

(Not a) Callout

By C. Jade Wyton

Though recovery is a vital part of moving on in life, it has its ups and downs. Many of these downs are unavoidable... Though, as Becky Bloom is going to discover, many could be easily prevented by running things by a friend before posting them online. What started out as a brief apology for a misplaced comment and an explanation for her sudden long disappearance from social media turned into a ramble about her ex-girlfriend. And though she probably shouldn't post it, she is going to, anyway. We can only wonder of the consequences she is going to face for this one....

Contains mentions of abuse, horror, gore, and homophobia.

~~~~~

A small, poorly angled image of Becky flickered to life; she fiddled with her phone, trying to get it into its place on the stand, and gave a sigh of relief when she finally managed to make it sit steady.

'Okay... okay? Yes! *Okay*. Uh.... Hello, everyone. Um. Long time, no see. It's been... months. Since I posted anything here. I know you've all been worried. I have a lot of, uh. Comments. Questions. Concerns.... And I thought uh. Now would be the time to address them all.... Oh! And— Uh, trigger warning. There's some really... um... there's going to be some. Gore? In this video? Uh— Yeah. It's really... gross. Just uh, be aware of that.'

Becky cleared her throat, and pushed back her hair.

'Um. Another warning; this might be messy. I'm not good with this sort of thing— And I'm basically just making this up as I go along because, uh. The last time I tried to write down my thoughts ahead of time it was a... mess.... But now— I'm taking these!'

For a moment, Becky reached off screen and fumbled with something— Then she sat back up straight and showed off a small medicine container.... She gave it a shake and it rattled loudly.

'Anti... anxiety. Anti-anxiety medication. So, uh., hopefully I'll be able to um. To get through this.... Um. So. *First of all*, I would like to address and apologise for the recent comment I made on my ex's... new boyfriend's... selfie. Uh. This one—'

Becky vanished off the screen, and was replaced by a screenshot of a comment she had left on another user's selfie. It read:

*cngrats on baging mattel. her strap abilty is fuking aces but her head is full of wet poptarts and moldl y bread. when she loses her mind and you need help escapping her (andd you will) do this in a selfie ☺ so that we know to to send an extraction team for you. cheeeers baby*

A moment passed, giving the audience time to read the full message, before Becky reappeared on screen; she looked sheepish and fiddled with her nails before taking a deep breath.

‘Yeeeeeah. That. Was bad. I have no excuse for that. I... uh. Should not have made that comment. It was immature. And unfair. And... stupid.... And... I was, uh. I didn’t go to bed after taking my sleeping medication. And though I knew it made me a little... *loopy*, I did not realise just *how bad* it would enable me to be.... Uh.... *That*.... So. Uh. To... prevent this sort of thing happening again I’ve set a parental lock on my phone. Nine o’clock and I’m locked out. No internet; no social media. Just my music app, and emergency calls. That’s... that’s me taking responsibility for what I said and preventing it from happening again.’

Becky let out a sigh, and rubbed her neck.

‘It was just hard to see that Mattel had moved on— And I didn’t *want* to see it. But it was unavoidable. It’s been, uh, a major topic among the people I know all week. Which is.... It messed with me. And I shouldn’t have let it. And I’m sorry for lashing out.’

Becky’s hand fell from her neck to her lap, and she hesitated a moment before clearing her throat.

‘*Hm*, uh— That’s not the main reason for this video, though— I just thought it was important and didn’t think it should be left until.... Um. The main reason for this video is to, uh. Answer questions and address some rumours about where I’ve been the past few months....’

Becky gave a nervous sniff and fidgeted in place.

‘Um.... Some of the rumours I’ve heard about me.... Well.... *No*. I was... not pregnant. And I didn’t cheat on Mattel.... I didn’t move away. I wasn’t kidnapped. And... I didn’t get eaten by zombies.’

Becky gave a cough, and adjusted herself in her seat.

‘That one might sound funny for people, uh, outside of town. But for my local friends you, uh. Probably know what I’m talking about.... And um. As for the rumour that I died... while, that’s obviously not true, uh, because *here I am*.... It *was*... almost the truth. I was, uh— I was involved in a serious car accident. It was. Um. The night me and Mattel broke up— On my way home from that. Uh... *hahah*, uh. Yeah. A good reminder for you all to uh, take a breather and calm down before you, uh. Drive.... Yeah. Don’t drive when you’re upset.... Um. Because it, uh. It was a really bad accident. Like uh— really bad. I’ll put some of the photos up so you can, uh, see what I mean.... Um... here—’

Becky gave an awkward hand motion before vanishing off the screen. She was replaced by several images of her car sitting in the garage of Tief and Tire mechanics. It’s hood was crumpled, sharp bits of metal bent at angles they definitely weren’t supposed to be at. The windscreen was completely shattered, its glass scattered over the torn front seats; decorating around the impaled tree branches that stuck out at all angles.

Spatters of half-dry blood covered the driver’s side of the car; mostly across the dashboard and soaked into the seats, though some was visible along the the inner frame.

‘Uhm.... Well. This is. What my car looked like. After the accident. I uh— A... *deer*, ran out... in front of me, and I swerved to avoid it, and uh. Well. My car lost a fight with a tree.... Uh. I didn’t look to good, either. Um. If you don’t want to see blood and, like, gore and stuff, uh. Don’t uh.... Don’t look. Because it’s— It’s really bad.... Um... here—’

The images of Becky's car flashed away, replaced instead by photos of her in a hospital room. The photos had her topless, though she'd crudely censored herself with a black bar. Instead, the focus of the shots were her injuries.

Her face was swollen; bruised deeply across her nose and under her eyes. Stains of blood were visible at her nostrils; looking as though it had bled, then been wiped away, then bled again....

'I uh. Really don't look to good in these, do I? Hah. No....'

Though the majority of her wounds were superficial scratches, bruises, and scrapes, there were two deep gashes; one along her shoulder and another around her hip. It was clear that, though they had been stitched up and cleaned, they were serious. The edges were red and bruised, with marks where blood had oozed its way out of her and been only half-cleaned off.

'I uh. I lost a lot of blood, and had a uh— A concussion.... I uh. I was lucky to make it out of the accident alive....'

Becky reappeared on the screen, taking the place of the gory photos as she wrung her hands awkwardly and licked at her lips.

'I uh— Funny, enough. I was actually. Embarrassed. By my injuries. I was— As stupid as it sounds to say this— I thought— That my friends would make *fun* of me for having such *ugly* bruises and— I... realise, now. That my train of thought was, uh. Irrational. And stupid. And just. Not... making sense? It didn't make sense. Though it did, to me. At the time it did. Uh—'

Becky took a deep breath to calm herself.... In, and out....

'Ooh, sorry. Just. Phew. Hah.'

She took another breath, and let it out slowly.

'I'm fine. I'm uh— I'm fine.... So. Um. I was scared that my friends were going to judge me, for what had happened. And— Uh. During the accident, my phone got damaged. It worked, at first— Which is how I was able to call for help, but uh. The battery was leaking or something, because it died before I could get in contact with any of my friends. This uh. Lead to some misunderstandings. And when I got a new phone, some of my friends thought I had been, uh. Ghosting them. Which was, uh.... Not true, but I uh— I panicked. And then *actually* started ghosting them.... And it uh— Yeah. I should have just said something, but I was really not in a good uh, mental state after everything. And I didn't uh— I just cut everyone off. Which was uh— A mistake. Because it ended up making this whole... guilt loop. Where the longer I waited to say something the more impossible it felt and.... Yeah.'

Becky paused for a moment, nervously fiddling with some of the items on her desk before continuing.

'I... did, eventually, get back in contact with my friends. Just last month. They were understanding. And kind to me. And tried to help me feel better— And I'm so grateful to them, a-and so so sorry that I didn't trust them to be there for me.... It's just been, uh.... Hard. But uh. Things were— *Were*, looking better for a bit. But uh— My local friends. Know what I'm talking about when I say the town... *went to shit*. There was a uh— Problem. With a sloppy necromancer. A-And don't uh— We have some *very good* necromancers in town— And it wasn't a *necromancer* problem, specifically it was a— Um— It was a *sloppy* necromancer problem.... Some fucking... dumb shit newbie was practicing magic. And they

uh.... Weren't cleaning it up properly— I-It was a whole thing.'

Becky waved a dismissive hand, and shook her head.

'But that— Uh— That's all been dealt with now.... *Apparently*, I mean. From what I've been told. No more zombie animals trying to maul people so... yay....'

Becky paused again, and tapped her fingers on her table.

'Um. And again, for those who know me in person— Probably wondering why I ended up vanishing a uh. Second time. Right after finally... *emerging* again—'

Becky gave a nervous chuckle at her own comment; distracting herself for a moment before giving a curt sniff and continuing.

'I uh— The last you all remember of me was probably me saying I was going to that party, and then not showing up. Well.... Uh. The night of the party there was an... incident. That I would rather not talk about in detail. But it uh... it sort of pushed me. Over the edge.... And uh. I... admitted myself to a mental health ward.'

Becky took a deep, deep breath, and let it out slowly.

'I know that is a, uh. Lot. Coming from me. Me. Who uh— The girl who broke her arm and was determined to still go to martial arts class—'

Becky gave another chuckle... though it was quickly replaced by melancholy as she looked to the floor and her brow furrowed.

'So you can, uh. You can imagine. How bad what happened must have been. For uh— For me to say it was too much.... It's just— its just there's.... There's a moment. When you're... when you're in danger. And you feel fear. Like. *Real fear*. Fear that digs so deep into you that your bones hurt. And you realise then that— You realise that... you... don't want to die. You want to live. And you want the people you love to live. And that realisation hits you hard. And sudden. And it overpowers you. There's nothing you want more in that moment to be alive. And for the people you care for to be safe. And it makes you crazy. Crazy crazy. And you realise that— You will do anything. *Anything*. To protect your friends. And... sometimes those things... aren't good things. And once you've done them, you can't believe what you're capable of doing under pressure. And that fear that dug into you keeps its hold on you even after everything is over and you feel— Paralysed. In every way. And you can't move or speak or think.... It's terrifying.'

For a moment, Becky stared at her desk; her eyes trailing slowly over nothing as her voice grew quiet.

'Um... yeah. So. I went to therapy. And uh.... It uh. It helped. A lot.... There's still a lot I need to address, but... I'm making progress. And I'm becoming— At least I think, that I'm becoming, a better person. Um....'

She paused again, before sitting up straight and clearing her throat.

'Uh— Anyway. I'm going to try to be more open with who I am and more confident with myself. If things about me seem to change, that's... that's just me learning who I am.... And uh. That's. It for the most part of this update though— I do have something else to talk about.... Um. Mattel. I want to talk about. Mattel.'

Becky scratched at her arm— And then at her neck.

'I admit. The rest of this is just going to be me, uh, *airing laundry*, if I can put it that way. Um. Please know, my intention is not to get hate sent to my ex— This isn't supposed to be a callout! This is not a callout.... But since she's gotten a new partner and I'm getting a lot of messages and questions— Especially, uh, after the

comment I made— I think I should just put it out there exactly *why* we broke up. What happened between us....’

Becky took a deep breath, and looked around her room; tapping her knees before finally looking back to the camera and sighing.

‘The uh. The short version of it is that she made a racist comment against someone I consider a friend, and it upset me. We fought, and... I... dumped her. I’m ashamed to say that I— Uh. Besides dumping her in a relationship way I... literally dumped her. Physically. In the woods.... I left her in the woods after breaking up with her— Which was a huge mistake, I know that now, and I really regret that I did that.... She could have gotten hurt and... that wouldn’t have been good.... And I’m genuinely glad that she got home safely that night and.... Yeah.’

Becky gave an awkward nod, before giving a cough.

‘So. And. Um. I think I mentioned before that my phone was broken in the accident and I couldn’t, uh, contact anyone— I did eventually get a replacement and, um. When I did, this is what I was... greeted with....’

Becky’s image disappeared, then; replaced by a screenshot of the abusive texts she’d received from Mattel after the breakup. They read:

*Talk to me*

*Becky, message me as soon as you’re home.*

*I’m so upset I can’t EVEN*

*You can’t TALK to me like that!!*

*I thought you loved me*

*You really overreacted, Becky*

*I wasn’t even being serious*

*REPLY to me Becky*

*You can’t just ghost me*

*You can’t just BREAK UP with me!!!*

*I have put SO MUCH into this relationship!*

*Do you have ANY IDEA how HARD it was to convince my parents to be okay with you??*

*You can’t just leave me!!*

*I CAME OUT for you!!*

*Becky!!*

*REPLY TO ME.*

*You can’t just break up with me like that.*

*You LEFT me in the WOODS*

*Oh my god grow up*

*It’s been TWO DAYS.*

*REPLY TO ME.*

*Fine.*

*Fuck you then*

*Bitch.*

*(YOU CANNOT REPLY TO THIS PERSON)*

The image hung on the screen for a moment before Becky reappeared.

‘They were not the best messages to receive. And... not something that could come out of a healthy relationship for— For either of us.... Uh. I want to clarify that at this point uh— Mattel did *not* know about my accident. She did *not* know

my reason for not replying— And she *still* probably doesn't know about the accident, as of me uh. Recording this at least.... Not many people do know.... Um. But— She only had what I had said to her during the breakup to go off, and— Uh— Well.... You can see she's, uh. Obviously feeling hurt. She thinks I was ignoring her and— Yeah.... Fair assumption. People who know me personally know that I'm uh. Prone to ghosting when I get stressed. It's not usually anything personal but th-this? I can see why Mattel felt hurt.'

Becky licked her lips and rubbed the back of her neck, averting her eyes from the camera..

'I, uh.... Couldn't even talk to her about it, either. Because she blocked me. Which— Honestly. Probably for the best. We were not good for each other and it *needed* to end somehow. I'm just sorry it was... um. So sourly? Because we did have... good times and stuff.'

For a moment, Becky paused. She stared at the floor for a moment before letting out a heavy sigh, and speaking with a trembling voice.

'I have... no doubt in my mind that Mattel... that she loved me. I don't think she lied about that. I think her love was genuine, and deep. And I believe that she cared about me.... But, um... we.... We were not compatible. She brought out the worst in me, and she encouraged me to hurt others. And she'd pressure me to put her wants before my own health.... Um.... There were days I came home from her house trembling. Shaking. So emotionally exhausted I wanted to cry....'

Becky took a deep breath, and wiped under her eyes; she could feel the tears coming, but was determined to keep herself together.

'I uh.... I don't blame her for that. She was— Living with what she was taught.... I... um... I....'

Becky paused a moment to take a breath, and wipe her watering eyes, before continuing.

'I gave up huge pieces of myself for her.... Like— Uh. Um, for those who didn't know, I'm, uh, polyamorous. I always have been, a-and I've always been most comfortable having... uh, having multiple partners. But when I dated Mattel, she wanted to be monogamous— A-A-And that isn't a bad thing! D-Don't get me wrong. She communicated that to me clearly, right at the start of our relationship, and it was something we both agreed on.... But— But it felt like it was for the wrong reasons. She treated it like it was some sort of... of victory; like she'd tamed me and I was a prize she'd won. It... didn't feel good.'

Becky let the words sit for a minute, before slowly shaking her head.

'I can't be monogamous.'

She said it firmly.

'I can't do that again. I was restless and I felt trapped and I know that contributed to all of our problems. And— That one was on me. I never communicated these feelings to Mattel, she had no idea I felt like this. At least, I don't think she did.... I... I *hope* she didn't know I was in so much pain....'

Becky paused, to swallow back her tears and wipe her nose on a tissue. She could feel that the crying was going to start, and tried to push it down.

'And— I don't want to make it sound like she never gave up anything for me. I know that she took a huge risk with her family when she dated me. They— Uh. I'm probably going to get in a lot of trouble for saying this. Um... if the video gets

taken down, it'll be for this— Uh, but.... I think it needs to be said. The Masters family is homophobic. Really, *really* homophobic. Um... Mattel's mother was much worse than her father— Her father at least tried? Sort of. To accept us. More than M-M-Mrs M-M-Masters—'

Becky cut off in a sob, and quickly sniffed it back.

'Sorry, I— Sorry. I, uh. I'm fine. I'm fine.'

She grabbed another tissue and quickly wiped her face.

'Mrs Masters was— She was *violently* homophobic. She um— She took uh— Any chance she could to make me uncomfortable. But I uh— I put up with it. For Mattel— And— And I— *I'm sorry*— I need— To—'

The video cut, then, and the teary-eyed image of Becky was replaced by a Becky with freshly-brushed hair and tiny white patches of moisturiser that hadn't completely soaked into her cheeks. She took a deep breath, and then continued talking.

'I'm sorry about that. I just.... I needed a moment to compose myself. Uh... where was I.... Um. Yes— So. Um. Mattel. Had a hard time in our relationship, too. Uh... she had to put up with a lot of... hate, from her family. And that put a lot of pressure on her.... She had to *prove* we were perfect to them, you know? There was no room for mistakes. We had to *prove* that we could work. And that nothing would, uh. Ever go wrong. It wasn't... it wasn't good. Mattel's parents put pressure on her to be perfect, and so she put pressure on me and—'

Becky paused to take a breath.

'And it meant I came out of our relationship feeling tired and anxious. I couldn't function... A-At first I put a lot of my issues down to my accident, and all that trauma and... yeah.... But, then, the first intimate time I spent with someone after the breakup, I found myself actually *flinching away* in fear. Because all I could think about was how Mattel would have reacted.'

Becky bit her lip, and gave the camera a sorrowful look.

'This partner is... someone I've known since I was... seven? Eight? Maybe six? More than a decade, at least. He's uh. He's never been anything but wonderful and supportive to me, and before Mattel he always made me feel comfortable, and safe, and cared about— But after my relationship with Mattel, I felt like every mistake I made was being scrutinised. And that I was going to be scolded. Or yelled at. Or walked out on.... And he— My new partner. He hasn't changed. It was me. I was a wreck. I... still am. But I'm working on that.'

Becky took another moment to breath. She rubbed her hands together anxiously— Then brushed away a strand of hair from her eyes, tucking it behind her ear.

'I think the reason it's so hard, now, is that I *do still love her*. Even after— Everything. The hurt and the pain and the hate. I miss Mattel. And I still care about her so, so much.... But— I know we can't be together. We both have to move on, and do better for ourselves.... I... I don't know, if I should reach out to her or not. I feel like we shouldn't talk again. But... still. I uh. Don't wish Mattel any harm. Or hate. Or... bad... things.... I hope she can be happy.'

Becky bit her lip, and looked in thought— Then she gave a shrug.

'I think that's everything that I needed to say. I'll... try and keep everyone here updated on my life, from now on.... Um... thanks for listening.... Bye.'

*(Replay?)*

—END—

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