

Auntie, No!

By C. Jade Wyton

Becky Bloom is having a day in with her boyfriend, Jareth Slader. However, they are soon interrupted by their friends, Portia and Bianca, who go on to invite even more people over.... And then, Becky's aunt Isabel shows up to drop off some old boxes and Becky, with her very diverse group of friends, has to try and control her aunt's inappropriate questions.

Contains some sexual content, racism, and mentions of abuse.

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It had been a tiring week, since the erkling had taken Becky to meet with all of the warlocks and their patrons.

Ken had constantly been on the edge of a complete panic the entire time and Isa, though she tried not to show it, was obviously concerned.

Becky had stuck to her schedule and tried only to worry about the end of the world during set times of day; though she had been meeting frequently with the erkling to discuss the safety of the town wildlife outside of her *worry times*.

She'd told her friends she'd be needing help with protecting the animals, and of course they were willing to do what they could (even though she doubted all of her friends actually believed her). And she'd been trying to figure out how to convince the druids she knew to help... she still had her teacher to tell. And her druid classmates.... They'd looked at her like she was crazy, when she'd mentioned she was trying to help her "friend" prepare for the potential destruction of the woods.... At least they'd taken her seriously, though. And heard her out.

Again, she wasn't sure if they all *believed* her; but they'd *listened* to her. Which had been more than she was expecting....

It wasn't too bad. Becky didn't want to just drop the erkling on them out of nowhere. She wanted to bring the concept of him up *slowly*, so that her classmates didn't panic and send the skittish deer god running back into the woods.

So that introduction would come later. Which meant today she'd had time to work on organising Mimi's wedding. Which had been a *lot*.

Becky stretched out, putting down her laptop and folding it over so she could rest her head on Jareth's side properly.

Mimi had, being an absolute angel, asked Becky if she wanted to hold off on the wedding plans— And Becky had told her *no*. They would find a way to have her wedding if she wanted it.

It was, honestly, a good distraction for Becky. Something full of love and positivity to keep her mind off all the horrible things to come.

Her friends hadn't seemed surprised that she was still planning the wedding, even in the face of death and doom. Adam had said he would have been more surprised if she *didn't* continue with it. And Portia had sent a screenshot from the

Simpsons, where she'd edited Mimi into a bunch of photos over the text "DO IT FOR HER."

Becky didn't understand the reference, but she still thought it was pretty funny.

Funny enough that she giggled again as she thought about it, and felt Jareth's hug tighten.

She looked up to him and grinned as he cast a glance to her.

He was so great.

So, so great....

She couldn't imagine being anywhere else than here right now, or with anyone else.

Just her boyfriend. Her pets. Her couch. And a funny movie.

*Bloop!*

*Ping!*

Both Becky and Jareth's attentions were drawn to their phones as Isabel posted in the family group chat.

**Isabel:** So my MOTHER called today....

**Ken:** ☐

**Isabel:** She was cleaning out our old storage unit and wanted me to come and help her because Sharon was busy.

**Marta:** Oh?

**Isabel:** I found some old photos of Barbra from school

**Ken:** Oh vraiment?

**Isabel:** Oui!!!

**Becky:** no way

**Isabel:** I took as many as I could find before anyone else saw them. A few got a little bit crinkled because I was just STUFFING them into my bag to hide them but I HAVE THEM!!

**Jareth:** Yooooo!

**Marta:** Oh that's great news!

**Isabel:** I also found some boxes of things from the room Barbra and I used to share, before we moved to the city with mom.

**Becky:** oooooo!

**Ken:** Oh that was before you went to high school, oui?

**Isabel:** I was able to convince mom that it was all my stuff and now I have some of Barbra's old diaries and toys!

**Isabel:** Oui, Ken! Oui! Middle school!

**Ken:** Old diaries? I didn't know that Barbra kept diaries. She never wrote any when we were together.

**Isabel:** No, she stopped when she found out mom was reading them

**Marta:** Oh dear

**Ken:** Ugh, ta mère est une pute ! Je la noierais si je pouvais.

**Isabel:** Ouais moi aussi 😬

**Becky:** if u guy skeep speeking frencch im gonna make u tich me

**Isabel:** Honey are you sure you could handle learning a second language? What with your... you know.

**Ken:** What are you implying?

**Isabel:** Oh I'm just saying she's struggles enough with ONE language, learning a second one might be too hard for her

**Isa:** Are you calling Becky stupid??

**Isabel:** I remember how hard it was for ME to learn French and I knew how to spell "teach"

**Becky:** lol id rather b called dum then crazy

**Isabel:** No!! Oh my gosh NO I'm not calling her stupid!!

**Becky:** cus at lest its TRU

**Isa:** You better not be

**Ken:** I swear to god Isabel if you are calling Becky stupid I'm going to te déchirer membre par membre

**Becky:** i am stupid tho

**Isabel:** Our entire side of the family just has a bit of a record for being... not smart

**Becky:** dad be nice

**Ken:** No it's just you

**Becky:** dad

**Jareth:** No offence Mr Bloom but I don't really think you have the right to get mad at someone for calling Becky stupid

**Isa:** .....What do you mean by that, Jareth?

**Jareth:** Oh nothing

**Isa:** ☐

**Isabel:** Uh... anyway. Can I leave this stuff with you?

**Isabel:** Please?

**Becky:** shore

**Isabel:** If anyone in my family finds it they will destroy it all and I couldn't BARE that

**Ken:** I suppose that would be alright

**Isabel:** Oh Ken you are so wonderful! ♥♥

**Ken:** But only because it was things that were important to BARBRA

**Isabel:** I'll drop them off now!

**Becky:** no aunti not NOWW

**Ken:** Isabel, ne viens pas chez moi !

**Jareth:** aaaaand she's logged off....

**Ken:** Ugh, merde.

**Marta:** Ah, good luck with her, Liebling.

**Ken:** We won't be home by the time she shows up.

**Becky:** ill be home

**Ken:** Or maybe if we leave now we'll be there in time to hit her with the car...

**Becky:** daaaaad : (

**Ken:** No I'm sorry. That was very mean.

**Ken:** Just... She is NOT to go upstairs, ok?

**Becky:** ok dad

**Jareth:** Got it Mr Bloom

Becky looked back up at Jareth and sighed as her father logged off.

'I guess Auntie Isabel is gonna gatecrash our date,' she said, trying to hide her disappointment. 'At least we have a while before she gets here....'

‘Heh, yeah,’ Jareth chuckled. ‘It won’t be so bad. At least you’ll be able to contain her in the house, and nobody else will see her.... Where’s your dad gone, anyway?’

‘He went to the city with Isa,’ Becky explained. ‘I think he mentioned something about insurance? He said if the town really *was* going to be destroyed, he doesn’t want us to end up with nothing afterwards.’

‘Smart,’ Jareth replied, giving a nod and pecking Becky on the top of the head.

As he did, the scarf he was wearing decided it was the perfect time to chirp and migrate from him onto Becky; turning into a plush bear as it did so.

‘Stinky Mimi,’ Becky giggled as her pet climbed into her lap and settled down with a purr. ‘Good girl.’

A honk sounded from Jareth’s other side, and Becky laughed and reached over her boyfriend to pat her other mimic.

‘You too, Don,’ she told it. ‘You’re a good boy. Such a good baby.’

‘Heh, now this is *my* kind of double date,’ Jareth joked, carefully leaning forward to retrieve the chips and dip from the floor.

Becky slid out of his way and then, once he’d sat back up, she laid down on him with her head in his lap. ‘Chip me,’ she said, opening her mouth.

Jareth complied, carefully placing a dip-covered chip into Becky’s mouth.

‘Mm!’ Becky grunted an unintelligible thanks.

‘Decadence,’ Jareth chuckled, eating a chip of his own before offering Becky another. ‘Another chip, *Princess?*’

Becky laughed, which caused her to choke on her chip— And she sat up so she could cough it up.

‘Oh, baby girl—’ Jareth pet her on the back. ‘You alright?’

‘Mhm!’ Becky giggled into her hand; trying to avoid Mimi as it leapt up to lick the gross, mushed-up chip from her face and hands. ‘Ugh! Girl! No! Stop it! Girl—’

Mimi’s tongue went in her mouth, and she yanked her pet away. ‘*Excuse me?!*’

Jareth was in stitches with laughter. ‘I *told* you she still did that!’

‘Mimi!’ Becky scolded; though she was smiling wide as she did, and the mimic knew it wasn’t really in trouble. ‘Just for that, you have to sit over here!’

She put Mimi next to Don— Which made both of them chirp happily as they stood and circled around each other before settling down together again.

Then, the front door opened and Becky jumped as she heard loud, familiar laughter.

*Portia...?*

What the fuck was Portia doing here?

‘Ah, what the *fuck* is she doing here?’ Jareth echoed Becky’s thoughts. He put his arm over his girl and glared in the direction of their friend’s voice. ‘Portia! The hell?! You didn’t even *knock?!*’

‘Becky never knocks!’ Portia shot back.

‘Yeah!’ agreed Bianca, who trailed behind Portia so she could shut the door.

‘I knocked last time I went to your house!’ Becky defended.

‘Well *I* didn’t hear you!’

‘Cos you were too busy *screaming* and *wrestling!*’

‘Haha, yeah,’ Portia agreed, turning the corner into the lounge and giving a

silly curtsy. 'Hello hello, what can I do you for?'

Becky immediately noticed that her friend had a fake moustache glued to her face.

'Portia, what's that—'

'So it turns out costume glue works *very* differently on different skin textures,' Portia interrupted, clapping her hands together loudly. 'Bianca's came off no worries, but I guess the universe is just wanting to misgender me!'

'Aww, boo, universe!' Becky joked, flopping back over Jareth's lap as her friend made her way over to see what they were watching. 'So, like, what are you doing here?'

Portia shrugged. 'Youse came over and checked on all of us! Now I'm gonna check in on you— YOOO! You're watching *Shrek*?!'

'Oooh my god you're watching *Shrek*?!' Bianca exclaimed, hurrying to the couch and lifting Becky's legs up so she could sit down with her. 'Shove! Over! *Shrek* is the *shit*!'

'You're watching *Shrek* and you didn't fucking invite me?!' Portia exclaimed, punching Jareth in the shoulder. 'Why not?!'

'Because!' Jareth exclaimed, grabbing Becky to stop her slipping as Bianca moved her around. 'We're on a *date*—'

'Aw, fuck great idea! A date!' Portia exclaimed, pulling out her phone. 'Double date it UP, I'm texting Toast!'

'Portia don't you da—'

'He'll be here in five!'

Jareth let out a long, heavy sigh and looked to Bianca; who had finally settled down comfortably. 'Hm.... So. Who are you?'

'I'm Becky's side-piece,' Bianca joked, running her hand over Becky's hip. 'Her booty call! We fuck when we're bored.'

'Bianca?' Jareth guessed. 'Well, it's good to finally meet you—'

'Oi, I told Toast we're watching *Shrek* and he wants to bring Leeway. I'm saying yes!'

'No!' Jareth let out a cry, and kicked out at Portia— Who dodged, and lifted a mock-offended finger.

'Aw! AW! Just for that! *Just for that*!' Portia began typing away. 'I'm gonna invite the rest of the barbars!'

'Don't you dare—' Jareth cut off as his phone pinged. 'Mmm....'

It pinged again, and Portia gave a happy whoop. 'Ahah! Angelo's in! Ooh, and Cackle. Benny's asking ain't you two on a date—' Portia began typing. 'Yeah... but... *Shrek*....'

'Tell him to bring Orson!' Becky suggested.

'*Beck*,' Jareth gave a defeated sigh. Then, he slipped his hand down her side and into her shirt. 'Okay, fine. Invite Orson... but my hand's staying here until everyone shows up.'

Becky snickered as Jareth playfully cupped her breast, and then gave a squeal as Bianca's lips met her midriff and she blew a raspberry.

'*Bianca*!' Becky laughed. Wiggling as her friend slipped a hand up her thigh and under her jorts.

'Aw, fuck! A wild Vaporeon?!' Portia shouted at her phone, and Becky realised

she'd opened a game. 'Get back, fuckers! I'm in A.R!'

Portia stumbled back from where she was standing; sitting on top of Becky so she had a clear view as she tried to play her game.

'GET IN THE FUCKING BALL, YA CUNT!'

'So what's your favourite part of Shrek?' Bianca asked Jareth; still fondling Becky's leg. 'I'm partial to when Dragon first reveals her hooker makeup.'

Jareth chuckled, at that— Though Becky didn't hear his answer over Portia's screech.

'NO! IT RAN AWAY!' Portia shouted. 'Aw! This is the worst day of my *life!*'

'You're telling *me*,' Jareth muttered as Portia's tail caught him in the side of the head.

Then there was a knock at the door and Portia leapt off Becky (winding her as she did) and hurried to let her boyfriend into the house.

'T! Aw! Heya!' Portia greeted, embracing her boyfriend. 'Ah! Glad you could make it— And, Leeway! Hey.'

Awkward finger guns were exchanged between Leeway and Portia before the two rangers hurried after Portia to the lounge and went to sit down.

Toast made to sit beside Jareth— Only for Mimi to growl at him.

'Oh! Sorry!' Toast leapt from the seat hurriedly. 'I thought that was a pillow!'

'Nah. Sorry, Pop-Tart, this couch is only for my pets and people who have sex with me,' Becky joked, reaching over and ruffling Toast's hair. 'So if you wanna sit here you either gotta take your pants off, or put on a collar.'

'Or be like me and do both,' Bianca joked; immediately having one of Portia's thongs *thawpk* her in the face.

Toast went bright pink, hiding in his ears as he hurried over to one of the other couches and sat beside Portia.

'Besides, even if I let you, I don't think you'd *want* to sit here,' Becky continued. 'If you knew what this chair's been exposed to.'

Leeway gave Becky a look she couldn't read, so she stuck out her tongue at him before turning her attention to Jareth as he snorted a laugh.

'She doesn't fuck on the couch,' Jareth reassured, slipping his hand away from her chest and out from under her shirt; tenderly running his fingers over her skin as he did. 'It's *texture* is too important to mess up by sweating all over it. That's why she doesn't want other people sitting on it.'

'Shh!' Becky giggled, batting at Jareth's face as he bent down to kiss her. 'You make it sound like I'm, like, strict about it!'

'You *are* strict about it!' Jareth chuckled back, bumping their noses together. 'Remember when we were kids and I dropped pizza on the cushion, and you full-body tackled me to the floor?'

Becky snickered, playfully shaking her head.

'I remember,' he said, his hand sliding up her side again. 'You *bit* me on the leg!'

Becky let out a squeal and kicked out as Jareth tickled her— And her shout was echoed by Bianca, who got a foot to the face.

'OI!' Bianca exclaimed, trying to sound angry but clearly laughing as she pinned Becky's legs down. 'Fucking watch it!'

'Keep holding her down!' Jareth ordered with a sly grin as he pinned Becky's

front half down with his elbow. ‘I wanna see how loud she’ll squeal!’

It was very loud.

Very, *very* loud.

Toast tugged his oversized ears down hard as Becky screamed, and Leeway’s tabaxi ears pressed back flat, and Portia gave a pained grimace.

‘No! No no no! No! Stop!’ Becky laughed, trying to flail but finding herself unable to move. ‘No! Jareth! Stop! Stop—’

A unidentifiable, high-pitch *sound* escaped her as Bianca ran a finger over the back of her knee; and both her mimics let out similar loud cries.

Mimi leapt up at Jareth, nipping at his face playfully and causing him to flinch and loosen his grip on Becky.

‘Stop! Stop or I’m gonna *pee myself*!’ Becky shouted, finally breaking out of the pair’s grip and tumbling to the floor with a loud *thump*!

‘Not something I wanted to hear,’ another voice spoke from above Becky and she rolled over, finding herself looking up at a small group of people.

‘Oh, hey Orson!’ Becky greeted, grinning widely. ‘You let yourself in?’

‘We *did* knock,’ Orson said, leaning over Becky and patting her on the head. ‘But you were too busy screaming to hear us. Benny said it was fine to just come in.’

‘Not like you ever knock, yourself!’ Benny laughed, giving Becky a playful kick. ‘You’re lucky I didn’t have them all climbing in through *your* windows!’

‘Hah!’ Becky clambered to her feet and threw her arms around Benny, squeezing him tight. ‘Like you’d be able to lift yourself through a window!’

‘Hey!’ Benny ruffled Becky’s hair. ‘Don’t be mean!’

‘Yeah, Becky, don’t be mean!’ teased Benny’s friend, Cackle.

Becky broke away, then, to examine her guests.

There were five newcomers; Benny, Orson, Cackle, Angelo, and Hazelnut.

All of them were barbarians, except for Orson— And only half of them were people Becky got along with.

But... that was fine. These were Jareth’s (and Portia’s) friends; so it was nice to have them over.

Even if now Jareth was holding Hazelnut in the air by her tail.

Becky bit her lip as she watched the two friends interact, and was distinctly reminded of a time she’d called the little gnome Hazel-*butt* and been kicked so hard in the ankle she’d had to sit out on cheerleading practice for two days.

That tiny woman had a lot of bite to her... literally.

Jareth dropped Hazelnut when she sunk her teeth into his hand, and she landed on the floor with a *thump*. Mimi immediately mobbed her with licks and nips, growling playfully and clamping onto her tail.

‘Hey! Hey! No!’ Hazelnut cried, trying to pry the mimic off. ‘Don’t! Stop that! Ow! Becky! Get your fucking dog, bitch!’

‘Mimi!’ Becky called, quickly scooping her pet up. ‘That’s enough, no more rough-housing— *That goes for all of you!*’ Becky warned, as Angelo and Cackle reached for each other. ‘You’re working Mimi up. Also like, I promised Dad I wouldn’t, like, wreck anything while he was out.’

‘Since when do *you* make promises to your *dad*?’ Cackle asked, snorting loudly. ‘I thought you *hated* him!’

‘I went to therapy,’ Becky said, simply, propping Mimi up on her shoulder and then picking up Don from his hiding place between the couch cushions. ‘We worked out a lot about my self-hate and anxiety, and how I was externalising it as aggression.’

‘Hah!’ Cackle let out a loud laugh. ‘Alright, then. I never would have picked *Becky Bloom* as someone who hated themselves!’

‘I mean. You *have* to hate yourself at least a *little bit* to date Mattel, right?’ Becky joked— Earning another loud laugh, which spooked Don and had him burying his face into Becky’s neck. ‘Aw, baby, it’s okay. Nobody here is gonna hurt you.... Do you want to go upstairs?’

Don honked, loudly, and wiggled out of Becky’s grip; running for the back door.

‘Oh, shed? You wanna go to the shed?’ Becky asked, following after Don as he gave a honk of confirmation. ‘That’s okay. You just tap on the window when you’re ready to come back in, okay?’

Another honk, and Don hurried across the lawn and disappeared through the shed window.

‘What about you, Mimi?’ Becky asked as she shut the door. ‘You wanna stay with me or head upstairs?’

‘Mrrp!’ Mimi chirped, followed by a fart noise as it sprouted legs and leapt off Becky to bolt up and down the hall in excitement.

It ran up the stairs as Becky passed it, giving a loud trill before bolting towards the bedroom.

‘Have fun, baby!’ Becky called up after her. Then she headed back to the lounge and smiled when she saw everyone settled together on the couch, playfully shouldering each other and snacking on the food she’d brought out for herself and Jareth. ‘Anyone want drinks? I have some bottles of soda in the fridge.’

‘Aw, fuck yeah!’ Portia exclaimed. ‘Gimme a fucking Lift, aye!’

‘A... what?’

‘A Lift!’ Portia exclaimed.

‘Uh, Portia—’ Bianca winced. ‘They don’t have Lift, here.’

‘*What?!*’ Portia’s eyes widened.

‘Yeah. They don’t sell it. Also, uh. They discontinued it,’ Bianca told her. ‘About a month after you moved?’

‘NO!’ Portia cried. ‘NOT MY LEMON SQUASH!’

‘Ah, is that what a “Lift” is?’ Leeway asked, casually.

‘Was!’ Bianca laughed.

‘*Was...!*’ Portia wheezed miserably.

‘Oh, we have lemon squash,’ Becky told her.

‘Yeah, but it’s not *Lift!*’ Portia whined. Then, she took a deep, deep breath.

‘Okay... okay... what about a Solo?’

‘Uh,’ Becky folded her ears back. ‘A what?’

Portia sat up straight, looking *incredulous*. ‘Tell me you have Kirks?’

Slowly, Becky shook her head.

Portia grabbed the end of her fake moustache; forcefully pulling it off with painful *ripping* sound so she could throw it to the floor in anger. ‘America fucking *sucks!*’



‘Aw, don’t be such a baby!’ Hazelnut kicked Portia in the hip. ‘You’ve been living here nearly a year, how’d you not know we don’t have this shit?!’

‘Well I have a fucking stockpile at home, don’t I?!’ Portia snapped, shoving Hazelnut away. ‘*Fuck!* B! We’re gonna have to call Kezza and fucking get him to send us more!’

‘Ew, *nooooo*, I’m not calling *Kezza* for a favour!’ Bianca whined. ‘He voted for the libs, Porsh!’

‘HE FUCKING *WHAT?*!’

‘He said Scomi had a point!’

‘FUCK HIM!’ Portia picked up the fake moustache, just so she could slam it down again. ‘KEZZA’S FUCKING DEAD TO ME!’

Everyone watched in silence as Portia began to furiously kick up the rug.

Then Becky gave a sniff and looked back towards the rest of her guests. ‘So, does anyone *else* want a soda?’

A wave of requests hit Becky, and she quickly hurried into the kitchen to retrieve drinks and cups.

She was pulling down the plastic cups they used when Katie came over, when she heard someone come in behind her and twitched an ear.

‘Jareth?’ she assumed. ‘Could you get the drinks for me?’

‘Hah! Ah ain’t Jareth, but a’ight,’ Angelo’s voice laughed. ‘Just let me wash m’hands first. Hazelnut licked ‘em.’

‘Oh! Okay— Sorry!’ Becky felt herself blush. ‘I assumed if anyone was going to, like, follow me it would be Jareth.’

‘Naw, he tried!’ Angelo chuckled. ‘But Cackle got him round the waist.... If y’listen y’can hear ‘em.’

Becky cocked her head, straining to listen to the shouting that was going on in the other room.... They were all chanting something, perhaps a little out of tune with each other, which muffled it and made it harder to make out. One word....

*Simp.*

Becky laughed aloud when she heard it.

‘Yeah, that’s been his nickname fer a while!’ Angelo dried his hands on the dish towel instead of the hand towel, and then gathered the drinks from the fridge. ‘Ooh, y’all got wine!’

‘That’s... Dad’s,’ Becky said, shuffling nervously. ‘Uh. Did he just... leave it in the fridge?’

‘Yeah!’ Angelo nodded. ‘Why? Is he not s’posed to?’

‘*Mm...* not really,’ Becky shrugged. ‘We have a locked cabinet.’

‘Oh? Why?’

‘To keep it away from... me,’ Becky answered; earning a laugh. ‘Though... I guess that’s not a big deal anymore since I’m on my meds.’

‘Oooh, right! Adam *said* yer weren’t s’posed to be drinking!’ Angelo nodded. ‘You been sticking to it?’

‘Y... yeah!’ Becky felt herself smile as she realised it.

She hadn’t stolen her Dad’s wine since she’d started seeing Goodhuman. Was he leaving it out of the cabinet because... he *trusted* her?

‘Y’think he’d mind if we had some?’ Angelo asked.

‘Uh— Leave it!’ Becky hurriedly decided. ‘He might be saving it.’

‘Alright then,’ Angelo shut the fridge, and then scooped up the drinks he’d put onto the bench. ‘Y’know, yer’ve been a lot nicer lately, Becky. Prob’ly nicer than Ah’ve ever seen yer b’for! It really suits yer.’

Becky felt herself blush again, and quickly hurried back to the lounge so she didn’t have to acknowledge Angelo’s compliment.

She found everyone but Toast and Leeway had piled onto Jareth to hold him down.

‘Hey! Let him go or no drinks!’ she threatened. Then, when nobody listened, she increased the stakes: ‘I *will* turn off Shrek!’

A chorus of dismayed cries echoed throughout the pile, and everyone hurried back to their seats.

The group remained rambunctious for the rest of the movie. And through the entirety of the second one, as well....

Everyone whooped and yelled and jumped around— Only calming down after Cackle accidentally knocked a photo of Becky’s mother off the wall and Becky let out a *shriek*.

Luckily Leeway had caught it. But Becky’s almost-panic attack that followed had everyone a little more cautious of their surroundings.... They still roughhoused, of course, but made sure to stay away from the walls.

Then, there was the rattle of what sounded like an *ancient* car, and Becky felt herself tense.

‘Aw, wow!’ Portia laughed. ‘One of your neighbours has a real shitbox, don’t they!’

‘Oooh it’s *Isabel!*’ Becky realised, loudly. ‘Oh, she was *serious!* Jareth! She was *serious!* Oh my god and now there’s *people* over! She can’t be around *people!*’

‘Isabel?’ Benny’s brow furrowed. ‘You mean your—’

‘Oh my god it’s *her!*’ Orson cackled, looking out the window. ‘Shit! Oh, you *guys!* You’re not gonna fucking *believe* this bitch! She’s even more ridiculous than Beck—’

Becky didn’t hear the rest of what Orson said as she hurried to the door to meet her aunt.

‘Auntie!’ she called out the door. ‘Uh— Hey, Auntie!’

‘Becky!’ Isabel chirped back, kicking the back door of her car shut as she struggled to hold onto a heavy cardboard box. ‘Oh, honey! You look so *beautiful* today! Look at you! Oh, just— Let me put this down inside and then I can hug you!’

‘Auntie I didn’t think you were *serious* about coming over!’ Becky exclaimed, hurrying over to stop her aunt from dropping everything. She took one side of the box and helped guide Isabel inside to the lounge, where she deposited it onto the coffee table.

‘Here, Becky, *this!*’ she pulled out the bat that had been sticking out of the top. ‘This is the one I was telling you about!’

‘Huh?’

‘Oh, you remember!’ Isabel laughed. ‘When your mother broke my ex’s nose?’

There was a small cheer from the barbarians at the mention of violence, and Isabel gave a fearful cry and dropped the bat as she jumped up and leapt around.

‘OH— Oh!’ Isabel put her hand over her heart and gave a nervous laugh. ‘Oh, I

didn't see you all there! Becky, what a... *colourful*... group of friends you have— Ah! Jareth! Hello, honey! It's so good to see you again!

Isabel gave Jareth a kiss on the cheek and then hugged him firmly. It was clear he was uncomfortable as she squeezed him tight, and he cast a glance back at his chuckling friends as if to warn them off saying anything dumb.

'How have you been?' she asked, pulling away and pecking another kiss on his cheek. She then seemed to get distracted by his biceps then, as she lifted his arm and pet a hand against it. 'Look at *you*!'

'Yep, that's— Uh...' Jareth's cheeks went dark in a blush. 'That's my arm.'

'You're such a strong boy...' Isabel trailed off as she saw behind Jareth to Benny sitting on the couch. Then, she pointed in what Becky thought was the *rudest* way she possibly could have and exclaimed; 'Another one!'

'Auntie!' Becky cried.

'Uh...' Benny froze, his eyes widening as all attention turned on him. 'Another... one...?'

'Oh! Oh! Becky's told me about you, yes!' Isabel released Jareth to clap her hands. 'You must be... Jareth's brother, right? Oh... your name... uh... *Ben*... Benny?'

'Heh! Yeah, I'm Benny,' Benny's smile returned and he visibly relaxed as he pushed himself to his feet. 'And you're Becky's aunt. Isabel, right?'

'Right!' Isabel grinned wide, turning to take Becky by the arm and pull her close. 'I'm so lucky, Becky is just the *sweetest* girl!'

'Well, it's really nice to meet you,' Benny chuckled, reaching out a hand to Isabel—

Who let out another shout, and flinched away.

'Whoa!' Benny flinched back, as well; almost backing into Bianca. 'Whoa, you good? You okay?'

'Oh, I'm so sorry!' Isabel gasped, putting her hand to her chest again and trying to catch her breath. 'I-I'm not used to, uh.... Usually when a man raises a hand at me it's because he's about to— Well. *You know*. Ooh....'

'Well, it sounds like yer needing better men in yer life!' Angelo chimed in, pushing himself off the couch and —slowly— offering his hand. 'It's a real pleasure to meet ya, ma'am. Ah'm Angelo. Ah'm friends with Jareth and Benny. Though Ah do get along with Becky, too! Hahah.'

Isabel stared as she shook Angelo's hand; seemingly unable to comprehend him.

'You're... a... uh....'

*Don't say tiefling*, Becky silently begged. *Don't point out his race. I'm begging you. Say anything except tiefling....*

'You're a very *large* man, aren't you?'

Becky let out her breath, and felt Jareth's arm gently wrap around her.

'Uh, y... yeah?' Angelo cast Becky a look of confusion. 'Ah'm, uh. Ah'm kinda tall. Even fer my family, Ah guess.'

'You know, I've never actually *met* a tiefling before,' Isabel said, looking down to Angelo's feet in a way that had Becky instinctively lunging at her. 'Oh my lord it is true that you have hooves—'

'OKAY, Auntie!' Becky exclaimed, pulling her aunt away from Angelo. She

tried to ignore the snickers as she turned Isabel to face her and tried to change the subject. 'That's— Is that the only box you brought? Or... is there more?'

'Oh, no, there's... five more? This was the lightest one, though,' Isabel laughed, then held out her car keys to Jareth. 'Jareth, honey? Would you and your friends be dears and go get the other boxes from the car? You all look so strong, it shouldn't be a problem for you!'

'Yeah, we can do that,' Jareth answered, ignoring as his friends chuckled and flexed. 'C'mon, barbarians! Five boxes and six of us— Whoever doesn't get a box out has to drink *the juice*!'

'Aw, fuck, not the juice!' Portia shouted, shoving Hazelnut out of the way in her hurry to get outside. 'Not again!'

All of the barbarians fled the room after Portia and Jareth.

Isabel seemed to find this amusing, as she chuckled before turning and planting several kisses onto Becky's face. 'I better be quick, sweetie. I *did* see what your father was threatening in the group chat.'

Several eyebrows raised from Becky's remaining guests, but only Orson seemed rude enough to ask;

'What, does Mr Bloom not like you?'

'Oh, no, he *hates* me!' Isabel laughed. 'I think if he could, he'd kill me!'

'Why, what'd you do to him?'

'What *didn't* I do to him?' Isabel chuckled back, blushing and rubbing the back of her neck. 'Aw, anyway— Orson! It's so nice to see you again. How's your gender? Still a boy?'

'Nah, I'm a *man*,' Orson joked, striking a dumb, manly pose.

Isabel was enraptured by his performance, clapping her hands and throwing her head back in laughter. 'Oh, my god! I just still can't believe it! Science is *amazing*!'

'Heh! Becky, why didn't you introduce us to your aunt sooner?' Bianca said, nudging Becky playfully. 'She's fucking bonzer, aye!'

Isabel's eyes widened as she looked to Bianca, and she lifted a hand to touch the girl. 'Oh, my god. I *love* your hair!'

'*AUNTIE NO!*' it came out of Becky as a shriek, and she grabbed her aunt's wrist before she was able to touch Bianca. 'YOU CAN'T JUST TOUCH HER HAIR!'

Becky regretted raising her voice *immediately*, as her aunt looked horrified at her own actions and covered her mouth.

'Oh— Oh no—' Isabel shrank away from the girls. 'Oh, god, you're right— Oh my god, I'm *so* sorry! I wasn't thinking! I didn't mean to— Oooh my god!'

'Aye, aye, it's fine! It's cool!' Bianca laughed in a way that made it clear to Becky that it wasn't *completely* cool, but that she'd understood the situation. 'Beck's right. You can't just go 'round touching curly hair without consent. Maybe she shouldn'tah reacted quite so... *loud*. But that's just cos she's protective of us all, ain't ya?'

Isabel's breathing slowed as Becky gave a hesitant nod.

'Yeah, so it's all good. All good,' Bianca reassured. 'We got that boundary there, now, huh?'

'Bianca, I'm so sorry,' Becky sighed. 'And Auntie, you too. I... sorry. I didn't

mean to yell I just... kinda freaked out a little—‘

‘Everything alright?’ Jareth’s voice asked from the door, and he quickly made his way into the lounge with one of the boxes. ‘I heard yelling. Nobody’s hurt?’

‘Naw, just a misunderstanding, aye?’ Bianca laughed, wrapping her arms around Becky and Isabel and squeezing them both tight. ‘Now I’m gonna do something I don’t usually do, but hey, Izzy—

‘Me?’ Isabel interjected.

‘You can ask me *one* dodgy question, right?’ Bianca told her. ‘Before the others get back.’

‘Oh. Okay.... You’re an elf, right?’ Isabel’s brow furrowed when Bianca nodded. ‘But I thought all elves were *white*.’

Becky wasn’t sure if the horrible pained noise that came from the couch was from Toast or Leeway; but neither of them looked her in the eye when she glanced to them.... Orson, however, looked *very* entertained.

‘Aw, fuck,’ Bianca echoed the pained sound. ‘That is a dodgy question.’

‘Sorry—‘

‘Naw, naw. I gave you permission,’ Bianca waved her hand dismissively. ‘Elves ain’t all white, that’s propaganda. I’m from Aus. Australia. I’m Aboriginal—‘

Bianca was interrupted as Portia bolted into the room and put down two of Isabel’s boxes.

‘PORTIA YOU BITCH!’ Cackle screamed after her. ‘YOU STOLE MY BOX!’

‘SUCK SHIT!’ Portia yelled back. ‘YOU CAN DRINK THE JUICE, JUST LIKE ANGELO!’

‘HAH! Now I know we can *steal* boxes I’m gonna be juice free!’ Angelo called back; followed by the sound of Hazelnut screeching in rage.

Benny entered, then, and put his box down with a wide grin. ‘Here you go, Becky’s Aunt! Safe and—‘

Angelo ran into Benny, almost knocking them both down and barely managing to keep ahold of his box.

‘Hey, hey!’ Jareth exclaimed. ‘Careful! Don’t break anything!’

‘Ah didn’t!’ Angelo defended, putting the box down. ‘It’s all good and safe! Don’t get fussy, y’simp!’

‘*Simp?*!’ Jareth exclaimed. ‘I’m not a simp!’

‘Simp?’ Isabel asked. ‘What’s that?’

‘Means he’s been wanting some attention of the lady-like sort,’ Angelo answered, putting on a high, feminine voice and poking Jareth on the nose. ‘And he’s all head-over-heels for Little Miss *Becky Bloom*—‘

Jareth grabbed Angelo’s arm, and the pair of them ended up on the floor in a heap as the rest of the barbarians returned to the room.

‘Oh!’ Isabel jumped back as the pair began to wrestle, looking to Becky with a confused expression. ‘Uh... do they just... *do* that?’

‘Yeah, they just do that,’ Becky shrugged. ‘They’re fine.’

‘*Hm*,’ Isabel gave a tentative hum. ‘Well... I don’t think Jareth is a “simp.” He’s always such a *gentleman*!’

‘HAH! You hear that?’ Jareth laughed, getting Angelo in a headlock. ‘I’m a gentleman! Suck on that, you red bastard!’

Becky couldn’t help but giggle as the other barbarians all jumped in on the

pile, play-wrestling with each other.

‘Well... anyway, now that I’ve dropped all this off I should probably get going,’ Isabel said, her tone dropping as she wrapped her arms around Becky, giving her niece another one of her very bony hugs. ‘I love you, honey. You stay safe for me, alright?’

‘You too, Auntie,’ Becky sighed into her aunt’s shoulder before pulling away.

Isabel planted another couple of kisses on Becky’s face, before brushing the girl’s hair aside. ‘You call me if you need anything, okay? Day or night, I’ll be there for you.’

‘Thanks, Auntie,’ Becky felt a chuckle escape her. ‘See you next week?’

‘Yes!’ Isabel perked up, pressing one more kiss on Becky’s cheek before making for the door. ‘Next week! Sunday! I can’t *wait!*’

‘Bye, Auntie!’ Becky waved goodbye, watching as her aunt shut the door and listening out as she started her car.... And only relaxing and turning back to her guests *after* she heard the rattling of her aunt’s old car fade off in the distance. ‘Sooo... that was my aunt.’

‘Certainly... something,’ Leeway commented, slouching in his seat.

‘Bloody hell,’ Bianca laughed. ‘I see why you don’t talk about her much!’

‘Hah!’ Orson gave Benny a nudge. ‘I *told* you she was a scream!’

—END—

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