

I Like Isa, Too

By C. Jade Wyton

After a bad dream, Becky Bloom seeks comfort with her caretaker, Isa. However, instead of finding the drow alone in her room; Becky discovers she's not the only one who's sought to share Isa's company that night.

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Becky woke up crying.

A gentle trilling in her ear pulled her from her nightmare, and she felt Mimi's tongue on her cheek; lapping up her tears.

'Trrrad. Sad. Mrrp,' Mimi's voice whined. 'Mama! Wake up! Mrr.... Mama sad....'

Becky sniffed and reached up; first petting her mimic, and then moving to wipe her eyes.

'Mrrrrrama!' Mimi chirped. It was the last chirp Becky understood before it all became noise again.

Slowly blinking awake, Becky sat up and gazed around her room. Her hands fell lightly on Mimi as it climbed into her lap, and she instinctively began to scratch the creature along its pillow-shaped body.

'I'm okay, baby,' Becky mumbled as Mimi gave another chirp.

She was getting more used to hearing Mimi talk. Though, as Mimi snuggled tight against her and gazed up with its big, worried eyes, she wished she had more control of her abilities.

'It was just a bad dream...' Becky comforted as she gazed around the room again. 'I think.'

It couldn't have been real, could it?

*Everyone's gone.*

Becky shook her head, trying to clear it of the thought.

Nobody was gone. It was a dream. It... had to be a dream....

*But what if it wasn't?*

Becky let out a breath from deep in her chest as the anxiety tried to push its way into the front of her mind.

Nobody was gone.

But how did she *know* that?

Because Mimi was right here.

Sure, Mimi was here... but what about everyone else? The house was so quiet; who was to say it *wasn't* just her and the mimic? She couldn't be sure, unless she went and found someone....

*Ugh, fine,* Becky thought as she wiped the sleep from an eye and let out a yawn. *She would check.*

Slowly, giving Mimi time to scabble up her arm and onto her shoulder, Becky rose to her feet. She stumbled to the door and leant against the frame as she wiped her eyes again.

*She was so tired....*

Mimi's tongue pressed against her cheek, and she gave the mimic a gentle pat before continuing into the hall.

She stumbled to a familiar door; Isa's room.

Should she knock?

*No, no.*

She didn't want to wake Isa. She just wanted to make sure she was still there.... She wouldn't have to knock. Just open the door and check....

Carefully, Becky pushed open Isa's door and peeked in.

It was a beautiful room, Becky thought as she looked around. She let her gaze settle on Isa's bed, where the drow's form lay under her blankets—

The form rolled over, splitting into two as it did, and Becky's brow furrowed as she thought it was an unusual thing to happen....

*There was only supposed to be one Isa.* Why were there now two of her?

Curiously, Becky crept into the room.

She would check what was going on, and then go back to bed....

If she wasn't still dreaming, that was. Which, if there was two Isas, was *very* likely. Especially considering how tired she was feeling.

*Hmm....*

That second form, the one that hadn't rolled over. It didn't look.... it didn't look much like Isa. It was too long.

The one that had moved was definitely her; Becky could see Isa's beautiful white hair as she approached.

But that second form was....

*Oh.*

Becky paused as she reached the side of the bed.

It was her dad?

That was... strange.

What was her *dad* doing in Isa's bed?

Becky wiped her eyes again, and sniffed back a yawn.

Isa and her dad were lying together, And though there was now a gap between them, Ken's arm was draped lightly over Isa's side.

It was weird.

But at least now Becky knew they were both still here.

*See, brain?* she told herself. *They're not gone. They're right here.*

Mimi let out a gurgle as Becky relaxed, and gave her one final lick before sliding off her shoulders and skittering out of the room.

*'Bye, Mimi,'* Becky whispered after it; and then heard the sound of tearing fabric and a playful snarl, and knew the creature had found something to rip apart.

*'B... Becky?'*

Becky looked back to her father as he sat up and rubbed his eyes.

*'Becky? Is that you? What are you...'* Ken's murmur trailed off as he gazed around the room. His eyes fell on Isa and he paused for a moment before looking back up at Becky. *'Oh... um.... I, uh....'*

Becky wasn't sure why he looked so guilty.

He and Isa were friends. And it was comforting to sleep with friends; Becky knew this. When she used to have sleepovers she would often push her and her

friends' mattresses together. And though they hadn't really done it since starting high school, sometimes it was still tempting.... Especially in Winter, when it was cold....

And though it was still just Autumn, now, it *was* very cold. So Becky could understand why her father and Isa would be in bed together.

*Hmm....*

It would be very warm, under those blankets....

'Becky?' Ken gave a confused whisper as his daughter lifted his blanket and crawled under it with him. '*Becky what are you— Okay, uh—*'

Becky climbed over her father, settling herself down between him and Isa. She felt the warmth soak into her from all sides and let out a contented sigh.

She had been right. It was very *very* warm.

'Becky, you're *freezing*,' Ken observed, hefting the blanket up and pulling his daughter close. He rubbed her arm in an attempt to warm her up as he nudged his pillow closer to her for them to share. 'How did you get so cold?'

Becky didn't reply. Instead, she shifted closer to him; burying her face into his chest and letting out another sigh.

'Becky?' Ken asked— Then, when Isa gave a murmur, he dropped his voice to a whisper again. '*Honey? What's wrong?*'

'*I had a dream,*' Becky muttered. '*That I did something bad.*'

'*Oh? What did you do?*' Ken asked.

'*I don't know,*' Becky admitted. '*I just know that it was really bad. But I didn't understand why it was bad. And nobody would tell me what it was that I did. Instead they got mad at me and left.*'

'*They left?*'

Becky nodded, and curled closer into her father as he kissed the top of her head. '*And because I didn't understand what I did wrong, I did it again. And again. And everyone kept getting angry at me. Katie. And Jezzibeth. And Malinka and Jareth and Marilyn.... Even Adam got mad at me. And when I asked him what I did, he said that I knew what I did. But I didn't know. And he got mad at me for not knowing.*'

'*That doesn't sound like Adam,*' Ken reassured. '*Adam wouldn't say that to you.*'

'*I know. But I didn't know while I was dreaming,*' Becky whispered. '*I didn't know anything while I was dreaming. Just that everyone was really angry with me. And acting weird and doing things I didn't understand and then getting mad at me when I didn't copy them right.*'

Another kiss from her father found its way onto the top of her head.

Then, she felt Isa rolling over again. The drow's arm wrapped around Becky and Ken; though she didn't seem to wake up and instead let out a long breath and murmured about bread.

Becky waited a moment to make sure she hadn't woken Isa up before she continued, '*I couldn't stop making mistakes. I tried to fix it, but I didn't know what I was doing wrong. And then... I did it to you and Isa. And then you were both gone, too.*'

Becky felt her father give her a firm squeeze as he pressed his face into her hair.

*'I would never leave you because of a mistake,' he told her, softly. 'I promise.'*  
*'I know,' Becky replied. 'But in the dream you did. And it was scary....*  
*Everyone left and then I was just... alone. The whole town was quiet. And no*  
*matter where I looked, or how much I called out, there was nobody. I looked*  
*everywhere, but everyone was gone. And I was alone,'* a heavy sigh escaped  
Becky as she pushed deeper into her father's chest and swallowed back her tears.  
*'And it wasn't the good type of alone, either. Not like when you're alone for a*  
*little bit by choice. It was the bad kind. Where you need help, but you can't find*  
*anyone to help you.... Do you know that kind of alone?'*

*'Yes, I do,' Ken answered. 'It's the worst kind of alone.'*

*'Yeah,'* Becky sighed. Then, she pushed away from her father— Or, pushed  
away as much as she could, before being pressed as far back as she could into  
Isa's sleepy embrace. She gazed up at him curiously and, yawning halfway  
through her sentence, asked him; *'So why are you.... Oh, mmm-auh... Hm. Why*  
*are you in bed with Isa? Did you have a bad dream, too?'*

Ken hesitated, looking embarrassed, and Becky felt him tense as he took a  
long, deep breath. *'I... like Isa.'*

*'Hmm,'* Becky gave an approving nod before burying her face back into her  
father. She felt herself starting to drift off again as she murmured, *'I like Isa,*  
*too.... She's really good.... I'm glad you're friends with her.'*

—END—

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