

# A Serious Relax Time

By C. Jade Wyton

*It has been another hard week for Becky Bloom. Feeling like she's been dragged into something she shouldn't have been, she seeks out Isa's advice and, being herself, only half-follows it before deciding to do something else. Something very, very stupid.... She sneaks into the woods and spends several days by herself, having what she calls a "serious relax time."*

~~~~~

Becky was not comfortable with anything that had taken place, that day. Everything that happened with Guillmero had made her skin crawl like bugs were burrowing into it.

After thinking about it the past few days, she thought that Guillmero must have used some sort of magic to calm her down when she'd tried to size up to him about his intentions towards Jezzibeth.... Which, was fine, really. If she was muscling up at him, he was allowed to muscle back at her with whatever he had to defend himself— But it was his attempt at *flirting* with her afterwards that had made her so furious.

Things had spiralled from there. And Becky found herself angry, and confused, and then that Carlita woman had shown up, and— And—

Becky scowled, and swore.

It was one thing for *her* to be angry in the moment, after Guillmero had talked about dating Jezzibeth and then not even two breaths later tried to flirt with her and Malinka— But it was another thing altogether for Carlita to spend *months* looking for Guillmero, with full intention to cause him serious harm.

Sure, Guillmero was a dick. But Carlita wanted to *kill* him.

And it wasn't just something she'd said out of a burst of anger or fear for her life, like when Becky had fought Romero— Carlita had actively hunted the man down, keeping that anger active and alive by choice, and had genuinely wanted to hurt him.

Becky had been so mad during the argument that it hadn't hit her until afterwards that Carlita was *serious* about hurting Guillmero. At the time, she'd thought it was just hyperbole. Just venting. But now it was hitting Becky that it *wasn't* just venting, and it made her insides itch.

That woman was dangerous, and Becky didn't trust her. Not one bit.

But everyone else seemed to trust what she said....

It scared scared Becky.

It scared her so much.

Becky swallowed and rose from her bed. She wandered out of her room and into the hall; slowly making her way towards her father's study.

Isa had been borrowing space in it, the past few days. Weaving a small blanket with a beautiful spider pattern over it....

She had told Becky it was something that drow parents made for their firstborn child.... And then she'd told Becky it was for *her*, because she was Isa's

first child, and Becky had all but malfunctioned as she sat to watch Isa weave with amazing skill.

It brought tears to the half-elf's eyes— That Isa loved her so much she wanted her to experience such special traditions.

It felt *right*.

'Rebecca?' Isa glanced over her shoulder, her thick cover-all glasses hiding her eyes as she watched Becky. 'What's wrong?'

'Hm? Nothing's wrong,' Becky lied. 'Why would you think something's wrong?'

'You're hovering at the door,' Isa said, simply, before reaching out an arm to beckon Becky over. 'You only do that when you're upset. Come here. Tell me what's wrong.'

'I'm not...' Becky trailed off as Isa gave her *a look*, and instead of finishing her sentence she sighed and made her way over to her mother; kneeling on the floor beside her chair and burying her face into Isa's side.

Isa's arms wrapped around her, squeezing her tight and rubbing her shoulders in comfort.

'What's wrong, Becky?' Isa asked, softly.

'It's...' Becky hesitated, unsure where to start.

*How could she even begin to explain everything that was happening?*

She couldn't tell Isa about Carlita, could she? Not without mentioning her friends' involvement with her— And not without worrying Isa sick....

'Becky?'

'If you...' Becky paused to swallow her anxiety down, before looking up at Isa and speaking with a trembling voice. 'If you knew that someone was... doing something... *wrong*.... What... um...' Becky hesitated again, looking away and fidgeting as Isa's grip on her tightened. 'If someone was doing something that you knew was wrong, but then nobody else was saying anything about the thing they were doing being wrong... what would you do?'

'What kind of wrong?' Isa asked. 'It's nothing... *dangerous*, is it?'

Becky chewed on her lip at the question; refusing to meet Isa's eye.

*She couldn't tell Isa what was happening....*

'Hm...' Isa gave a low hum of concern as Becky's face was buried back into her side. 'Becky? What's going on?'

Becky didn't answer; instead, she pressed firmer into Isa and gave an anxious sniff.

'*Rebecca*,' Isa said, her voice turning firm— Though Becky felt a gentle hand in her hair, and knew she wasn't in trouble. 'What's going on?'

*'I think my friends are making a really big mistake,'* it came out as a whisper. *'And I don't want to be a part of it, but I'm scared that if I say anything about it they'll.... They'll....'*

Becky felt Isa tense and trailed off, worried she'd said the wrong thing.... But then Isa pressed a kiss in Becky's hair, and Becky let out her shaky breath.

'You're allowed to say no,' Isa told her, gently. 'You don't have to do anything you don't want to. Okay?'

*'Mhm...'* Becky's hum of agreement didn't sound very agreeable.

'Set your boundaries— If you think that they're making a mistake, say so,' said

Isa, running a hand through Becky's hair. 'Maybe someone else thinks it's a mistake, too. And maybe they're worried just like you.... If you say something, they might feel brave enough to agree.'

'Hm,' Becky hadn't thought of it that way. 'Maybe.... I'll... ask Adam what he thinks about it. Even if he doesn't agree with me he'll still listen.'

Another kiss pecked the top of Becky's head.

'Good idea,' said Isa. 'Adam's sensible.... Be safe, okay? Please. Don't do anything stupid. Promise me?'

'Yeah,' Becky sighed, pulling away from Isa and rising to her feet. 'I'll try not to.'

Isa's brow furrowed in concern, and her lips pursed into a thin, grey line on her face as she watched Becky. 'I love you, Rebecca.'

'I love you too,' Becky replied, turning and heading back to her own room.

She flopped into bed, heaving another sigh, and pulled out her phone to message Adam.

**Becky:** hey

**Becky:** r u awake ?

**Adam:** it's 3pm why wouldn't I be?

**Becky:** idk

**Adam:** everything alright?

**Becky:** idk

**Becky:** i dont think so

**Adam:** what's wrong?

**Becky:** i dont like wat happened with carlita

**Becky:** like

**Adam:** honestly? me neither

**Becky:** it was 1 thing for me 2 be mad at guilmero and want 2 punch him in the face

**Becky:** cos he is dat ing my friend and was being a dick abut it and i got mad in the MOOMENT and then 1s it was dun it was dun and over

**Adam:** yeah

**Becky:** and malinka wen she rabbited him was 2 protec me

**Becky:** again

**Becky:** in the moment

**Adam:** right

**Becky:** but carlita followed him from warm water 2 here

**Becky:** and it has been months since he did any thing 2 her

**Becky:** he want her 2 LEAVE

**Becky:** not is looking for hurting her actively

**Becky:** if that make sense

**Adam:** i get you

**Adam:** and i agree Becky

**Adam:** sure he slept with her partner but like... how long can you hold a grudge for?

**Becky:** ex actly

**Adam:** especially if you broke up. like. get a life

**Becky:** EXACTLY!!

**Becky:** she wanted 2 HURT him 2 like

**Becky:** hurt hurt him

**Adam:** yeah

**Becky:** like MURDER him!!

**Becky:** and like

**Becky:** that is a big thing 2 do because he slept with ur part ner

**Becky:** like did she kill her partner or sum thing 2 cos it not like guilmero forced them to cheet with him!! and if she think cheet makes kill him ok like wat else make kill him ok

**Becky:** u no???

**Adam:** i do

**Becky:** guilmero does not seem evil 2 me he is just a rly big cunt

**Becky:** and like if it was o k 2 kill people for being a big cunt then mattel wuld b ded 4 times ober

**Becky:** but she is not and wat she says nd does is imo object worst than having sex with consent ing adult

**Adam:** racism is definitely worse than sex

**Becky:** i hate cheating! u NO how i feel abut it but it not kill sum1 over !

**Becky:** exact ly!!!

**Becky:** and idk i think imm scared that if we do not do wat carlita wants wat will she do 2 US

**Becky:** like if she think we r enable guilmero wil she hurt us??

**Becky:** will she hurt jezzibeth???

**Adam:** i don't know

**Becky:** i dont trust her

**Becky:** and i dont like this red woman thing she showed us

**Adam:** me either

**Becky:** idk what to do

**Adam:** honestly i think it would be best to just play it by ear for now

**Adam:** leave Guillmero alone unless he does something that puts people in actual danger

**Becky:** that sounds smart

**Becky:** ur smarrrt

**Adam:** thank you

**Becky:** i just hope i didnt mess up any thing with jezzibeth :(

**Adam:** i don't think you did. Jezzibeth cares about you a lot and i think it would take more than one fight to drive her away

**Becky:** adam ur so smart

**Becky:** sorry 4 venting at u

**Adam:** it's ok. i'm glad you told me how you were feeling

**Becky:** can we talk more abot this later?

**Adam:** sure

**Becky:** thank u

**Becky:** i luv u adam

**Adam:** you too, Beck

**Adam:** talk later

**Becky:** ♥♥

Becky let out a long, deep breath, and put down her phone.

Isa had been right.

Someone had agreed with her.

*Adam* had agreed with her.

Maybe everything wasn't *completely* terrible....

Though, it was all still *so much*.

Everything was so much, all the time, and Becky had no idea how to get it all to calm down and just *be less*.

The only place she could relax anymore was in the woods, away from everyone and everything.... But her trips out there were never long enough.

She'd go out, and the day would end, and she'd have to come home.

If only she could spend... a full day or two outside. Undisturbed. *Then* maybe she could get her thoughts together properly.

*Hmm....*

Today was a Saturday, wasn't it?

A thought glowed in the back of Becky's mind. Dim, and barely-there. But it felt... clever.

No. Not *clever*.

Clever was the wrong word, it seemed like it might have actually an incredibly *stupid* thought.

But it was still some sort of thought.

Not clever.

But close to clever.

*Tricky.*

It was a tricky thought.

The sort of thoughts she used to have as a child, when she wanted to get her way but had already been told no....

Slowly, Becky rolled out of bed.

*She knew how to spend time out in the woods, without anyone coming to bring her home before she was ready.*

Becky looked around her room, locating the bag of holding her father had given her, and went to pick it up— Only for it to chirp loudly and roll onto its back to expose its stomach for a pat.

'Mimi!' Becky giggled, rubbing the creature's belly. 'Smelly girl. Did you steal my bag? Did you? I need that, you know!'

'Mrrp!' Mimi gave a happy chirp, and scrambled onto its side; the straps of its bag-like form stiffening as it propped itself up on them like legs.

'Aw!' Becky gave a gasp. 'Oh my god, that's new! Clever girl!'

'Trrp!' Mimi gave a trill, looking very proud of itself, before growing its usual spidery limbs and scuttling underneath Becky's bed.

A moment passed before it dragged out a bag that was near-identical to itself.

'Good girl! Thank you!' Becky cooed, taking the bag and giving Mimi a pat above its eyes. 'Now. Baby. I'm going to be gone for a few days, okay?'

'Trp?' Mimi cocked its head. 'Brprp?'

'Mhm. Just one or two,' Becky said, tapping the creature on its upper lip. 'I'll be back before Wednesday, okay? But I need you to do me two big favours, yes?'

'Brrp?'

‘One, I need you to behave for Dad and Isa, yeah?’ Becky told it. ‘And two, look after Don. Make sure he gets enough to eat. Can you do that for me?’

‘Brrp!’ Mimi bounced in place, and Becky knew she’d been understood.

‘Good baby,’ Becky told it, scratching under the chin. ‘Now, I’m going to pack.... Let’s see....’

Becky gave a hum, and walked around her room; gathering a few pairs of spare clothes, her portable phone charger, and her water bottle.

She already had snacks in her bag, she always did. And once her phone was in her pocket, that was all she needed for a trip to the woods.

‘Okay, good baby,’ Becky said again, watching as Mimi leapt up onto her bed to lay in a sunbeam. ‘I love you! See you in a day or two!’

Becky threw her bag over her back and turned to head into the hall— Meeting Isa as she came out of Ken’s study.

‘Isa! Hey,’ Becky gave the drow a wave before hurrying over for a hug.

‘Ah, you seem happier,’ Isa said. ‘Did your talk with Adam go well?’

‘Yeah,’ Becky said, giving Isa the warmest smile she could. *She needed to act as normal as possible for this to work....* ‘It did.... Uh, so. I like, called Jareth, just before. And I’m gonna head over to his place for the night. And I’ll probably like. Stay all of tomorrow? *Maaaybe* ride with him to class on Monday? I, um. Kinda think I need a day or two like... *off*. From life. You know?’

‘Mm,’ Isa gave a nod, though the look she gave Becky was clearly suspicious.

Becky tried to keep her smile.

She was never good at lying to Isa.

Nine times out of ten, the drow could tell that Becky was lying through her teeth.

The few times she *didn’t* catch her out, Becky pinned down to pure luck.

*Isa was thinking on it....*

Even behind her glasses, Becky could tell.

Becky needed to make the lie more convincing....

*Add some truth to it!*

‘You’ll be okay to look after Mimi, right?’ Becky asked, casting a glance to her bedroom. ‘I cut up some leftover sausages for her last night, and mixed them in with her chicken mince. That should be enough for tonight, but you’ll need to take out the beef from the freezer for her for tomorrow. Can you do that?’

‘Ah. Of course I can,’ Isa’s pursed lips turned up into a warm smile, and she pulled Becky close so she could kiss her cheek. ‘Stay safe. Call me if anything happens, okay?’

‘I will!’ Becky promised, giving Isa a tight hug before pulling away and heading for the stairs. ‘I love you! Tell Dad where I am!’

She made straight for the door, hurrying out before Isa thought to interrogate her further.

*Nine times out of ten*, Isa could tell she was lying.

Still....

That meant that *every so often*, Isa got it wrong.

~~~~~

Becky trudged through the heavy underbrush, pushing aside branches and bushes as she made her way deeper into the woods than she'd been in... a long time.

It wasn't the deepest she'd ever been, of course. She used to sneak out *way* further than this as a child. But she hadn't made her way this deep since a very serious talk she'd had with her mother about the woods being dangerous....

Three hours straight, she'd been walking.

And about two hours ago she'd texted Jareth, a message that she *hoped* wouldn't make him suspicious of her actions....

*hey bab e. i m have hard time. i luv u lots but i need a day or 2 my self 4 healing. i am going 2 have a serius relax time. i will see u in a few day. i will b safe do not worry! luv u!*

It was only a short time after sending the message to Jareth that Becky realised that maybe she shouldn't have added the "I'm safe" part. That seemed like an obvious hint that she was doing something she wasn't supposed to.... So, she'd turned off her phone so Isa couldn't track her, just in case of the *very slim* chance Jareth went to check on her and Isa learnt Becky had lied.

It was wrong to lie to her family, Becky knew. But she was just too *happy* to be in the woods again, and didn't want to go home before she was ready. The air here was crisp, and clean, and her head felt clearer than it had in a long, long time.

The woods were always good for her. And she knew a day or two in them would help sort her out.

She was already enjoying being back in the deeper parts of the woods where she hadn't been for so long. Even if nothing looked quite as it did when she was a child....

But she thought she remembered this place; she was *sure* that she used to come here when she was very little. To... dig?

Yes! Dig!

She used to dig around here!

She wondered if her hole was still around.

She'd worked *very* hard on it.... But it had been a very long time since she'd seen it.

She could check it out, couldn't she? Even though it probably *wasn't* still there, after more than thirteen or fourteen years of being abandoned.

But that was alright. She could still have a look for it!

Ducking under another few trees, Becky managed to spot the old hill that she used to spend long, long nights in.

And, with a bit of quick searching, she surprised herself.

*Her hole was still there!*

'Good job, little me!' she said aloud, peering into the hole in the side of the hill. 'You built this thing to *last!*'

The sticks and rocks she'd pressed into the walls had kept it strong for a surprisingly long time. And though, it wasn't in *amazing* shape, it was clear things had used it to nest in, at least a few times!

Though there was nothing there, now.

*Hm....*

This seemed like as good a spot as any to settle down. It would be getting dark, soon, and Becky knew she needed to make sure she had somewhere safe to stay....

Becky licked her lips, and sat down next to the hole.

She could probably fit in there to sleep, if she was in wildshape.

*Was worth a shot, wasn't it?*

Becky closed her eyes, took a deep breath, and....

Her clothes fell from her body as she shrunk, and she soon found the grass tickling her nose as her long fluffy tail wagged out behind her.

*Fox!*

She was a fox!

Perfect! That was the animal she had been *wanting* to turn into! All that practice was finally paying off!

Becky shook herself down and gave a proud chittering bark before nosing her clothes into a messy bundle.

*Hmmm....*

Becky twitched an ear as she moved her bag.

She should put the rest of her things *into* it, shouldn't she? So she only had to worry about the one thing and could keep a better eye on it.

Carefully, Becky took the bag's zip in her teeth and tugged. It wasn't easy, and she knew she could have just turned back into a half-human and do it in a second, but... she didn't want to.

So she pulled her bag open and awkwardly stuffed her things inside before struggling again to do it back up.

Then, she slipped her legs into the arm-bands, and pulled them tight with her teeth.

*Perfect!*

Now she was an adorable red fox, wearing an adorable green froggy backpack!

Becky felt her tail wagging, and couldn't help but yip with excitement.

Then, her hunger hit her, and she licked her lips.

She had food in her bag, but....

Becky's nose twitched as she caught the scent of berries and mushrooms in the air.

She recalled a spell.... Wild Cunning, was it called?

A spell that could call upon the spirits of nature, to help find food and water while out in the natural world.

It was a spell that Becky hadn't had many chances to practice, really. She'd been so busy with everything else that she never spent enough time in the woods to actually look for food or water or shelter....

Well, this seemed like the perfect time to practice that spell— The perfect time to practice *all* her spells!

~~~~~

The trees shook with the sound of Becky's magical shriek. Leafs fluttered to the ground, and the early morning dew fell like rain as a wave of thunderous force swept forward across the woods and knocked everything out of its way.



The birds of the wood scattered, screeching out in surprise as their entire world shook.

‘Sorry!’ Becky called out after them, gripping the branch above her as she dangled dangerously out of her tree. ‘That was me again! Didn’t think I’d be *that* strong!’

She was getting better at casting thunderwave. But she still had to figure out how to manage it into a smaller wave of force, so that she didn’t take out everything around her whenever she let out a shout of joy.

But she’d disturbed the wildlife enough for now. After all, she’d been tearing around the woods for two days straight!

She wasn’t *quite* ready to go home. Though she knew that she had to. It was Tuesday, after all. And she’d promised Mimi she would be home before Wednesday!

Plus, she knew that after not showing up to school yesterday she was *already* going to be in enough trouble... she didn’t need to vanish for another night; she’d be home before sundown.

And she’d have a shower. Because... well. Because the woods didn’t have showers. And running around through the brush had left her... *messy*.

She hadn’t even bothered getting *dressed*. She was shifting back and forth between her elven self and animal self so often, that it was just easier to keep track of her backpack and nothing else.

But of course, that meant that her *entire body* had been caked in dirt and mud and leaf. And now her hair was a mess. And she’d fallen out of a tree at one point and gotten a bruise on her side.

Not that she really minded. It all made her feel *wild* and *free*!

Though, she missed her friends quite a lot. And she missed Mimi at least twice as much as she missed all her friends combined!

But she’d be home tonight.

And probably every night for the rest of the week, because she was going to be grounded as hell when she got home.

She could practically *hear* Isa’s scolding, now....

The drow was going to be mad. Even after Becky had used the Animal Messenger spell last night to send a bat to Malinka’s house (it was the closest house to the woods, and Malinka liked bats— It seemed like the perfect idea!) with a message to “please let Dad know I’m safe and also having a lot of fun and will be home tomorrow!”

She hoped Malinka got the message. And also hoped Malinka passed it on to her family.

Otherwise she’d be in even *bigger* trouble than she was already in.

Hm.

Big.

Big.

She hadn’t tried to use the Enlarge or Reduce spell, yet. Had she?

She should *totally* do that!

Becky looked to the branch beside her, focusing *very hard* on a stick that was tangled in the new growth... and the stick quickly began to grow!

‘Yes!’ Becky cheered. ‘It’s growing! It’s— Oh, no— That’s *way* bigger than it’s

meant to get!’

Becky dodged out of the way of the growing stick, and quickly threw out a burst of magic at it to halt its growth.

‘Whoa,’ Becky chuckled, looking over the log-sized stick. ‘Neat! Oop. Goodbye!’

The stick began to shrink again; growing smaller and smaller, until it was back to normal.

‘Alright. I need to use a little less *oomf* with that spell!’ Becky chuckled to to herself. ‘Hm... what other spells can I practice? Ooh, I know!’

Becky climbed higher up in her tree, all the way to the top, and popped out of the canopy to look at the sky.

Skywrite.

She’d never had the confidence to cast that spell, before. Not in town, where *everyone* would see it.... But here in the woods was so much more private! She could try it out now!

Becky took a deep breath, and tried very, very hard to summon up the magic she needed to write in the sky....

*Shit. What should I write?*

As soon as the words entered her mind, they appeared in the clouds in the sky, and Becky couldn’t help but snort a loud laugh.

‘Okay, okay!’ she chuckled. ‘That spell’s *way* easier than I thought it would be! I should *totally* use that more often!’

And with that, Becky leapt from the tree; using her magic to propel herself almost three times as far as she could have made on her own before she failed the landing and tumbled down an incline directly into a puddle of mud.

‘Ow,’ Becky mumbled, pushing herself up and wiping off large handfuls of mud from herself. ‘Okay. Note to self; practice landing after using Jump....’

‘Rebecca Bloom?’ a strangely-familiar voice called, and Becky craned her neck to see who had spoken to her— It was a satyr woman! A familiar one; one of the rangers in the station in town. Addison Cleverheart. *Alyssa’s mother!* ‘Rebecca, is that you— My god, what have you *done* to yourself?!’

‘*Hiiiiii* Mrs Cleverheart!’ Becky called out cheerfully, waving at the satyr. ‘How are you?’

Cleverheart gave Becky a very clear *look*. One that said she was very, *very* tired. And Becky bit her lip as the look was followed by a loud sigh. ‘Where are your *clothes*?’

‘Oh, in my bag!’ Becky said, tugging her muddy backpack off her shoulder and holding it up for Cleverheart to see. ‘Cos, like, I’ve been wildshaping and stuff so I have to like, take them all off and stuff!’

‘You.... You know you can wildshape *with* your clothes on, right?’ Cleverheart said, sounding *exhausted*. ‘You don’t have to... strip to nothing just to wildshape.’

‘See, like. I’ve *read* that’s a thing!’ Becky said. ‘But I just can’t, like, figure it out, you know? Like. Wildshaping turns *you* into an animal. And my clothes aren’t me. So like. They just like. Don’t transform. They just, like. Fall off and stuff. So it’s easier to just not wear them when I’m doing a lot of wildshaping, you know?’

The look Cleverheart gave Becky told her she *didn’t* know....

Then, the satyr took a deep, deep breath and pointed at the sky. 'Was that you who did that?'

'Oh, yeah!' Becky gave a happy nod. 'That was me!'

She didn't look impressed. 'You know I have to take you home, right?'

'Hah! I guess you do, huh?' Becky chuckled, unzipping her bag and pulling out a pair of pants and a shirt. 'Just let me get like, dressed and stuff first.'

'Yes.... Please, do.'

—END—

If you enjoyed reading, please consider supporting me and my work at  
[cjadewyton.com](http://cjadewyton.com)