

Lying is a Sin

By C. Jade Wyton

It has been a miserable day for poor Isabel Parker. Her father treats her like a slave, and she knows she deserves better. Losing her patience at her mistreatment, Isabel stands up for herself... triggering her father to have a medical emergency.

Contains depictions domestic abuse, death, and implied homophobia.

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Isabel was having a miserable day.

She'd woken up feeling stiff, and sore, and not ready for the monotonous hell of making her father's breakfast.

*Again.*

She couldn't bare it.

She'd barely gotten through it....

Isabel groaned and sat up straight; stretching her sore back as she put down the scrubber she had been using to clean the bathtub.

Meeting Becky had been both the best and the worst thing to ever happen to her....

She loved her niece.

She loved her *so much!*

Becky had given Isabel a new purpose —a new reason— to try and be a whole and full person again, instead of a meaningless shadow with nothing inside.

Her routine had been broken! And she was being treated with love!

But then, on the other side of it....

Her routine had been broken. And she was being treated with love.

The numbness was fading.

And she could feel the sting of the abuse she was being put through all over again like a whole new and fresh wound.

Every time she was treated with kindness and respect it made it that much worse to return to the hell she called home.

Because she knew, now, what it felt like to be treated better.

She knew that she *deserved* to be treated better.

She knew there was more for her in life, if only she could just *reach for it* without being pulled back down....

'Isabel!' Isabel's father, Leon, hollered through the house. His tone was demanding as he shouted again. '*ISABEL!*'

Isabel sighed and tugged off her gloves, throwing them into the garbage in a huff before storming down the hall to check on her father.

She would *love* to go away someplace far from here.

Just like Becky's parents.

Ken and Isa had, according to their posts in the family group chat, gone away

to a nice hotel together.

Isabel was jealous.

So *incredibly* jealous....

'Isabel!' Leon snapped as Isabel entered the room. 'Do you have *any* idea what time it is? Lunch should have been ready ages ago!'

*Ugh.*

What a horrible man....

What a horrible, *horrible* man....

'I know what time it is, Dad,' Isabel tried not to scowl, but knew she was failing at looking calm. She tried to bite her tongue to stop herself from continuing; but found her bad mood was too great, and she couldn't hold back the snarky remark that came out of her mouth. 'I was just finishing cleaning the bathroom. *Like you told me to do.* So you can wait ten minutes for something to eat, it won't kill you!'

'Don't you give me that attitude, you ungrateful thing!' Leon snapped, pointing his cane threateningly at his daughter. 'Don't forget that I—'

'Roof over my head, food on my plate! *I know!*' Isabel snapped, crossing her arms and— She ducked away from her father as he swung his cane at her, barely managing to avoid it.

'Do you *want* to go back to living with your mother?!'

'Maybe I *do!*' Isabel snapped, grabbing for her father's cane as he swung it again. She got ahold of it and yanked it from him with a furious tug. 'Or, maybe I'll go live with my girlfriend!'

'Your *what?!*' Leon spat.

'Girlfriend!' Isabel repeated loudly, throwing the cane to the floor and stepping towards her father as she raised her voice. 'My girlfriend! My girlfriend! MY GAY LESBIAN GIRLFRIEND!'

'Your—' Leon cut off with a gasp.

For a moment, he was quiet. And Isabel felt like time had stopped moving....

Then he slumped sideways out of his chair, landing on the floor in a quiet heap as Isabel stared, stunned.

'Dad...?' she asked, quietly.

There was no reply.

So, slowly, Isabel pushed at her father with a foot,

He didn't move.

*Oh... oh, no!*

That wasn't good!

That wasn't good at all!

He was having a— Some sort of— He was—

*She had to call an ambulance!*

Isabel spun around, hurrying for the phone and— Pausing when she reached it.

Her hand hovered, just above the handset.

But she didn't pick it up.

She needed to get her father help. He'd had some sort of heart attack and he clearly needed medical attention as soon as possible.... But....

Something inside her was whispering....

*Just wait a little longer.*  
He was going to die.  
*Let him.*  
*Just wait.*  
Just wait and you will be rid of him. You will be *free!*  
You will *finally* be *free!*  
Just wait. Wait a few more minutes. And say you came in and found him already on the floor.  
Nobody would ever figure it out.  
They'd never have any reason to believe otherwise!  
You were cleaning.  
You were cleaning, and you came in to check on him, and he was on the floor....  
*Lying is a sin*, Isabel reminded herself. *Letting him die is a sin.*  
*So is beating your daughter*; she argued. *And, according to him... so is loving Moon.*  
Isabel slowly pulled back her hand and turned to look at her father on the floor.  
She felt... *nothing* for him, as she stared at his limp, lifeless body.  
No concern for him.  
No love for him.  
*No fear of him.*  
She felt *no fear*.  
For the first time in her entire life, she could look at her father and *not feel terrified*. Not feel like she had to bite her tongue, or be ready to brace for his hand against her cheek.  
She only felt relief.  
*He couldn't hurt her anymore....*  
'One,' slowly, her voice trembling, Isabel began counting the seconds. 'Two. Three. Four....'  
She counted all the way to three hundred —five full minutes— before she picked up the phone and began to dial.  
'Hello, nine-one-one. Fire, police, or ambulance?'  
'Ambulance.'

—END—

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