

Declutter

By C. Jade Wyton

Becky had a very, very difficult Friday night. So now, a day or two later, Becky decides that it's time to declutter and clean her room to make herself feel better.... But then, she finds herself having a very serious talk with her caretaker, Isa.

Contains non-explicit descriptions of violence.

~~~~~

Becky felt like she could finally breathe again.

After a week of panic and anxiety, the Beast (actually a *Ms LaBette*, as Becky found out) had come for the meeting with Becky's father— And Becky finally understood why he had been so anxious about it.

LaBette was a creature masquerading as human. Mimi had seen through the disguise immediately; screaming in fear and cowering away, scared that LaBette was going to *eat* them all.... And then when Becky had used her wildshape magic as a “party trick” to distract the talkative women from her father for five minutes so he had a chance to breathe, she had seen it too.

She wasn't a human. She was something else. Her body didn't move right. And she had no heartbeat.

*A warlock patron.*

That's what her father had said to Isa, though Becky was sure she wasn't supposed to overhear it. So she had kept quiet about the night. Even to Jareth and Adam; though she wasn't sure she could hold off talking to them about it for much longer. They obviously knew that something had happened to shake her.

Becky might have been good at keeping secrets for other people, but she was *terrible* at hiding her own feelings....

At least LaBette's photographer, Bruno-something, had been nice.

A little bit nosey, snooping around the main room, but nice.

*That had been the better part, of the night.*

Before she'd almost been murdered by Helena Hitchcock (not that she didn't think Helena wasn't justified; Becky had made the last few years a living hell for the woman and she was honestly surprised she hadn't snapped *sooner*).

She hadn't told Isa or her dad anything about what happened after she'd left for Wendy's house that night. She'd told them, when she got home, that she'd been in a fight.... She hadn't wanted to worry them— But when security footage of her and Mattel being attacked was released, she had to tell them everything.

Becky let out a sigh, and hefted herself up her shelf so she could reach the things on top.

*Her favourite plush toys.... A participatory award for middle school gymnastics.... A box of letters from her mother, when she was travelling out of the country....*

Nope. Nothing here she wanted to get rid of— *Oh!*

Becky gasped when she spied something behind the rest of the things. Something very familiar.

It was *Bimpy!*

She smiled when she recognised the old vintage toy that Adam had given her.

A “jolly chimp” he had called it. But Becky had thought that “Bimpy” suited it much better.

She’d pushed it behind everything else just a few years ago because it made Mattel uncomfortable.... Actually, Becky was fairly sure Mattel was *scared* of the old thing; with its red eyes and bright white teeth. The one time she’d seen it moving she’d had to leave the room....

Becky pulled Bimpy to the front, where it belonged, and pecked a kiss on its forehead. Then she let out a grunt as she dropped back to the floor and took a step back; making sure she liked the new arrangement of things on the shelf.

She did; so she moved onto her drawers.

It was surprisingly easy to get rid of things, Becky had learnt earlier that day. Isa had pulled her aside and made her clear out her wardrobe of everything Mattel had forced upon her, and Becky felt like she could breathe again.

*If you don’t like it, don’t keep it.*

That was what Isa had told her.... It seemed like such a simple idea; but it had never really occurred to Becky before to just... replace the clothes.

She’d thought, to herself, that if she got rid of them she wouldn’t have anything to wear— But Isa had pointed out, if she *didn’t* get rid of them, she’d not have room for new clothes she *actually liked*.

The realisation had practically punched Becky in the brain. All the clothes Mattel had gotten her to wear had slowly been replacing her old wardrobe; so why *couldn’t* she just replace her wardrobe again? With things *she* liked, instead of what other people thought she should be wearing....

God, Mattel had messed with her head.

*Oh, god, her vibrator’s batteries had exploded!*

Becky quickly glanced around, grabbing the nearby garbage bag and throwing the ruined toy into it.

Ugh, it was leaking *everywhere*. It was all over the bottom of her drawer.... That’s what she got, wasn’t it, for forgetting to take the batteries out and then losing her libido.

Becky wiped down the inside of the drawer and checked the rest of its contents. Luckily nothing else was damaged; she would have been *devastated* if she lost any of the things she kept in this drawer— Her most private, important, special, personal effects. Like letters from Jareth, and jewellery her mother had given her, and Mimi’s baby teeth (which, Becky had learnt shortly after the mimic had dropped them, meant it was a *lot* younger than her parents had been told when they adopted it).

This draw was for stuff she was embarrassed to still be holding onto, or scared that someone else might misplace, or for *personal* items she didn’t want Isa stumbling on when she tidied up.... As far as Becky knew, nobody else had ever seen the drawer’s contents.

*And she was happy to keep it that way....*

Content that nothing else had been soaked in battery acid, Becky tied the end

of the garbage bag tightly in a knot and then, grabbing the other two bags she'd filled, started for downstairs; discarding them in the bin outside and deciding she'd done enough cleaning for one day.

'Becky?' Isa's voice floated from the door as Becky stuffed the last bag into the bin. 'What's all that?'

Becky felt herself tense as Isa joined her by the bins. 'Just... decluttering,' she answered, finding herself unable to meet Isa's eye.

Even after everything that had happened at the meeting with LaBette... the thing that had shaken Becky the most had happened *after* the woman had left....

'Decluttering?'

When Isa and Ken had thought Becky was busy upstairs....

'Uh... yeah. After you made me clean up my clothes I thought I'd... get rid of some more stuff. Just like... broken things, and things I don't want anymore that I can't give to Mimi. You know.... Make some more room on my shelves.'

Becky knew she wasn't meant to see it, and had pretended she hadn't....

'Really? That's... that's a really big step, Becky. I'm proud of you.'

*Isa had kissed Ken.*

Becky swallowed as she felt the drow step to her side, and finally let her gaze trail submissively up to Isa's own.

*Isa and Ken had kissed, when they thought Becky wasn't looking, and Becky didn't know how she was supposed to feel about it.*

'Becky?' Isa hesitated, before reaching out a hand to Becky. 'What's wrong?'

'Nothing's wrong,' Becky lied, not taking Isa's hand and instead turning away and slamming the bin closed.

'You've been avoiding me,' Isa said, obviously hurt.

'No I haven't,' Becky lied again, averting her gaze and turning away again as Isa stepped around her to try and meet her eye.

Isa just sighed. 'You've barely spoken to me all day. I'm worried. We spent the entire morning together, clearing out your wardrobe, and you hardly said a word.... Are you mad at me? Have I done something to upset you?'

'No,' Becky answered; this time honestly. 'I'm not upset at you.'

'Then what?' Isa asked, her tone edged with desperation. 'Please, Becky. I'm really worried. Is it about what happened at Mattel's house? The police are looking for Helena, I'm sure they'll find her soon. She won't hurt you again.'

'I don't blame Helena for what happened,' Becky answered, surprising herself with her honesty. 'Mattel and I pushed her.... And then, like. Her little brother.... They found Mattel's old car where he was kidnapped, so. I don't think she was wrong for freaking out like that.'

Becky felt Isa lean in close to her. She didn't pull away as the drow took her hands; but didn't look up, either.

Of course Isa was worried about her. Becky had never been good at hiding her feelings; especially not from Isa. Isa could *always* tell how she felt.

And right now she felt... scared.

*Why was it such a big deal?*

She'd told her dad it was okay for him to start dating again. And Isa was already like a mother to her. It should have made *sense* for them to get together. But instead it made Becky's stomach turn over with fear.

*What if it went wrong?*

*What if it didn't work out?*

*Would Isa have to... leave?*

*What if they broke up, and Isa left, and Becky never saw her again?*

The thought terrified her more than the end of the world did.

'Becky? Honey, please talk to me.'

Becky forced herself to look up, then, before she wrapped her arms around Isa; hugging the woman tight and burying her face into her shoulder. 'I love you,' she squeaked.

Isa's hand met the back of her head, gently stroking her hair, and Becky was able to blink away her tears as she was held close.

'I love you, too,' Isa responded.

For a long moment, the two held each other close. Neither seemed to know what to say or do; so they just stood together, embracing each other tightly.

Becky didn't want to lose Isa.

Or her dad.

She'd been relieved when the meeting hadn't worked out and he hadn't gotten the job.

She felt guilty for feeling relieved, but she was glad that her dad wasn't going to leave again. *Especially* if it meant he would have been working for that terrifying LaBette woman.

But now she was worried that *Isa* might have to leave....

'Isa?' Becky asked.

'Yes, Becky?'

'Dad's not leaving?' she said, unsurely.

'No, he's not,' she reassured. 'He's staying right here.'

'And... so are you?'

'Of course I am,' Isa promised. 'I could never, ever leave you....'

'Ever?' Becky squeaked.

'Ever,' Isa confirmed.

Becky let out a sigh of relief, and felt herself relax.

'Becky— *Honey*,' Isa heaved a sigh, and ran her fingers through the girl's hair. 'Is that why you've been so quiet with me? Because you've been scared I'm going to leave? Why would you *ever* think I could possibly leave you?'

'I dunno,' Becky answered. 'It's just....'

'It's just what?' Isa asked.

'Just...' Becky trailed off.

'Becky?'

'I saw you kiss Dad,' she blurted, deciding that being blunt was best. 'After LaBette left.'

Isa's grip on her tightened, and the drow went stiff. 'You did?'

'*Yeah*,' Becky squeaked, her own grip tightening to match Isa's. 'Are you and Dad... dating?'

'We...' Isa hesitated, biting her lip, before letting out a long breath. 'We like each other... a lot. And we would *like* to date, but....'

'But... what?'

'We're worried about you,' Isa admitted, leaning back so she could run a

gentle finger over Becky's cheek. 'And how you would feel about it.... We didn't want to hurt you.'

'Is that why you didn't tell me?'

Isa gave a nod, biting her lip again.

'I don't mind,' Becky said. 'I'm.... I'm really happy for you.'

'Yeah?'

'Yeah,' Becky echoed. 'Just... nervous. That things are going to change.'

'It will be alright,' Isa promised, before pecking a kiss on Becky's forehead and leading her back towards the house. 'Come on, Becky,' she said, softly. 'It's freezing. You're going to make yourself sick, standing out here dressed like that.'

Becky couldn't help but smile as Isa fussed over her; taking her inside and sitting her on the couch closest to the heater vent.

'Do you want a warm drink?' Isa asked, smiling weakly when Becky nodded. 'I'll make us both some hot chocolate.... Then we can talk.'

Becky nodded again as Isa turned and made for the kitchen.

She tapped her feet together as she heard the kettle boiling, and then heard a loud *SQUEAK SQUEAK SQUEAK* as Mimi came running downstairs with its rubber steak toy and rushed past Becky into the kitchen. Isa greeted the mimic before being drowned out by the relentless squeaking of the toy, and Becky felt herself give a giggle.

It didn't take long for Isa to come back into the lounge; a mug in each hand and Mimi circling at her feet. She settled down on the couch next to Becky, giving the girl one of the drinks, before fidgeting with her own.

'So,' Isa started. 'You saw me kiss your father.'

Becky nodded, sipping at the warm drink.

'Did you... hear anything else?'

Becky knew exactly what Isa meant with that comment; LaBette's status as a warlock patron.... And her father almost signing a contract with her....

'No,' Becky lied, mumbling into her mug and hoping she sounded convincing. 'Was there something else for me to overhear?'

'No...' Isa lied back, very carefully. It was clear that she knew Becky was lying— And it was clear that Becky knew that she knew.... 'Nothing that *matters*, anyway.'

Becky nodded, shifting closer to Isa to make room for Mimi to sit beside her.

They both knew they knew. But the looks they gave each other made it clear they were more comfortable with the lie, so neither said anything else about it as they sipped their drinks.

When Becky was done drinking she put her mug on the coffee table and then leant back against Isa; resting her head on the drow's shoulder as an arm was wrapped around her own.

*SQUEAK SQUEAK SQUEAK— BAP! Squeak.*

Becky watched as Mimi flung its toy across the room into the wall, before chasing after it and scooping it back up.

*SQUEAK SQUEAK SQUEAK squeak squeak squeak....*

The squeaking grew quieter and quieter as the mimic rushed back up the stairs and made for Becky's bedroom— Though, it veered off at the last second and doubled back, rushing all the way to the other side of the hall.

‘Is Dad sleeping?’ Becky asked.

‘He *was*,’ Isa gave a weak chuckle, depositing her own empty cup next to Becky’s. ‘But it sounds like he won’t be for much longer....’

‘Hm,’ Becky let out a tentative hum before shifting so she could settle more comfortably into Isa’s side. ‘Isa?’

‘Yes?’

‘I have... a question,’ Becky said. ‘I was wondering....’

‘Yes?’ Isa pressed gently as Becky trailed off. ‘I’m listening, honey.’

‘Is it... um....’ Becky swallowed, before blurting, ‘Does this mean you’re going to be my mother, now?’

‘I....’ Isa hesitated, tensing, as she tried to answer. ‘I’m not... sure.’

‘Oh...’ Becky breathed, pressing herself tighter against the drow. ‘It’d be nice, don’t you think? To be able to call you my mum.... C... Can I call you Mum? Is that okay? I— I won’t, if you don’t want me to, but.... I’d... like... to....’

Becky felt Isa’s breath escape her in a shuddering tremble, and she could feel the drow was close to tears as she buried her face into the top of Becky’s head and gave a sniff.

‘Yes,’ Isa answered, quietly. ‘*Of course you can.*’

—END—

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