupid to find out the truth.”

“Oh, my god, are you serious? Me being pregnant has nothing to do with you! Why can't you just leave me the f*ck alone?” I replied, trying to show her how sincere I was in this manner.

Pulling out her phone, she quickly scrolled through and then took a picture of me without my permission and sent it to who knows where. Her face lit up with joy as she turned back to look at me with an intrigued expression that spoke of nothing but ridicule and hate.