

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



For the first time in weeks Ava woke rested and she wasn't alone. Alexis snuggled beside her while Sean and Theo lounged at the foot of the bed. Seeing them she couldn't help but smile but she also felt the pain of regret knowing Silas was not with them. Perhaps his presence had only been a dream. And yet she could still feel his arms around her.

"If you're wondering where Mister Prescott went he got a call from work," Alexis yawned. "It sounded pretty serious."

"He...did?" Ava turned to look at her trying to fight the hope blooming in her chest. So it wasn't a dream. He had really been there and he held her so tenderly like she was a precious treasure. But why would he comfort her? Didn't he hate her?

"I think he likes you mom," Alexis said after a moment.

"...What? I—I'm sure it's not...Do you think so?" Ava hesitantly asked. Was it wrong for her to hope it was true?

"He wouldn't have carried you up to your room or tucked you in or held you if he didn't," Alexis said.

Ava bit her lip. Was all of that true? Did he do that for her? Or was he trying to earn the kids' trust? Her head ached from the paradoxes running through it. What was she going to do?

"Well...it's morning so we should get ready for breakfast," Ava announced. "I'm going to take a shower and you three should wash up too."

"Kay." Alexis readily agreed.

"Sure," Sean and Theo gave muffled replies as they continued to doze.

They watched as their mother stood and retreated to her private bathroom. After a moment Sean finally spoke, "I thought we agreed we weren't going to help him."

"A little nudge doesn't hurt," Alexis said. "Besides I think last night was the first time mom slept without tossing and turning."

As much as they wanted to deny it what their sister said was true. Their mother had always been a light sleeper and prone to waking at odd hours. They remembered waking early hoping to surprise her with breakfast only to find she was already awake. As they grew bigger the boys began to notice their mother was getting thinner, paler and the dark rings around her eyes were darker. Their mother seemed to be slowly wasting away right before their eyes and they didn't know how to help her.

But last night their mother hadn't stirred at all. She slept deeply, completely relaxed in their father's arms. He held her all night long never once trying to disengage or leave her. As much as they hated to admit it their parents did look good together.

"...So are we going to help him now?" Theo asked.

"It's still too early to give him our full support," Alexis said. "But we can nudge mom here or there. I think he really does want to take care of her. You heard what he told the butler before he left didn't you?"

"You mean that thing about getting rid of mom's old clothes so she would wear the new stuff he bought?" Sean said.

Alexis nodded.

"What's the big deal about that?" Theo asked.

"He wants mom to wear the clothes he bought her because they are nicer. You know mom never buys anything new for herself," Alexis said.

"That's true," Sean agreed.

Their mother didn't hesitate to buy them new clothes but she always made due with secondhand things for herself. In fact it had been several years since she bought anything for herself so her clothing was getting more frayed the longer she wore it without replacing it. Their mother deserved a new wardrobe and needed one.

Though Theo was hesitant to admit it their father did seem to care about their mother's wellbeing. The shopping trip might have been too much too soon but it was clear he wanted to make up for the time he missed.

"I read something interesting last night," Sean said.

"What's that?"

"It seems Prescott Industries beat out Carlisle Enterprises for several key acquisitions."

"Is that news?" Theo sighed. "They've always been rivals."

"But Prescott's never specifically gone after the same contracts as Carlisle before. This time they were determined to win the bids."

"Meaning what?"

"Meaning our father might just be seeking revenge for mom too," Alexis said, "same as us."

"You think?" Theo asked sitting up.

"It might be too early to say for certain...but I think so," Sean said. "The Dalairs did the same thing to the Trents remember?"

"No." Theo shook his head and earned his brother's rolled gaze. "Does it matter?"

"If he is aiming at the Carlisle's it might make things easier for us," Alexis said. "A two-prong attack will be more effective."

"Right." The brothers agreed.

Ever since they decided to eliminate the people responsible for their mother's suffering they had faced several difficulties. First of all they didn't have the capitol to truly hurt their grandfather's company. They simply didn't have the means to buy them out or outbid their projects. The second difficulty was that while their grandfather was a despicable person he was an excellent and honest businessman. Sean found no dirty deals or tax evasion in his deep dive through the company's finances.

If there was even one or two under the table deals to take advantage of it would make it far easier to hurt the company's image. Right now their grandfather's biggest weakness was their aunt. Marilynn's antics were outrageous. It was the reason why they employed so many bots to comment, share and criticize her. Her shoddy reputation damaged the image of the company as a whole and it was the best they could do so far.

"Okay here's our next move," Alexis said. "We need bots to spread the news of their failed projects. Highlight the bids they lost to Prescott and make it look like they are falling behind. That should make investors think twice. Also highlight our little escapade with the hack. If they are too incompetent to protect their files it'll make others lose trust with them."

"Right." Sean agreed.

"How is that going anyway?" Theo asked. "They figure out how the hack was done?"

Sean shook his head. So far the FBI hadn't made a single arrest. They were hampered by the multiple foreign IPs that led the attack. With such a smokescreen it was unlikely their tampering would be noticed and it was highly unlikely they would suspect ten-year-olds in the first place.

"Well come on," Alexis stood. "That's enough strategizing. Let's get ready for breakfast."

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"Ma'am, can I help you?" Duncan asked as Ava lingered in the hall.

She wore insulated, black leggings and a cashmere turtleneck. Both were warm and comfortable in the large home prone to drafts. After a leisurely shower that failed to clear her mind she returned to her bedroom to discover all of her clothes were missing. All that was left was the wardrobe Silas bought her.

"...Um I was wondering what happened to my clothes," she hesitated.

"Forgive our intrusion but Master Silas believed your old clothes were unnecessary now that you had new ones. He wants to make sure you are comfortable. To that end he has also asked me to increase the temperature to seventy. Is that warm enough or shall I increase it further?"

"N-no. That's fine. I...Seventy is perfect," Ava nodded hugging herself.

She always had difficulty when it was cold. Her wardrobe mainly consisted of sweaters and sweatshirts to combat the chill that always seemed to reside in her bones. They also hid her thin, boney body. Ava knew she didn't eat nearly enough but her worry suppressed her appetite and she never finished a full meal.

The effect on her body was getting more noticeable and not wanting the kids to worry she generally wore oversized clothing. Though her current outfit wasn't all that different from what she normally wore it was correctly sized and fitted for her frame though it was a bit baggy because she was underweight.

"If you find anything uncomfortable or not to your liking please inform me," Duncan nodded. "The Master wishes us to meet all of your needs."

"Thank you." A ghost of a smile softened her expression.

Silas was being extremely considerate and no one had done that for her before. Maybe it would be good to let herself relax at least a little bit?

A ringing phone interrupted further conversation. Moving to answer Duncan stood listening to the caller on the other end saying, "Yes Miss Carter is right here. Of course. Ma'am, it's for you. She claims she is your friend, Miss Tracy Lamont."

"Tracy! Yes I'll take it," Ava eagerly grasped the phone. "Tracy a lot has happened..."

"It's fine. The kids explained everything."

"They did?" Ava hesitated wondering when the kids could have contacted their aunt and exactly what they might have told her. Tracy knew they were staying with Silas though Ava had left out some details.

"Yeah. We are going to have a very long talk missy, but right now there is something else that takes precedence."

"What are you talking about?"

"Your father is suing for custody of the kids."

"He's what!" Ava stumbled back quivering from just the memory of facing him.

"I heard it through the office gossip...although I've been expecting it so I've also been keeping an eye out."

"You expected this?"

"Alexis said your father practically kidnapped both of you," Tracy said. "He isn't one to give up...so yeah I expected this."

Ava sighed. She should have expected it as well. Maybe she did. That was why she accepted Silas's offer so readily. She averged. Her father was ruthless and wouldn't stop until he got what he wanted. He wouldn't show mercy just because she was his daughter if she was in the way.

"Hey! Don't worry! I'm here!" Tracy practically shouted over the phone. "I've already been preparing."

"Y-you have?"

"Of course. I'm your counsel after all. I may not specialize in custody hearings but I've been researching them. Tailor gave me some pointers. I have a few things to go over with you and some friends for you to meet."

"O-okay," Ava agreed. "Um...Tracy I appreciate this but you know I can't pay..."

"Don't worry about that. Every lawyer does pro bono work besides Mister Prescott already said he'd foot the bill for everything."

"...Silas said that?"

"Mhmm. He said to spare no expense and to call on him if there are any issues."

Ave fell silent. Silas really said that? When did they even meet? Why did it seem everyone was suddenly on friendly terms and talking to each other behind her back? Just what was going on?

"Ava? Ava! Are you still there?"

"...Y-yes. I'm here."

"Don't worry about a thing. We are not going to let him take the kids away from you. You hear me. We're going to fight and he is going to lose. He has no idea the hornet's nest he just kicked."