

The Billionaire's Twins Play Matchmaker Book One: Chapter 7



"How long!" Julius demanded throwing open the door to his father's office. "How long have you known?"

March followed a step behind closing the door. Augustus looked up from the paperwork he was about to sign. His gray eyes were calm and appraising. Without a word he returned to the paperwork in front of him signing before handing it back to Stephen. With a wave he dismissed his steadfast assistant before turning his attention back to his sons.

"Dad," March prompted when he still didn't speak. "How long have you known about Macey...and the twins?"

Without a word Augustus reached into the bottom drawer of his desk and removed a small photo album he tossed toward them. Julius remained riveted where he was hands balled into fists as if fighting the urge to attack his own father so March stepped forward to take it. He stepped back to stand beside Julius as he paged through it. Julius looked sucking in a breath at the very first page depicting a pair of newborn twins. Their skin was still red from the exertion of birth. One wore a blue beanie the other a pink one.

March continued to page through the album. They saw pictures of Macey with her growing belly. There was an image of her having an ultrasound taken. Beside the photo was a copy of the ultrasound image with a single word written next to it: Twins! The photo diary continued eventually showing Macey being wheeled into the hospital pushed by a woman with raven black hair followed by another image of her on the bed clearly enduring labor holding the same woman's hand for support.

The next showed a tired Macey with a newborn on her chest. Another chronicled her first attempts at breast feeding. Still another depicted her cuddling with one twin while the black-haired beauty cradled the other but it was the final photograph that made their blood boil. The last picture was of Augustus cradling a newborn twin in either arm like the proud grandfather he was.

"Caden August DaLair and Aria Carla DaLair," Augustus finally said as he stood and went to his wet bar to pour himself a drink. He sipped it without returning to his chair. "I've always known."

Julius glared at him struggling to find words to describe his sense of betrayal. Six years he searched for her. Six years he missed being at her side and seeing their children grow. Six years his father had known, watched over them and kept in contact behind his back.

"Dad, how could you?" March spoke first.

"If you think I was going to let my pregnant daughter-in-law spend one night in that godforsaken motel after she left, you are mistaken," Augustus snorted.

"How did you know she was pregnant?"

"I watched you mother go through three pregnancies, you think I wouldn't recognize the signs?" Augustus scoffed turning his attention to Julius. "I don't know what you said to her that night but I know you brought her to tears. She was devastated when she saw you surround yourself with those Harpies. I told Stephen to follow her. He trailed her home and when she left he followed her. When he called to tell me where she was staying I told him to bring her home."

"Unbelievable," Julius finally found his voice. "I was turning the city upside down and she was with you!"

"She stayed three weeks under a doctor's care," Augustus said earning pained looks from his son. "The situation put stress on the pregnancy. It was touch and go for awhile."

Julius grimaced bowing his head in shame. It was his fault. Because of him she had almost lost the babies, their babies. What would have happened if his father didn't intervene? He was both angry and grateful toward the man who kept it all secret.

"When she was finally stable I told her you were looking for her. She told me about the divorce papers," Augustus giving his son a disapproving scowl. "I asked her what she wanted to do. She wanted to leave. She couldn't stay. She didn't want to see you. It was too painful. She wanted a fresh start, to go back to school and finish her studies. I told her to pick a city. She said she always wanted to visit Paris."

Vaguely Julius remembered Macey talked about seeing Paris. She stopped short of asking him to take her and instead she treated it like some lofty dream as if he didn't have a fleet of private jets available to make the dream reality. But that was the way she was. She never asked him for favors or gifts. He should have paid more attention. Any birthday or anniversary could have served as an excuse to take her to Paris. Why did he never think of spending time with her, just the two of them? At that moment a romantic getaway just the two of them, or maybe four of them, sounded fantastic.

"I had Stephen fly her out on my jet," Augustus said. "He set her up in an apartment, enrolled her in the best art school available and arranged her care under the best OBGYN and pediatrician to be found."

Augustus's voice sounded neutral but Julius knew his father better than to believe it. His father's emotion shone out of his gray eyes as he related the past. Augustus scrutinized his son's reaction as he explained the details. It should have been Julius dotting on his pregnant wife, pampering her and eagerly waiting for the birth of their twins but he had missed it all.

"I told her I wanted to be there every step of the way, every doctor's appointment."

"...All those business trips you took," March said recalling how their father suddenly started taking trips to Europe nearly every month five years ago. "It was to see her and the kids."

"You may not take your promises seriously, but I do. I promised her father to watch over her and even if she wasn't the mother of my grandkids I would have taken care of her," Augustus said.

"Six years," Julius finally spoke, "I've been looking for her for six years. Did it ever occur to you to tell me?"

"It did."

Julius sucked in a breath. Then why...

"She needed space to spread her wings," Augustus continued. "I can't imagine what was going through her head: starting over in a different city, a new country, going back to school all the while carrying and taking care of twins. It's inspiring. She's stronger now so don't think you can push her around. I wouldn't have asked her to come back if it wasn't so."

Julius flinched. Just the thought that she might have remained in Paris indefinitely left him feeling hollow. He had to see her to explain, to apologize, to beg for forgiveness...whatever it took to get her to stay.

"Six years ago she needed you. She needed you to be there, to protect her, to shield her and you threw her to the wolves. She doesn't need you any longer. She can stand up to them on her own now."

Julius struggled to reign himself in. He had known Macey was often targeted by various social elites. Though she grew up with his family she was still far removed from high society. It was no surprise she hadn't been prepared to face the backlash of their union. And he had done nothing to help her. He should have protected her, supported her. Instead he allowed rumors to color his own opinion of her.

"Now if that's everything. I have a luncheon with the governor. I trust you two can handle negotiations with Herr Leon when he arrives. This is important for the future of the company," Augustus moved past his stunned sons and reached the door. Pausing he looked back at Julius saying, "I expect you to make the most of this opportunity but know this...I will not be deprived of my grandchildren because you lack courage."