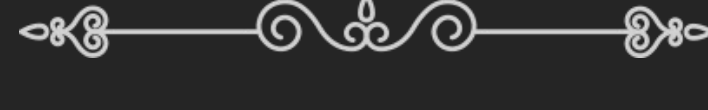


## The Billionaire's Twins Play Matchmaker Book Two: Chapter Twenty-Eight



Marilynn sighed as she grabbed another glass of champagne. Her thick mane of brown hair had been straightened and highlighted to give her a lighter, trendier hairstyle. She wore a bright red dress with a low cut front and back. It seemed such a waste to show off her new look here but she hadn't been able to talk her way out of it.

In the past Ava always accompanied their mother to boring charity events. Even without her Marilyn was usually able to avoid them if she complained loud enough but lately her father had been in a bad mood. Though he refused to explain the details it was obvious he had lost out on some big deal. It didn't seem fair her social life suffered because of that but here she was drinking alone while her mother talked to one useless person after another.

When they first arrived they heard a rumor Silas Prescott arrived with a date, and not just any date, but a woman he claimed to be his fiancée. Marilyn was immediately intrigued but their informant couldn't tell them more. Wanting to see the woman who finally landed the city's hottest bachelor Marilyn went in search of the man himself. To her disappointment he stood alone speaking to some business associates. She hadn't the nerve to approach him and Marilyn shrugged off the rumor.

Changing out her empty class for another Marilyn suddenly froze not believing her eyes. A short distance away was a small group. In the center was a petite brunette in a classy silver gown. As the woman turned Marilyn was struck speechless...Ava?

It had been some ten years since she last saw her sister. It was right after the incident in the hotel. Thanks to Marilyn's little joke Ava had been kicked out of the house and disowned. Even she had been surprised by the severity of their father's reaction. Ava disappeared forever shamed much to Marilyn's glee. How then was her sister standing in front of her in a dress Marilyn hadn't been able to afford? And why was everyone fawning over her like she was a princess?

Marilynn's shock gave way to anger and she strutted toward the group ready to settle the score once and for all. Reaching Ava she loudly declared, "Well, well, look what the cat dragged in."

Startled Ava turned. Her green eyes met those of her sister with a shocked expression but this faded almost immediately. Ava's gaze dulled in resignation. This wasn't a confrontation she expected tonight but perhaps it was unavoidable.

"And just what do you think you are doing here?" Marilyn demanded. "This is an exclusive event. It's not for a disgraced woman who embarrassed her own family and was kicked out."

"You would be the expert on disgraceful behavior," Ava answered neutrally.

"What was that? Oh I see, you have a mouth now huh? It seems you have forgotten your place."

"Excuse me. Is there a problem?" a gentleman in a maroon suit approached. The red suit indicated he was part of the event's staff.

"Yes we have a problem," Marilyn practically shouted, "it seems any tramp off the street can wander in here."

Ava blushed at her sister's crude language. The women she had been pleasantly talking to shared uncomfortable looks but they were unwilling to inject their support for either sister. Beside her Tracy was fuming no doubt ready to leap in but Ava would rather avoid causing a bigger scene.

"Excuse me, miss," the man turned to Ava. "May I see your invitation?"

"We weren't asked for one at the door," Ava said.

"Everyone is required to show their invitation," the man said.

"Then my fiancée has it. You'd have to ask him."

"Like anyone would marry you!" Marilyn laughed. "Talk about shameless."

"I'm sorry miss but without an invitation I'll have to ask you to leave," the man grasped Ava's arm. Removing her was the quickest way to bring a conclusion to the uproar that was disturbing the guests.

Marilynn smirked but was surprised by the glare Ava gave her. In all the years she had known her sister Ava had always been meek and acquiesced to her sister's whims.

"I suggest you take your hand off of me before you have a real problem," Ava said calmly and firmly making the man hesitate.

"You heard her," a commanding male voice startled all of them.

They turned to see Silas had quietly approached forewarned by Thomas that there was trouble. He hadn't expected Marilyn Carlisle to attend a charity event since she tended to avoid them. His blue eyes were cold and like daggers as he stared at Ava's sister and tormentor.

"Mister Prescott," the man hesitated, "I-I'm sorry for the disturbance. I was just taking care of it now."

"Bold words for someone man-handling another's fiancée." Silas glared at him.

The man hesitated before realizing he was still gripping Ava's arm. Nervously glancing back at Silas there was no doubting his murderous gaze. Immediately letting her go, the man stepped back. The host mentioned something about ensuring Silas Prescott and his fiancée were properly cared for throughout the evening but he hadn't actually seen the couple himself.

Silas stepped forward claiming Ava by wrapping an arm around her waist. He kissed her temple, "Ava, are you all right? Did he hurt you?"

"No." Ava shook her head. "I'm fine."

"Good." Silas turned his attention to Marilyn who stood in utter shock. "It seems the standards of this Gala have dropped if they allow such a vagrant in...but one can hardly expect class from a Carlisle."

Marilynn snapped her mouth shut blushing. She opened her mouth to reply but closed it again. What exactly was going on? Did he actually claim Ava as his fiancée? How in the world did she manage that? And why was he acting so tender with Ava? Wasn't he supposed to be cold and calculating?

"I suggest you monitor your invite list more carefully in the future," Silas glared at the man. "Ava there's someone I want to introduce you to."

"Of course. Please excuse us," Ava smiled at the women with whom she had been visiting. "It was a pleasure speaking to all of you."

"The pleasure was ours."

"We'll catch up later."

"Have a pleasant evening."

Their well wishes trailed after them as they walked away. Giving Marilyn disapproving looks the group disbanded to spread the word about the amicable nature of Silas's fiancée. They had been apprehensive at first but they were pleasantly surprised by her gentle demeanor. Even more surprising was how warm and gentle Silas acted toward his soon-to-be wife.

"Just what is going on here?" Marilyn snagged Tracy's arm before she could leave. "How is Ava with Silas Prescott?"

Tracy smirked, "You're a smart girl. I'm sure you'll figure it out."

Leaving Marilyn speechless she walked away. It had taken years but it still felt good to put the other woman in her place for what she had done to her sister. Marilyn glanced around finding herself alone. Her face warmed and she quickly retreated followed only by curious stares.

"Are you really all right Ava?" Silas quietly asked when they were out of earshot. When he received Thomas's warning text he had been in a near panic worried what might happen if Ava confronted her tormentor alone.

"Silas I'm fine," Ava laughed then frowned as a thought occurred to her. Blinking she looked at him almost in awe. "I'm fine. I really am."

He breathed a sigh of relief, "Good. That's all that matters."

"Ava?"

She turned to see her mother staring at her as if seeing a ghost. Ava looked at her mother conflicted. She had always been close to her growing up but the night her father threw her out her mother hadn't offered one word of protest. Part of her wanted to run up and reestablish their bond but another recalled how the other never even looked for her. Grace knew Tracy was Ava's best friend. One call to her would have put them in contact.

"Ava is that you? Why are you with Silas Prescott?" Grace Carlisle asked.

"Mother," Ava finally answered, "Silas is my fiancée...and my children's father."

"Your...children?"

"That's right. If you want to know more Tracy knows how to get in touch with me. She always has but then you knew that already."

A slight blush colored her mother's otherwise pallid complexion. Without another word Ava turned away from her and walked away safe in Silas's embrace. He didn't spare the other woman a glance. There was only one person who mattered and she was in his arms.

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"Got it!" Sean announced startling his siblings.

It was late and Duncan had already bid them goodnight. They knew he was never far should they need someone but the triplets were self-sufficient. What was more they didn't want anyone interfering with their work.

"What did you get?" Theo asked not looking up from his phone screen as he leveled up in Candy Crush.

"Lexi was right. Our aunt definitely had to cover up multiple pregnancies," Sean said.

He had been searching through their aunt's travel records but found nothing of note. With that in mind he switched his focus to credit card sales and found several pharmacy purchases.

"Oh really?" Alexis asked.

"I didn't find anything in her travel history but I found something interesting in her credit purchases. There have been multiple purchases at a pharmacy so I looked into it," Sean explained. "She's been prescribed both mifepristone and misoprostol."

"What are those?" Theo asked.

"They are used to medically terminate pregnancies," Sean explained. "No need for surgery and if done in the first trimester you don't even need to go to the hospital. It can be done from home."

"Is that so," Alexis said, "and how many times has she been prescribed these drugs?"

"Four."

Theo finally put his phone down. Even he was shocked by the number. They had known for some time their biological aunt was a certifiable sociopath capable of just about anything but even this was more heartless than he could have imagined.

"You're kidding."

"Nope."

"Well the number is surprising but not the action itself," Alexis said, "now we just have to release the information."

"How though?" Sean asked. "I mean, this is purely circumstantial. It's not proof and a lot of media outlets will be hesitant to stand up to the Carlises even with proof."

"We don't need them," Alexis said. "Rumor travels faster than news. Do you still have that fake news website?"

"Yeah," Sean nodded. When they first targeted their aunt he had created a website to spread unsavory rumors and compromising photos about her. It had a small but dedicated reader base even now.

"Then that is where we'll break the news," Alexis said. "Can you imbed a link so it automatically shares to people's social media whenever they click on it?"

Sean thought about it. It wouldn't be the first time he imbedded a virus into a link. It was how he infiltrated their aunt's various social media accounts in the first place. The virus itself was harmless merely spreading the link to share the story faster.

"Yeah. That shouldn't be too difficult but what should the article say? It needs to sound legit."

"I have that covered. Just type what I say," Alexis announced. "Scandal Rocks Carlisle Household..."