

The Billionaire's Twins Play Matchmaker Book Two: Chapter Thirteen



Silas fled the board room practically hysterical at how long it had taken for them to reach their consensus about the company's projected profits for the next quarter. None of it mattered when Ava and Alexis were in trouble. Thomas met him as he exited and quickly fell into step.

"What's the situation? Where are they?" Silas demanded.

Thomas had sent him a short text warning him, Carlisle knows. While they had always been business rivals there was only one reason for such a message. Emerson had discovered Ava and the children. As soon as he received it Silas had been ready to storm out of the meeting and straight to Emerson's office to demand them back. Nothing could stop him from claiming his family.

Only Thomas could successfully hold him back with a timely update that only Ava and Alexis had been summoned meaning the old man didn't know or care about the boys. Silas wasn't certain which but had been convinced to wait for more information.

"She and the girl arrived a few minutes ago and the brothers are on their way."

Silas sucked in a relieved breath. Thomas had been sending him updates as the meeting dragged on keeping him abreast of the situation though it felt like torture. What did he care about quarterly reports and projected earnings when Ava was in trouble?

"Are they all right?"

"Well, Lexi seems fine but I think her mother had quite a scare. Mike and Don said she hasn't spoken a word since calling the school. She may be in shock."

Silas gritted his teeth. He supposed her reaction was to be expected. After ten years her father suddenly retrieved her and Alexis without warning. He wasn't certain what happened inside the Carlisle office but Emerson was known to be a harsh taskmaster and had thrown out his own daughter without a trace of remorse.

After experiencing that Ava now unexpectedly found herself swept up by her father's greatest rival and the father of her children. A man viewed even more ruthless than her father. Silas couldn't blame her for being apprehensive but he didn't want her to be afraid of him. That was why he hesitated to approach her in the first place. He wanted her to know she was safe and he wouldn't let anyone hurt her.

Reaching his office he hesitated before entering. Mike and Don stood near the door nodding to him as he stepped inside. Alexis sat on the couch contentedly munching on a muffin. The coffee table was laden with offerings of soda, donuts and snacks from the office vending machine. As Thomas said she looked completely undisturbed.

Silas's gaze scanned the room before finally finding Ava. She stood at the window overlooking the city with a pensive look on her face. Still wearing her jacket and waitress uniform she hugged herself rubbing her arms as if fending off a chill. Silas frowned. Was she cold? He did keep the office at a steady sixty-two degrees. Perhaps that was too cold for her. Should he offer to turn up the heat or just order it to be done?

He tried to shake the second guesses intruding into his thoughts. His hesitation nearly cost him everything. If he had approached sooner he could have safely absconded them to one of his properties well out of Emerson's reach. Silas took a deep breath before crossing the room. His heart hammered in his head as he drew near the woman who occupied his mind for so long. She wasn't a dream. She was really here.

"Ava."

She flinched at his voice and turned. Her green eyes were wide with fear and uncertainty. She didn't know what he wanted or how she would escape his wrath. What could she even say to him?

But the look that met hers was not what she expected. His gaze was steady but concern lined his face with a deep frown. There was no anger that she could detect. In fact he almost seemed afraid of her. But why? He held all the power. She had nothing that could compare and no way to stop him if he insisted on taking the kids away from her just as her father had.

"Ava, are you all right? Did he hurt you?" Silas asked stirring her from her thoughts.

"...N-no. He didn't." She shook her head.

"Lucky for him then. If he had..." Silas let his words and thoughts fall silent not wanting to continue less he scare her. "I'm sorry."

"W-what?" Ava asked startled by his sudden confession. "W-why would you..."

"I should have been there. I should never have allowed him to get that close to you. I won't let it happen again."

Ava opened her mouth only to snap it shut without a word. That was not something she expected. She studied him more closely. Why did he look like a child begging for forgiveness?

"Ava I..."

"Lexi!"

They turned as Sean and Theo suddenly barged in fresh from school. Theo was still lugging her backpack which he tossed into a chair along with his own before he and his brother leapt on the couch to embrace their sister.

"Jeez, you dorks," Alexis laughed. "You act like I've been gone for a week. It's only been like an hour."

"Yeah an hour since you were held hostage by a total perv!" Theo declared. "That old man is going to pay big time."

"Yeah, today was only step one," Sean agreed. "Next time we'll be better prepared. We'll shut the whole place down."

"It's not going to be easy now that we played our hand though."

"Don't worry about it. I got so many backdoors into that place. It's practically Swiss cheese," Sean shrugged grabbing a soda off the table. "Today was just for fun beside most of it was done by other hackers. They'll never pin it on us."

Alexis nodded. Leave it to Sean to plan ahead. Her knowledge of computer hacking was limited though she trusted his abilities. Employing other hackers to create a distraction was a smart move and it was unlikely anyone would notice their activity though the smokescreen.

"So how long do you think it will take to repair the damage?"

"They'll probably have to shut down and restart the entire network to clear out all the garbage from today," Sean thought about it. "But the shutdown is damage enough. Every minute they are down is millions down the drain."

"Well it's a start, I guess," Theo sighed.

"We'll let them get comfortable for now," Alexis announced, "and consider our next step."

Thomas sent Silas a shocked look. Though the kids looked and acted normal enough their conversation was anything but what one would expect from kids their age. Even so their excitement at being reunited was palpable.

"What are you three talking about?" Ava demanded breaking the tension.

"Mom!" Theo exclaimed bouncing to his feet and running toward her.

He threw his arms around her hugging her close like a child starved for attention. Ava's arms immediately encircled him and she leaned forward to kiss the top of his head. She let out a relieved sigh. All her babies were accounted for and safe but now she couldn't hold back her desire for answers.

"I think you three better explain yourselves."

Glancing at his siblings still seated on the couch Theo took their mother's hand and led her to the sitting area. Sitting her down beside Alexis Theo sat next to her while Sean moved to the coffee table allowing them all to hold her hands. It filled Silas with a sense of pride to see how his children treated their mother with such esteem and care.

"Okay mom," Alexis leaned her head on Ava's shoulder. "The truth is...we know. We know your name isn't the one you were born with and you changed it from Avalynn Carlisle to Carter. We know Emerson Carlisle is your father, our grandfather, and Silas Prescott is our biological father. We also know it was your sister who set you up ten years ago resulting in us even being born in the first place."

Ava sucked in a breath trembling at their confession. All of them gripped her hands giving her comfort and waited for her to calm down. After a long moment she finally asked, "H-how long?"

"Since we were, like, five."

"...That long? How? I never told you..."

"We overheard you and Aunt Tracy talking late at night when you thought we were asleep," Theo admitted. "And we've been planning our revenge on all the people who hurt you."

"Your revenge?"

"You're the best mom in the world," Alexis said. "We'll never forgive anyone who hurt you or let them get away with it."

Ava stifled a sob as tears blurred her vision. The love of her children surrounded her like a warm embrace. So she wasn't a failure. She had done something right after all.

"Which brings us to what happens next," Alexis said, "right Mister Prescott?"

Silas grimaced at the title. He didn't like them treating him with such indifference but he hadn't earned the title he most wanted. It would take time for him to grow closer to them and gain their trust. First he had to keep them safe.

"I guess it does," Silas nodded.

Ava hesitantly looked up at him. Her eyes glassy with tears but also shining with fear at what he would say or do next.

"First, I need to get you four somewhere safe," Silas said taking a seat across from them. "Then we need to make sure Emerson can't touch you."

"How do we do that? He'll figure out where we live soon enough since he already knows where we go to school and where mom works," Theo demanded.

"And he'll also figure out there is actually three of us now," Alexis said. They got lucky this time because he only knew about her and never bothered digging deeper.

"For now you'll stay at my villa," Silas said.

"Villa?"

"My family owns several. There is one on the Upper West Side. It might actually be under my mother's name. It's small enough that a minimal security force can keep it secure and there is plenty of room for all of you. Thomas can pick up your things from your apartment and you can stay there."

"But..." Ava wanted to protest.

"Does it have a pool?" Theo asked.

Silas nodded, "It's inside and heated but it does have large windows so it almost feels like it is outside. There's a hot tub as well."

"Cool. It'll be like staying in a hotel."

Sean rolled his eyes.

"What about school?" Ava asked.

"It's almost fall break," Alexis reminded. "We can tell them we're taking a long vacation. It's not like we need to be there and we can always take online courses to make up for it."

Ava chewed her lip.

"Ava."

Hesitantly she met Silas's pleading gaze.

"I promise I'll keep all of you safe."

Ava sucked in a breath. She wanted to scream why? But it was stuck in her throat. Did he really care about her? Did she dare trust him? But she also couldn't face her father alone again. She simply wasn't strong enough. Mutely she nodded in submission.

"You know what that means, boys," Alexis announced.

"Right." Sean reached into his back pocket and removed a phone.

"Hey! That's mine!" Jake exclaimed.

"Yeah, I know," Sean nodded. "I needed a way to access the building security somehow."

"You too, Theo," Alexis said.

"Yeah, yeah, yeah." Theo stood removing not one but three wallets from his various pockets.

"That's mine!"

"And mine!"

He rolled his eyes removing a set of keys next and adding it to the growing pile on the table before sitting back down.

"Are you some kind of master pick-pocket?" Thomas asked reclaiming his wallet from the pile.

"A magician never reveals their secrets," Theo said with a grin. "If this meeting went south we were going to need wheels and travel funds."

He winked as he snagged some of the junk food on the table. Thomas raised an eyebrow and looked as Silas rubbed a temple. They were definitely out of their league when it came to these children.