

The Billionaire's Twins Play Matchmaker Book One: Chapter 40: Bonus Story Five



Movie Night

Julius poured melted butter over the bowl of steaming popcorn before lightly shaking salt over it all. It might have been quicker to pop it all in the microwave but that popcorn lacked a certain flavor. Air-popping it and mixing it like this was how he remembered doing it when he was a kid and it brought back the movie nights they used to enjoy when he was little.

"Hurry up, daddy!" Aria called impatiently from the living room. She and her brother had been excited when he brought up the idea of movie night. It seemed Macey hadn't instituted any special nights like that to entertain them. When they wanted to play a game they had game night, when they wanted to watch a movie they had movie night.

When he first arrived in Paris he went along with it. After all he didn't have anything scheduled and no work to do. Instead he filled his days spending time with his babies and wife. They naturally saw fit to give him a proper tour and even introduced him to their favorite street performer. He didn't mind playing tourist. But things were different now. As soon as he started setting up the new office calls came in and he was suddenly very busy.

It didn't take long for the twins to start chaffing with the idea of sharing their parents' attention. They were especially distressed with sharing their father they only just met themselves. That was when he suggested official movie and game nights making it easier to ensure they had plenty of time together. He didn't think the twins would be very interested in it but they immediately embraced it.

Chuckling he set down the salt and carried the two bowls out of the kitchen. Their new apartment was not all that different from their previous one. Like the old one the kitchen, dining room and living room were part of an open concept with no clear delineation from one to the next. Unlike the old apartment their new one had three bedrooms. The third bedroom had been prepared to function as the baby's nursery.

At first Julius considered getting a house or an even larger space so all three kids would have their own rooms but Macey thought the expense too high and the twins loudly declared they wanted to share their room. For now, it was all right. Depending on the sex of the baby they could change to rooms as it grew up. If a boy the baby and Caden could eventually share a room, if a girl then Aria would be sharing a room. But he was getting ahead of himself. It was still a good two weeks before the baby would be born and there was plenty to do.

Monday he had his meeting with Herr Leon about his new business proposal. He had only just finished setting up their foreign offices and already they were being inundated with calls. It seemed the DaLair reputation preceded him or perhaps it was Leon's doing. Leon was a respected businessman all across Europe so having him introduce Julius to some colleagues opened doors that would have otherwise remained closed.

Not that he really had to worry about work. If he wanted to he could easily retire and live the rest of his life comfortably even while raising three kids. In fact when he first moved to Paris to be with Macey and the kids he treated it as something of an extended holiday. For weeks he leisurely toured the city with Macey or just the twins if she had a previous engagement. Though on the surface it appeared as if he was just having fun he was familiarizing himself with his new home. Learning the language took longer but it gave him ample time to spend with the twins as well as reconnect to Macey.

They had been apart for six years and he wanted to make up for every single minute not just with her but the twins who had never met him. If not for the fact his father told them about him they wouldn't have even known his name.

The thought soured Julius's mood. It wasn't that he was ungrateful toward his father. If not for Augustus's intervention it is difficult to say what might have happened to Macey and the kids. But while he took care of Macey he never once told Julius the truth. Even knowing how desperately Julius was searching for her Augustus remained silent. And not just silent, he actively hid her and helped her slip out of the country underneath Julius's nose.

Julius couldn't help but feel betrayed. His children were five years old before he even laid eyes on them all because of his father. At the same time his father had been seeing them regularly. Augustus had been there for their birth and made trips to see them on their birthdays and holidays in addition to speaking to them through video calls.

While his father was having fun with his children Julius had been snared by the worst kind of harpy, one that had almost destroyed his last chance with Macey. If he had only known a little sooner it would have saved so much trouble down the line. In reality though, he had no one to blame but himself.

When he first married Macey he still considered her a friend of the family. He had numerous relationships with a variety of girls and women all of whom were obsessed with his wealth. None of them loved him. To say he was disillusioned with the idea of love was putting it mildly. When Augustus proposed he marry Macey Julius had been against it. After all she was like a cousin, almost a sister, with how close they had been growing up.

On the other hand she was safe. She had grown up alongside him and his brother and was like family. Her only connection to high society was the DaLairs themselves. She didn't have allies or ulterior motives. Macey was loyal to his family and wouldn't connive behind his back or so he thought.

So he agreed to the marriage. It never occurred to him she would genuinely be in love with him or that she had been for some time. Perhaps if he looked more closely he might have realized the truth sooner. Their wedding was a formal affair but not overly extravagant. He figured it was because his father didn't want to overdo it since it was an arranged marriage of sorts but now he knew it was due to Macey's influence.

After seeing how she planned their vow renewal ceremony it was clear she had a way of controlling Augustus no one else could. There was no telling how many of his ideas she shot down to ensure their nuptials were tasteful and practical. Not even Rose had such a success when it came to holding the reins on the DaLair patriarch. Paging through their wedding album Macey was the epitome of the blushing bride with a gentle, bright smile. It was clear their wedding was a day she had been longing and waiting for a long time. How could he have been so blind?

The early years of their marriage he recalled were awkward. While he had previous relationships Macey hadn't had a single one. Their wedding night in particular had required some careful coaxing to even get her to join him in the bed. He'd had a few too many drinks greatly lowering his own inhibitions. In fact it was fair to say he was more than a bit horny. The memories were dim but he remembered he had still been careful with her and made certain she enjoyed their first time together as well as every time that followed after.

Macey had no problem taking on domestic chores while he went back to work. He recalled both his father and brother were surprised to see him at work the very next day. At the time he hadn't thought anything about it; after all their union was out of convenience not love. Still it was strange they hadn't gone anywhere or had a proper honeymoon. Now that he thought about it there had actually been a few rumors concerning their marriage because he had gone back to work so soon. It seemed a lot of people took that as a sign it wasn't going to last long or that it had all been for show.

After marrying him he would have expected Macey to be invited to a number of high class events as a way to strengthen ties to the Dalairs and secure their support but she hadn't. In fact Macey didn't attend any event Rose was not also a part of and he was fairly certain only Rose received a proper invitation. Did that mean no one believed Macey was a proper DaLair in the first place?

Macey didn't complain and he wasn't interested in needless parties anyway so he couldn't be bothered by it. Though he did recall March complaining once or twice asking him if he didn't care people were being so disrespectful to his wife. Julius brushed it off saying if it didn't bother her than it wasn't worth worrying about. But maybe it had bothered her. Macey was smart. She had to know she was being snubbed and yet she said nothing despite the fact she was a DaLair. One word from her and the entire family would have boycotted events hosted by those people. In fact maybe Augustus had done just that.

Thinking back he did recalling walking in on a conversation between his father and a business associate concerning a gala of some sort. The details of the event were lost to him but Julius quite clearly remembered his father saying, 'I don't think I will be going. If my dear daughter isn't welcome then there is no point in showing my face.' After that Macey started receiving proper invitations at least to some events.

He wasn't sure when the rumors of her cheating on him started. They always attended events together and Macey didn't know anyone there aside from his family so she never wandered far from Rose, March or himself. But somewhere along the way people started calling her shameless for hanging onto his family to improve her station. Then someone started a rumor she was actually flirting with other men who promised to buy her favors.

Having known so many women like that in his past it was enough to enrage him. Instead of asking her about the rumors he simply turned his back on her. Was it the overwhelming sense of betrayal that someone he deemed a close friend would do that to him or the idea his entire family had been duped? He wasn't sure which stung more but it led to him drinking more and ignoring her any time she tried to talk to him not that she tried often.

Macey had always been so full of life and laughter when they were kids. But not long after the rumors started she became pale and quiet. Perhaps the rumors weighed heavier on her than he had thought. It was like she was being eaten up on the inside by them. No doubt she hadn't wanted to burden him with her problems but he was her husband. Who would support her if not for him?

James Goodwell. The world's most shameless flirt and the worst example of chauvinistic male to ever exist. The only thing longer than his list of failed businesses was his list of sexual conquests. In fact he seemed to take a woman's wedding band as a personal challenge to seduce them giving no thought to how it ruined them afterwards.

He knew better than to challenge March and never targeted Rose for his sick games. But with the rumors swirling around Macey and Julius's own inaction he no doubt smelled blood in the water. It was a rare opportunity to get one over on a DaLair so targeting Macey was definitely not an accident.

As far as Julius knew Macey had never been hit on before and thinking back to that night he could picture the pair quite clearly. James stood too close leering as he took stock of her. Macey had always been gorgeous and possessed a natural beauty that certainly earned her jealous glares from other women. She never bothered with diets and she had no interest in unattainable beauty standards. For her beauty was accepting one's natural body type and hers was tantalizing curvy a fact he realized as James grasped her hand and slobbered all over it.

Macey's usual gentle expression turned to revulsion in an instant and she jerked her hand away from him in disgust. Her face flushed with embarrassment and rage and she might have been ready to give him a piece of her mind if Julius hadn't suddenly appeared.

He should have just hit the bastard but in his anger he had been blind to Macey's indignation. Instead of pummeling her solicitor like he should have he dragged her away and...he hit her.

Julius froze mid-step as the memory came flooding back. He had actually raised his hand against her. Cold suddenly assailed him and he felt himself go pale. How could he have done that? What was wrong with him?

"Daddy," Aria called. "Daddy, what's wrong?"

Aria and Caden were camped out on the floor in front of the TV waiting for their popcorn. The N*****x movie of their choice was already cued up and just needed them to select play for it to begin but they had been told they couldn't until everyone was ready.

Macey and her large belly were seated on the couch behind them. Julius insisted she sit and relax while he got their snacks in order. He had already brought them drinks. The twins' colas sat on a pair of coasters with straws tucked in the glasses. They were allowed them on the promise they would be careful not to spill. Seeing Aria's worried gaze Macey shifted looking over her shoulder to see Julius frozen mid-step and pale as a ghost.

"Julius?" Macey asked. "Julius, what is wrong?"

Her voice stirred him from his stupor. His blank gaze drifted to hers and he let the memory slip away. Julius licked his lips wanting to say something to put them both at ease but found himself without a voice. What could he say to her after he had been so stupid?

"Julius, are you okay?" Macey asked again her face betraying her worry. She shifted forward as if to rise but he didn't want her getting up and possibly straining herself so close to her due date.

He forced a smile, "I'm fine. It's nothing."

Clearing his throat he completed his delivery setting the larger bowl on the floor between the twins where they could share it. Then he sat on the couch with the smaller bowl. Without a word Macey shifted to lean against him. He raised his arm and hugged her close as they settled together. She sighed reclining against him and bringing her feet up so she could lie more comfortably. Tugging on her afghan throw she covered her swollen, aching feet.

Despite his care and regular massages her feet remained a constant problem. They always ached no matter how much she kept off of them. On top of that they always seemed cold. Sometimes at night he was woken up from a dead sleep when she tucked her feet up against him trying to warm up. It was like a bucket of ice water was suddenly thrown on him.

Once she was comfortable he slowly relaxed and nodded to Caden who held the remote. Without a word Caden pressed play and the beginning credits began to dramatic music before settling on snail racing fan. The kids were already snickering as they reached for their popcorn. Julius sighed setting his popcorn bowl on his lap within Macey's easy reach.

"So are you going to tell me what is wrong?" Macey whispered.

"What do you mean?" Julius asked feigning ignorance.

"I'm talking about how you were doing your best impression of a statue."

"Did I?"

"You looked like you saw a ghost," Macey insisted. "So what happened?"

"I was just...remembering."

"Remembering what?"

"The night you left."

Macey tensed. She looked at him wide-eyed and uncertain. Surely she couldn't have forgotten. There was no way she could have forgotten what happened...what he did...

"...Macey I..." Julius hesitated. What could he say? "I should have broken James's jaw for even speaking to you. Instead I... Macey I...God I'm so sorry..."

"Shh," Macey shushed him placing her fingers to his lips. "It's okay."

"Macey, how could you possibly forgive me after what I did...Macey I..."

Macey gave him an exasperated look before pulling back her blanket. She grasped his hand and pulled it to her swelled belly. Scrunching her brow she repositioned it and held it in place.

A moment later he felt a shock run through his hand and up his arm as the baby kicked. Julius held his breath and waited. A second passed and he felt another kick. Macey sighed and looked at him again her face warm and her eyes bright.

"Do you know what that is, Julius?" she asked. "That's your baby telling you to stop worrying about the past. If you want to worry about something, worry about the future...because you're going to be a daddy."

Julius sucked in his breath staring into her shining green eyes. He wondered if all women glowed when they were going to be mothers or if the phenomenon was unique to Macey. One thing he was certain of...none could be more beautiful than her. A smile softened his expression as he tugged the blanket back up to cover her.

"You're amazing."

"I know." Macey smiled and he couldn't resist kissing her.

He'd never get tired of how her lips tasted or how soft and pliable they were against his. Julius pulled away with a sigh. His pants were already feeling uncomfortably tight. When was the last time they had spent a passionate night together? He couldn't recall. It had to be at least three or four months, sometime before she started her last trimester.

Since Macey was only carrying one baby this time the doctor okayed intercourse for as long as they were both comfortable with it. Frankly Julius had been relieved. After so long apart his sexual drive was rather high and he wasn't ready to abstain from indulging. He craved her, wanted to taste her, pleasure her and touch every inch of her.

Macey was surprisingly receptive. He thought she would be hesitant after the pregnancy was confirmed. Much to his surprise her sex drive seemed to increase as it progressed. Not that he was going to complain about her lowered inhibitions but it was almost too much even for his starved libido. When her stomach began to really show her drive finally calmed and he almost breathed a sigh of relief. But now the weeks of only heavy petting and passionate kisses felt more like teasing knowing she was content to cuddle and sleep.

Knowing he was going to regret it later Julius leaned close to her again kissing her deeply. God, did she have to taste so good?

"Daddy, mommy, you're missing the movie with all your kissy facing," Aria complained.

Macey pulled away in mock horror and looked at her, "Aria!"

Julius cleared his throat as Caden also turned to look at them with a questioning gaze. Without a word Julius held up his hand and twirled his finger in a sign the young pair should turn around and pay attention to the snails on screen as they harvested tomatoes and tried to avoid crows. Snickering Aria and Caden obeyed looking again to the screen.

Julius sighed as Macey chuckled snuggling against him. So this is what fatherhood was like. For years he endured Frederick lambasting parenthood like it was a disease, the end to all fun and games. But this...was good. Julius kissed the top of Macey's head as he gazed at the six year olds. No. This was just about perfect.

"Feeling better?" Macey whispered.

"Yeah. I do." Julius rested his cheek on her head. "This feels really good."

"Good. Because we're glad you're here and we don't want you disappearing."

"I'm not going anywhere Macey. I promise. You'll never have to do anything by yourself again."

"Good." She sighed. "Does that mean you'll rub my feet tonight?"

Julius chuckled, "Of course, baby. You don't even have to ask. I'll always be here for you."