

Manic at Jareth's

By C. Jade Wyton

Becky has snuck into her boyfriend Jareth's house and is waiting for him to come home. She's excited, and wants to see him, and talk to him, and hug him. As she waits for Jareth, his brother Benny comes home and keeps Becky company.

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Jareth's bed smelt amazing.

Becky rolled over, pressing her face into the pillow, and took a long, deep breath.

It smelt like *him*.

His strong, earthy, greasy smell was soaked deep into the mattress and it made Becky want to melt into it. She wanted to let every fibre of her being absorb into the imprint left in her boyfriend's bed.

She couldn't wait for him to get home. She'd come over about an hour ago, hoping to see him, but had found his house empty. So she decided to lay in his room until he got back.

Everything about it was just so... *him*. And in the best way possible.

The old swivel chair. The shelves full of photos and seashells.... The dirty sports jersey that lay, discarded, by the door....

*Would it be weird to...?*

Becky didn't even finish the thought before retrieving the dirty shirt and pressing her face into it.

*Dear god it smelt fantastic!*

Becky sat down where she was, her face buried in the jersey, and just let herself take in the smell.

It made her entire body feel lighter....

She knew her druidcraft was blooming rampant around her. She could feel petals falling from her hair— But that didn't matter right now. All that mattered was Jareth.

She couldn't *wait* for him to get home!

She'd called her aunt Isabel again, just yesterday. The woman was *very* old fashioned. But it was clear she was trying to be a good person.

She'd asked Becky if her and Jareth were planning on having children anytime soon. And Becky had to explain that they'd been trying to *avoid* it.

*Why?* Isabel had asked.

The question had been innocent enough. Isabel had asked it in good faith; but Becky hadn't been able to answer it. And so it had wormed its way into her brain.

She *could* have kids with Jareth.

It suddenly felt like a very real possibility, instead of just a far-away consequence of not being careful.

*She could have kids with Jareth.*

They could have an entire *future* together!

Becky had never really thought about the future before. Not even when she was dating Mattel and the woman's parents pestered them about their plans— It had all seemed so unreal, so far away, so not-in-the-present....

But she *could* have a future with Jareth.

The idea felt real and plausible and *good*.

She took another deep sniff of the shirt before slipping it over herself and putting it on. It was inside-out, but she didn't care.

*All she cared about was the smell.*

Becky flopped onto the floor and closed her eyes, letting herself become lost in the smell of Jareth and blooming flowers—

'Becky?'

Becky hurriedly sat upright and looked up to meet eyes with Jareth's brother, Benny, as he leant against the doorframe.

'Hey, Benny!' Becky chirped, quickly brushing the petals from her fringe.

'What are you doing here?'

'I live here,' Benny answered with a grin.

'Oh, yeah, I meant— Jareth's room.'

'I could hear you thumping around in here and thought I should check it out,' he shrugged. 'You know. Make sure nobody's broken in. Or at least nobody *unwelcome*.'

'And what did you find?' Becky asked, grinning playfully. 'Am I gonna get kicked out?'

'I think Jareth would beat me up if I threw you out,' Benny gave a chuckle, then motioned towards the lounge. 'I'm going to watch a movie. Want to sit with me?'

'Yeah!' Becky leapt to her feet and hurried after Benny as made his way down the hall. 'It's been *ages* since we hung out, just us!'

'Yeah, usually you get distracted with Jareth,' Benny joked. 'He's gonna be a while, by the way. He's helping Mum get groceries.'

*Jareth was so sweet!* Becky thought, her heart melting for the man even more as she let out a long sigh.

'Man, you've really gone all-in with him, huh?' Benny asked, flopping onto the couch and turning on the TV. 'I shouldn't be surprised. You've always been really intense about these things.'

'Intense?' Becky asked.

'Yeah,' Benny confirmed, though he didn't elaborate. Instead he pet the seat next to him. 'C'mon, sit.'

Becky didn't hesitate to sit down and snuggle into Benny's side. She rested her head in the curve under his arm and lay an arm over his middle.

'You good, there?' he asked, obviously humoured.

'Yeah. You're comfy,' she said, pressing tighter against him. 'Warm and soft. Like a really big muffin.'

'You're so weird,' Benny chuckled, wrapping his arm around her so he could rub her shoulder. 'Its good to have you back, Beck. Everyone was *really* worried about you.'

'Yeah,' Becky let out a heavy sigh, and traced a finger over Benny's stomach. 'I was worried about me, too.'

Benny gave Becky a comforting squeeze. 'Glad you're okay,' he said. 'Even if you're weird now.... What even happened?'

'Hm? What do you mean?'

'I mean... you were normal. And then suddenly you weren't,' Benny said. 'It wasn't your accident. You were normal for a while after that— At least mostly normal. Not weird weird, like you are now.'

'Oh... uh... well...' Becky knew *exactly* what Benny meant, but she wasn't sure she was ready to tell him about the *Romero Incident*.... She'd only recently told *Jareth* about what had happened.... 'There was, like, a thing that happened. And I think it like... *broke* me.'

'What thing?'

'Uhh...' Becky shifted awkwardly. 'I got in a fight.'

'You always get into fights, though.'

'Yeah but, this was like a *bad* fight. Like, a *really bad* fight. And I saw people get hurt. And it was like a... switch flipping. Or like when a rope snaps cos you've been pulling on it too much and then everything it's holding falls apart,' Becky explained. 'And my whole brain kinda just, like. Changed. Like everything was just too much and it broke something and then I couldn't think properly anymore.'

'Yeah?' Benny asked, softly. 'That's why you went to hospital, right?'

'Yeah. It all feels really different now. Like the way I think my thoughts is different. Like all my thoughts are eggs, and they all got dropped, and now I have to scramble them so they don't go to waste.'

'So you're crazy?' Benny asked, though it felt almost like a statement.

'Yeah, I think so,' Becky answered. 'Things feel really fast, now. And it's like a lot of things in my brain got turned around and upside down. And it's weird cos it like, feels familiar? Like I've had these kinds of thoughts before.'

'Maybe you have,' Benny shrugged. 'You're acting a lot like you used to as a kid. Maybe all the stuff you learnt growing up that made you normal is what broke, and now all the weird shit is spilling out again.'

'Like popping a balloon full of glitter?' Becky asked.

'I was thinking more like a tiger breaking out of a cage,' Benny laughed. 'But that works, too. Even if it's less cool.'

*Hmm....* Becky *thought* it made sense.

A tiger that wasn't always in a cage and learnt how to be a tiger, that then got put in a cage and had to learn to be not-a-tiger.... And it got more and more agitated until it finally managed to break out and be a tiger again....

'Jareth doesn't like it when I call you crazy,' Benny mentioned. 'He gets all defensive and stuff.'

'Of course he does,' Becky said, simply. 'He's dating me. It's like, his *job* to get mad when people say that stuff.'

'It's true, though?'

'Yeah, but he's still supposed to say it's not.'

'I don't get that,' Benny shrugged. 'It seems really weird and round-about. That's one of the reasons why I couldn't date you, honestly. Too many rituals and rules that don't make sense.'

'Because I'm crazy?'

‘Yeah, because you’re crazy.’

Becky laughed, at that. Then, she saw the TV out of the corner of her eye and let out a coo. ‘Awww, they’re getting married! That’s so cute!’ she said, pressing into Benny. ‘Do you think you’ll ever get married to Orson?’

‘Uh...’ Benny blushed a deep shade of green. ‘*Maaaaaybe?*’

‘I’d like to marry Jareth, I think,’ Becky sighed, wistfully. ‘Can you imagine that? Me and Jareth?’

Benny gave a snicker. ‘Maybe you should ask him,’ he teased— Though his brow raised when Becky gasped, and it was obvious she’d missed his humoured tone.

‘I *could* ask him!’

Just as she said it, Becky heard the front door of the house— And with it the familiar voices of Jareth and his mother.

She was on her feet in moments, leaping over a very surprised Benny in her hurry to get off the couch and into the hall.

As soon as she was in the hall she was in Jareth’s unexpected arms; jumping into him with such force that he stumbled back into the wall and dropped the boot he was holding.

‘Jareth!’ Becky exclaimed, burying her face into his neck and letting out an excited squeal. ‘Oh my god! Jareth! We should get married! And move in together! And have kids! And adopt a dog! And a cat! No— No! *Two cats!*’

‘Wh—’ Jareth cut off as his mother and brother burst into laughter. ‘I— Huh— Uh.... H-Hold... on.... What?’

Slowly, he peeled Becky off himself and placed her on the ground.

Becky was so excited she couldn’t help bouncing on her toes and flapping her arms; flower petals spinning up around her as she twirled in a circle.

Jareth cast a confused look to his mother, then past her towards Benny, before finally looking back to Becky with a questioning look as she bounced around in front of him.

‘Ah,’ a look of realisation washed over his face before he gave a humoured grin. ‘Right. We’re manic today.... Okay, well.... First things first,’ Jareth gently placed his hands on Becky’s shoulders, stopping her excited bounces and pushing her down off her toes. Then he pecked a kiss on her cheek and brushed the hair from her eyes. ‘Hello, Becky.’

‘Hi,’ Becky gave a sheepish giggle, feeling her cheeks grow warm. ‘Hey. Hello!’

‘Hello,’ Jareth repeated, running a hand over Becky’s cheek. ‘So.... Okay. So. I’m not saying *no* to anything. But I *am* going to suggest we wait on that thought for a year or two, okay? Get everything else sorted out in here—’ he gently tapped the side of Becky’s head, causing her to giggle. ‘before we make any really *big* choices. Sound alright to you?’

It did— But Becky was too excited to reply.

It wasn’t a no!

Not a yes, but—

*Not a no!*

Becky felt herself flapping her arms again as her excitement worked up, and up, and up— Until she couldn’t hold it back any longer and bolted down the hall, her clothes falling to the floor behind her as her body transformed.

‘Ferret!’ Benny exclaimed, leaping out of Becky’s way as she bolted through the house.

Up and down the hall!

Into the kitchen!

Out of the kitchen!

Onto the couch!

Into the hall!

Up Jareth’s leg!

Off his shoulder!

Into the kitchen again—

And face-first into the leg of the dining table, knocking herself unconscious.

—END—

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