

McDonald's

By C. Jade Wyton

After seeing her ex-girlfriend being publicly abused, Becky Bloom finds herself a trembling, non-verbal mess. Luckily, she is with good friends. Though, only her boyfriend is sober and able to take on any form of responsibility. He takes the girls to a McDonald's before calling for backup.

Contains descriptions of an anxiety attack, intoxication, implied drug abuse, and mentions of abuse.

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Becky couldn't stop trembling.

She shouldn't have gone to that new club. The music had been too loud. The lights had been too bright. The room had been too crowded— But it had all seemed so okay, at first, because Jareth was there with her. She'd thought that, as long as she stayed close to him, nothing would go wrong. He'd kept her company for most of the night; his breath on her neck and his hands running all over her body.

But then.... Everything had happened so *fast*.

And it was still running through her mind. Again and again and *again*.

Portia had gotten up on the karaoke stage. And it was clear from just a glance at her that something was very, *very* wrong. Becky had to check on her, and she and Jareth had joined up with a drunken Malinka to sit Portia down at a nearby table.

Had Portia been drinking, too?

Becky didn't think so. She'd seen Portia drunk before, and this didn't seem like her usual cheerful drunken self.

It was like she was on something... *different*.

Malinka had stumbled off to find Portia some water, and while she was gone, Portia had complained of being hungry.

*Very* hungry.

She'd eaten everything Becky had on her and then—

And then....

The look she'd given Jareth was....

It was....

*Like when Mimi saw a bird out the window.*

The look in her eyes, it was like she wanted to sink her fangs straight into Jareth's throat.

But that was so unlike Portia.

So unlike her, that Becky had wondered if she'd imagined it— Until Malinka's face echoed her own anxiety and they tried to encourage Portia to go outside. And, with the promise of takeaway, Portia had seemed to forget about Jareth and stumbled along with the group to the door.

And that....

That was when it became *overwhelming*.

She'd heard shouting, and her attention had been drawn to the bar— Where she had seen the worst possible scene she could have ever dreamt of seeing.

Her ex-girlfriend, Mattel Masters, in a shouting match with her new boyfriend.

Becky couldn't get it out of her head.

The yelling.

The accusations.

It was like it was happening in front of her all over again. She could still *hear* that Guillmero guy's drawling, vicious tone.

*I'm tired of you....*

*You're fussy....*

*Nothing pleases you....*

*It's no wonder your last girlfriend broke up with you....*

*You're insufferable....*

*It's because I get to leave after....*

*I'm my own person, Mattel....*

*Independent....*

*And now, you're an independent person, too....*

*I'm bored of you....*

Becky could feel herself sweating as she remembered how calmly Guillmero had humiliated Mattel.

The vicious words.

The drink that he'd ordered; for the soul purpose of pouring it into her hair.

It had dug deep, deep into Becky's brain.

*It's no wonder your last girlfriend broke up with you....*

The fact he wasn't even *completely wrong* made her tremble.

The fact that almost everything he had said to Mattel, she herself could have been saying to her, only mere months ago.

*Should have been saying to her....*

But then....

Then, if Mattel had treated her so bad, why did she feel *guilty*?

Why did she hate seeing Mattel get hurt?

Why did she want to run to her, and throw her arms around her, and tell her it was going to be okay?

*Why did she feel like it was all her fault?*

She closed her eyes, feeling a lump rise from her stomach to her throat, and tried not to be sick.

'Becky?'

A gentle voice spoke to her, and she slowly opened to eyes to see her boyfriend's deep, yellow gaze softly looking back into her own.

'Baby girl?' he breathed, brushing a lock of hair from her face. 'Hey... you okay in there?'

Becky stared back.

Was she okay?

Was she okay?

Was *she*?

‘Mmm,’ Jareth gave a nervous hum and let out a deep, deep breath. ‘We’re ordering food now,’ he said, gently. ‘Do you want anything—’

He cut off, whirling around as Portia let out a loud groan of frustration, and rushed to stop her from licking the screen of the self-serve machine.

‘Portia, no!’ he exclaimed, yanking her backwards.

‘But the food is *there!*’ Portia retorted. ‘Let me eat it!’

‘Portia, that’s the self-serve machine!’ he snapped. ‘You have to *press* the item you want and *buy it first!*’

‘Ooh,’ Portia gave a nod. ‘I see. Magic.’

‘Ugh...’ Jareth gave a groan, and then glanced to Malinka; who was very, *very* slowly selecting her own meal on another machine. ‘Malinka? Are you alright?’

‘Gamburger,’ Malinka responded, flatly. ‘Kartofel’ fri. Morozhenoye.’

‘*Yeaaaaaah...*’ Jareth drawled, unsure. ‘You’re... fine. I think. Okay— Portia! No! Stop! *Hands!* You see these? These things?! *Hands*, Portia! Use them!’

Becky just stared, and went to rub her shoulders.... Only for her hands to meet the thick leather of Jareth’s jacket.

When had....

She didn’t remember Jareth putting his jacket on her....

She looked down at the revealing mesh outfit she’d decided to wear for the night and thought that, with Jareth’s jacket around her, it was no wonder she wasn’t feeling the cold.

Slowly, Becky pulled the jacket up so she could bury her face into its collar.

*It smelt like Jareth.*

Why was she thinking about Mattel?

She was with Jareth, now.

And she was happy.

Happier than she’d been in... *almost two years.*

Jareth loved her. Adored her.

And he respected her.

Jareth didn’t make her feel like she had to second-guess every choice she made.

What she wore. What she ate. What she said. Or where she went. He didn’t control her like Mattel did.

She was free to do what *she* wanted to do.... And Jareth didn’t judge her.

When she was with him, she felt like she was safe. Like nothing could ever go wrong again— And even if it *did*, that it would be okay....

So why couldn’t she get Mattel out of her head?

Why did she feel like she was still responsible for her? For making her happy?

Why had... why had her first reaction to seeing Mattel on the brink of tears been to step towards her?

If it hadn’t been for Jareth pulling her away Becky was sure she would have thrown her arms around her ex, and stroked her hair, and buried her face into her shoulder, and told her it was going to be okay.

*Why did she still love Mattel?*

Why couldn’t she just... turn off her feelings. And focus everything on Jareth?

Jareth....

She loved *Jareth*.

Her heart panged as she remembered her attempts to contact Mattel earlier that week— After being bombarded with message after message, all of them linking a video of Mattel having a very public breakdown, Becky had tried to check on her.... Only to receive no response.

It was probably for the best, but....

Even just *trying* to talk to the woman felt like a crime.

*And yet... she couldn't help herself.*

She'd felt so, so guilty about it.

So guilty.

It was the *one person* she was sure Jareth didn't want her talking to.

He was willing to let her be herself— Her stupid, slutty, polyamorous self.

But she was sure that their talk hadn't included *Mattel*.

Mattel was the *one person* that she was sure Jareth hated with all his heart.

And she couldn't even blame him....

And still. She'd *still* reached out to try and talk to her ex....

Becky *knew* she was being a terrible girlfriend and that Jareth deserved better than her. But she couldn't *stop*!

She was the worst possible person that Jareth could have fallen in love with.

In a fit of guilt, Becky had known that she had to make it up to Jareth— Whatever Jareth wanted, he would get. Becky would do whatever he wanted without question, and would be a better girlfriend.

*Though* —and Becky felt herself smiling weakly as she thought it— *all Jareth seemed to want to do was be with her.*

He just wanted to sit with her.

Lay with his head on her lap.

Or her head on his shoulder.

And he wanted to see her happy.

He was so, so good to her....

And she was *garbage*.

'Okay— Portia— Portia!' Jareth's voice cut through Becky's thoughts, and she looked up to see him struggling with the triton. 'Look at me. Is that *really* what you want to eat? Twenty-three triple cheeseburgers?'

'With *EXTRA*AAAAA mustard!' Portia shouted, drawing the attention of everyone in the McDonald's.

Jareth let out a heavy sigh, and pulled out his wallet— And Becky felt the lump come back to her throat.

*Jareth couldn't afford that— No!*

Before she knew what she was doing, she'd gripped Jareth by his wrist to stop him paying.

'Ah— Becky?' he jumped in surprise, but softened his voice when he saw who it was. 'Baby, what's wrong?'

Becky opened her mouth— And nothing came out.

It was like the words were too big to fit through her throat.

'Becky...?' Jareth asked, gently lifting his free hand to her cheek. 'Hey... hey....'

'I.... I....' Becky sighed, her breath heavy and hard as the words refused to form.

'What?'

Becky reached into her pocket, and pulled out her purse. She quietly handed her card to Jareth, and realised just how much she was trembling when she couldn't hold it straight.

Jareth looked at her with a concerned, furrowed brow. 'It's not your responsibility....'

*It's not yours either*, Becky thought— Though it remained *just* a thought as, no matter how hard she tried to force the words out, she couldn't remember how to speak.

'Okay, okay,' Jareth gently placed a finger to Becky's lips. 'You don't have to say it. I know. I'll use your card.'

Becky gave a slow, careful nod as Jareth took her card and paid for Portia's meal.

'Portia! Davay sadis!' Malinka declared in Russian as she marched over to Portia and grabbed her by the arm. 'Yeda skoro!'

'Malinka—' Jareth reached out a hand, but then pulled back when he realised Malinka was dragging Portia towards the booths. 'Malinka you— You know what? Okay. Yeah. Good idea. You take Portia to sit down. Cool, cool....'

Malinka practically threw Portia into the booth before sitting down beside her and letting out a loud laugh.

'YA lider! Delay kak ya govoryu, Portia!'

'BURGERS!' Portia declared, slamming her fists into the table. 'BUR! GERS! BURGERS! BURGERS! PORTIA IS HUNGRY FOR BURGERS!'

Jareth winced as the rest of the building glared at the two loud, obnoxious women in the booth.

He looked... upset....

Slowly, Becky raised her hand, and lay it on his arm— And he turned to her, his eyes soft and kind and loving as he placed his own hand on top of it.

'Okay,' he breathed. 'Let's get you something to eat, huh? You hungry?'

'Mhm,' Becky nodded. *She was starving.*

'Okay...' taking Becky by the arm, Jareth let her away from the machine Portia had been licking and to another one nearby. 'Here... what do you feel like?'

Becky....

Wasn't sure....

'Do you want to look through the menu with me?' he asked, tapping on the screen and motioning to the items. 'Here... Do you want nuggets?'

Nuggets?

Nug... *gets*....

Chicken nuggets....

Chicken....

Mimi loved chicken....

*She wished Mimi was here....*

Becky felt her eyes welling up with tears, and felt herself sniff.

'Oh— Oh, okay, not nuggets,' Jareth pulled Becky close, and pecked a kiss into her hair. 'Not nuggets.... What do you want? Do you want a burger?'

*Burger*....

Becky wasn't sure.

She felt Jareth squeeze her tight, and realised he was trying to hold her steady

as she trembled and shivered.

But she wasn't cold.

Why was she shaking?

She was so hungry.

She... she wanted....

'*Bay... Bay... Bacon...*' was all she managed.

'Bacon?' Jareth echoed. 'Bacon... McMuffin?'

Slowly, Becky shook her head.

'Bacon... Big Mac?'

Another head shake.

'Is it a burger?'

Becky nodded.

'Um... okay...' Jareth began to flick through the menu. 'Barbecue bacon?'

Yes....

'A barbecue bacon burger?' he asked.

Becky gave a slow nod.

'Double?'

Another nod.

'In a meal?'

'Mhm....'

'Okay,' Jareth typed it in. 'I'll get you a large—'

'MY BURGERS!' Portia shouted as a very frazzled-looking tiefling carried a tray, piled high with burgers, towards her and Malinka. She slammed her hands against the table and grinned widely. 'Right here, mate! Thank youuuu! Put them right here!'

She then began to devour them at a frightening speed; paper wrapper and all.

Malinka playfully reached out towards one— Only for Portia to leap up and hunker over them like an animal; snarling.

'MY BURGERS!' Portia snapped. '*MINE!*'

'Vy dazhe ne yedite ikh dolzhnym obrazom,' Malinka responded, sitting up straight. 'YA yem gamburgery luchshe, chem ty. Vy dolzhny posledovat' moyemu primeru.'

'Gamburgery in my gambellery!' Portia responded before attempting to stuff two whole burgers into her mouth at the same time.

*Attempting?*

Becky stared.

Oh, no.... She was actually *doing it*.

'U tebya ochen' bol'shoy rot,' Malinka said, crossing her arms and swaying in place— And then, her ears perked up as her own food was brought to her. 'Da! Spasibo. Teper' ya mogu pokazat' Portia, kto luchshe vsekh yest gamburgery.'

'Okay... that's everything, I think... do you want anything else?' Jareth asked, gently. 'Ice cream?'

Becky turned to Jareth, taking a moment to let his words sink in, before shaking her head.

'No ice cream,' he said. 'Right.... Okay. It's ordered, lets go sit down, okay?'

Becky gave Jareth a nod and took his arm. She let him guide her to the booth with Portia and Malinka and —after a moment of hesitation where he was

obviously deciding whether or not he wanted to move to a different table— he sat Becky down.

‘Alright baby girl, I just need to make a phone call...’ he said, gently. ‘Do you think you can hold on for a moment while I do?’

‘Mhm,’ Becky responded, trying her best to give Jareth a warm smile as she did. ‘*Hmh!*’

Jareth returned her smile, and then stepped away from the table and pulled out his phone.

Becky watched him, curiously... though she could barely hear what he was saying from the distance, with Portia and Malinka speaking so loudly.

She only caught small parts of what he was saying;

‘Dad, I need.... Something’s happened.... Mattel.... Becky’s not doing.... Not talking.... Bad.... She can’t stop trembling.... Need.... Take her home but.... Drunk.... Can’t leave them.... What do I do?’

Becky watched as Jareth began nodding and humming in acknowledgement of whatever his father was telling him.

‘Okay.... Okay.... You tell Isa.... I’ll see if anyone else is.... Okay.... Yes.... Thank you....’

Jareth hung up, and began typing away on his phone.

Then, another phone call.

‘Adam, Hey!’

Becky’s heart leapt.

*Adam!*

Adam was a good person.

He was... like a brother to her.

‘Yeah.... You saw? What do you mean.... Video— Mm.... Okay.... Yeah.... Yeah.... Portia is.... And Malinka.... Yes, please.... Thank you.... Yes.... The McDonald’s.... Yes.... Thank you....’

Adam was always looking out for her.

And trying to make sure that she was okay.

He was so good.

So... so good....

‘Becky?’ Jareth’s hands found Becky’s cheeks, and he cupped her face gently up so their eyes met. ‘What’s wrong? Why are you crying?’

She couldn’t explain it.

She just loved Adam so, so much....

‘It’s okay,’ Jareth comforted, taking the seat beside Becky and hugging her close; his hand ran through her hair softly as he held her. ‘I’ll take you home really soon, okay? Adam’s coming to pick up the girls and we just need to wait for him, so that they don’t wander off and get hurt.... With the state they’re in....’

As he said it, Malinka knocked over Portia’s drink and gave a loud, proud laugh— Which was echoed by Portia’s horrified gasp and slurping as she began to drink as fast as she could directly off the table.

Becky watched curiously as Portia somehow managed to prevent any of the drink from reaching the floor. Then when the triton sat back up Becky found herself unable to hide her awe and, without thinking, pulled away from Jareth and began clapping.

‘Spasibo! Spasibo,’ Malinka gave a wide grin, and leant heavily back into the cushioned chair. ‘YA zasluzhivayu aplodishmentov.’

Becky had no idea what Malinka was saying....

A careful arm found its way around Becky, and she turned to gaze up at Jareth.

He was looking down at her with a smile that did nothing to hide his concern and exhaustion.... And he motioned to the food that sat in front of her.

*Oh, their food had come....*

Becky’s phone buzzed in her pocket as she received a text from... Benny? She thought that was Benny’s tone.

Then it buzzed again, with the sound of a private message on her Instagram.

A tag on Spellbook.

Another text.

The group chat went off—

*What was happening?*

She pulled out her phone, and watched as it blew up with notifications of all sorts.

Her heart leapt, when she caught sight of a reoccurring name:

*Mattel.*

A video of Mattel.

This was just like what had happened over the weekend, when the video of Mattel crying had gone viral— And now, it was happening again.... With a video titled “MATTEL GOT DUMPED!”

Against her better judgement, Becky opened one of the messages.

She was met with the video’s thumbnail, featuring the exact moment that Guillmero had poured his drink on Mattel’s head....

And... even in the low resolution image, Becky could see herself and her friends standing in the crowd. Malinka looked confused and unsteady on her feet. Portia’s hand was in Becky’s pocket, obviously looking for the last remnants of the food she’d been sharing. And Jareth had an arm wrapped around Becky, holding her away from the fight in a way that seemed protective, at first— But then, when Becky looked closer, she thought that Jareth looked *thrilled* by what he was seeing.

Actually, *most* of the crowd looked thrilled.

Then, the image was blocked by orcish-green skin, and Becky looked up to Jareth again.

‘Don’t watch it,’ he told her, carefully taking her phone and pocketing it.

‘You’re stressed enough. You don’t need to see it happen twice.’

Becky gave a weak nod as Jareth pulled her against his side.

Then, she closed her eyes, and tried to relax.

But....

‘Becky, you’re shaking,’ Jareth mumbled, adjusting his jacket around her before squeezing her in a tight embrace. ‘*Oh, baby....*’

Becky accepted Jareth’s hug, and let out a deep breath as his fingers tangled in her hair.

It was a comforting motion.

Something that made her want to melt deep into Jareth; deeper than was



physically possible....

His hand in her hair was so soft, and gentle, and careful, and loving, and—  
And then she felt him remove his hand and give a wave, and she followed his gaze to see Adam entering the restaurant.

Adam saw the group and hurried over; concern plastered all over his face.

‘Becky, are you alright?’ he asked as he very carefully cupped her face in a hand. ‘Becky? I saw what happened. *Are you alright?*’

Slowly, Becky shook her head.

‘Becky?’ Adam asked, his eyes wide. ‘Are you— Can’t you talk?’

Again, Becky shook her head.

And Adam’s worried look grew as he looked her over. ‘You’re trembling—  
Jareth, she’s trembling!’

‘I know,’ Jareth said, simply. ‘She’s been like this, since.... *You know.*’

Adam rubbed the bridge of his nose— And Becky reached out to put a comforting hand on his shoulder.

She tried to smile at him, but could feel that it was weak.

And then Adam looked up at Malinka and Portia, who were both cackling and slamming their hands onto the table, and let out a heavy sigh.

‘I’ll get them home safely,’ he mumbled. ‘Becky? Do you want a lift home with me, or—’

‘*Mnuh!*’ Becky managed a noise of protest as she shook her head. She wrapped her arms around Jareth and buried her face deep into his side; clinging to him tight and shivering. ‘*Jareth....*’

‘Okay,’ Adam replied, gently running his hand through Becky’s hair. ‘I’ll... I’ll talk to you tomorrow, okay? Jareth— Look after her, okay? *Okay?*’

Jareth gave a nod, and planted a kiss into the top of Becky’s head.

‘Okay...’ Adam gave another heavy sigh, and rose to his feet. ‘Malinka? Portia. Come on. Time to go home.’

‘Nah!’ Portia complained. ‘I’m still hungry!’

‘Net!’ Malinka echoed. ‘YA glavnyy, i ya vybirayu, kogda my uydem!’

Adam just looked at Malinka in confusion.

‘Yeah— Uh—’ Jareth shrugged. ‘Apparently getting drunk makes her mean and Russian.’

‘Mmm,’ Adam gave a groan, and motioned for the girls to stand. ‘Come on.’

Malinka watched Adam closely, her eyes narrowing into slits, before she reached over and—

‘HEY!’ Jareth let out an angry shout as Becky’s meal was knocked to the floor. ‘That is— Malinka! What the *fuck!*’

Becky stared down at her food, now on the floor—

*Now in Portia’s mouth....*

‘Portia no! Stop it!’ Jareth attempted to kick Portia away from Becky’s meal. ‘Stop it! That’s Becky’s—’

Adam bent down and hurriedly scooped up what was left of the chips. ‘Hey! Portia!’ he exclaimed, holding the chips in the air. ‘If you get in the car, I’ll give you these.’

‘Fuck, mate! Don’t have to tell me twice!’ Portia exclaimed, stumbling to her feet and making for the door.

‘Malinka— Look, Portia’s leaving!’ Adam gasped. ‘We should follow her so she doesn’t get hurt!’

‘Da, potomu chto my nesem otvetstvennost!’ said Malinka, hurrying after Portia. ‘Portia, vernis’ syuda! YA glavnyy!’

Then, the three of them were suddenly gone, and Becky and Jareth were left in stunned silence.

‘How... the fuck did he do that?’ Jareth muttered, his voice filled with awe.

*Because Adam is the smartest person in the entire world,* Becky thought.

Then, she looked at the remaining crumbs on the floor, and felt herself tearing up again.

*Her food....*

She was so hungry....

‘Becky— Oh, baby girl— No— No—’ Jareth pulled Becky into a tight hug as she let out a low, mournful wail. ‘It’s okay! We can share mine, okay? We’ll share mine.’

—END—

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