

The Billionaire's Twins Play Matchmaker Book One: Chapter 39: Bonus Story Four



The Twins Make a Plan

"Are you ready Caden?" Aria asked bouncing around their room.

"Yes." He nodded though he remained seated.

Tomorrow was their third birthday and their mother was planning a party for them with their Aunt Vicki's help along with Dillon's assistance. To keep the twins out of the way and hide at least some of the preparations so it could be a surprise, Grandpa Gus was coming to take them out and entertain them while the others prepared.

But really any time Grandpa Gus paid them a visit it was call for celebration. While they lived in Paris he lived across the ocean in America. It made them sad to think he was so far away. Though they Skyped at least once a week and he always paid visits on their birthdays and during holidays they couldn't help but be dissatisfied they couldn't see him every day.

Grandpa Gus was a jolly person. If not for the fact he was clean shaved they would have easily assumed he was Santa Claus. In fact they were still not completely convinced he was not. After all he always came with presents, he was always laughing and he was a little plump around the middle. So who's to say he wasn't Santa or that Santa kept a beard all year round? On the other hand most Santas they met had fake beards anyway so maybe it was the same with the real one.

"Where are my little rascals?"

"Grand-père Gus!" they squealed as one rushing to their door as it swung open to reveal the man they had been waiting for.

Dropping to his knee Augustus embraced the pair in a warm, bear hug nearly falling over backward from the way they fell into him. Macey's entreats to be more cautious fell on three sets of deaf ears. Kissing the tops of their heads he held them at arm's length to get a proper look at his growing grandchildren.

He never tired of seeing them. They were almost perfect replicas of their parents aside from eye color with Caden inheriting their mother's green eyes and Aria their father's gray ones. And every time he saw them it appeared as if they had doubled in size. They were growing up so fast he wished there was a way to preserve this moment more solidly than memory.

"Macey, dear, do be good and get a picture of us. I can't believe my grandchildren are three already."

"But we're not three yet," Caden protested even as they cuddled up to their grandfather and smiled for the picture.

Macey chuckled as Augustus heaved himself to his feet. Though he didn't care to admit it, it was definitely more difficult getting up each time. The twins observed his trouble without alarm.

"Are you okay, Grandpa Gus?" Aria asked. "Do you need to rest?"

"No my dear. I'm just fine." He smiled. "It was just a long flight is all. Besides I don't want to waste a single moment. What do you two think about ice cream?"

"Yeah! Ice cream!"

"That is all right, isn't it?" Augustus looked to Macey for confirmation. As much as he wanted to take the pair out for a special treat he certainly wouldn't go against their mother if she vetoed the idea.

"Please mommy!" Aria and Caden turned to their mother as well.

"It's all right with me," Macey laughed. "As long as it doesn't ruin your dinner."

"Yeah!"

"Let's get out of here before she changes her mind," Augustus leaned close taking each by the hand. "Let's go."

"Ice cream! Ice cream!"

They skipped to the door quickly rounding up their shoes and jackets. The weather had been fair but it was still chilly to say nothing of the sloppy snow on the streets.

"Don't forget your hats," Macey joined them fitting both with knit caps. "How anyone could eat ice cream when it's this cold outside I just don't understand."

"I agree," Victoria called from the kitchen shaking her head. "All of you are crazy."

"Bye, bye mommy! Auntie Vicki! Auntie Dillon! Be back soon!" Aria waved as their grandfather and his assistant ushered them out the door.

"Don't let them stay out too long, dad," Macey warned. "I don't want them catching cold."

"Of course, of course," Augustus nodded. "Don't worry. I raised two boys remember?"

Macey rolled her eyes but didn't argue any further. In truth he raised her as well. Her father had been around for her early years so she thought of Augustus as a doting uncle for most of her childhood. After her father passed away he became more and more like a second father. Though Augustus sometimes gave the impression of being carefree and avant-garde in truth he was actually quite careful. He would never allow the twins' health to be compromised.

A rental vehicle waited for them once they reached the street. Stephen held open the door so they could climb in unimpeded. Normally they would have walked and enjoyed some fresh air but it was too cold for that. Augustus chuckled as the twins regaled him with stories of the day. No matter how much or how little time passed since their last meeting they always had a lot to tell him.

"You know what else, Grandpa Gus?" Aria asked.

"What?"

"Mommy says we'll start kindergarten in the fall."

"Oh, really? But you're only three."

"That's just how it works here," Aria shrugged. "She says not to worry. We'll have lots of fun and make a whole bunch of friends."

Augustus chuckled, "Are you excited about starting school, Caden?"

"I don't know." Caden shrugged.

Augustus considered his grandson carefully. There was something about the boy that made him different from other children though he supposed he shouldn't be surprised by the boy's lackluster attitude. Caden only started speaking a few weeks ago. Until then he had been mute. It had gotten to the point Macey was desperately worried about him.

According to the twins' doctor there was no physical reason for his silence and concluded he would speak when he was ready. They hadn't been wrong. When he decided to speak it had been in clear, full sentences. In fact his first word was, "Mommy, more juice, please."

It startled Macey so much she called Augustus in tears of joy. Luckily he hadn't been in a meeting so he didn't have to miss a word. Even as he listened though he couldn't help but feel guilty. After all it was a call Julius should have had. Since Macey left Julius had become more despondent. Shortly after the twins were born he had fallen into a depression so deep that even March couldn't drag him out of with a simple shower and coffee.

Augustus allowed Julius to take an emergency leave of absence. He just couldn't force his son to work when he knew the problem. Though March was still unaware Julius knew Macey had been pregnant when she left and he also knew the approximate time she would give birth. Knowing his depression was due to missing his child's birth Augustus thought it was best to let him be for the time being. Eventually Julius recovered enough to come back to work but every year like clockwork he'd fall back into depression right around the twins' birthday.

It was getting harder and harder to keep the truth from his son. Julius's depression and drinking binges would certainly end the moment he learned where Macey had gone and that the twins were safe. Once Julius laid his eyes on his children nothing else would matter. But Augustus couldn't betray Macey like that.

She had practically begged him not to tell Julius. Macey was intent on leaving that old life behind and starting fresh. She had chosen Paris as the place to start over and had done magnificently. She had gone back to school, had the twins and gotten her degree. Her next show was coming soon and she was slowly gaining a following with her work. Macey was finding success with her own work and without the DaLair name overshadowing her. If Julius came back now...

No. He couldn't do that to her. She needed a little more time to spread her wings. Once she could truly stand on her own then it would be time to tell Julius the truth. His son would have to hold out until then. Maybe then he would be able to win her heart back.

The drive to their favorite café was short and they disembarked only to hurry inside. Normally they would have sat outside but the day was just too cold Caden and Aria stomped their feet on the welcome mat to shake off any lingering slush.

"Bonjour. Petits!" the proprietor greeted.

"Bonjour," they called together.

Augustus chuckled as they took their seats. It amazed him to think his grandkids were naturally bi-lingual. They spoke French fluently and their English was impeccable with only a slight accent. Jude was taking Spanish in school but he could barely manage a short conversation and it was unlikely he would retain any of it once he was graduated. Was the secret actually living in a foreign country then?

Perhaps he should ask March about sending the boy to Spain for a semester...no then all of his grandchildren would be out of the country and he simply couldn't bear the thought of that. Maybe if Jude came up with the idea himself but Augustus wouldn't force the issue.

The server, a blonde he had never seen before, took their order and returned with it quickly. Augustus made do with simple coffee while Caden ordered a sundae and Aria wanted a parfait. Aria's selection was vanilla with chocolate and fudge layers while Caden had a scoop of vanilla and one of chocolate. The vanilla was actually a yellowish color due to the fact French ice cream used eggs. It was also thicker and creamier, more like a custard. Though Augustus was a multi-billionaire business owner there was something about Victoria that made him want to stay on her good side and not aggravate her.

As of now Macey seemed blissfully unaware of Paul's affection and showed no interest in him beyond a good friend. If the kids had shown him a lot of attention Macey might have been more inclined to see Paul in another way but thankfully the kids hadn't grown needlessly close to him.

"What do you want to know?" Augustus finally said.

"We'll start with his name," Aria diplomatically said.

"Julius."

"Julus?" Aria tried to pronounce the unfamiliar name.

"Julius. Julius DaLair. He's my youngest."

"You have more children?"

"I have two. March is his older brother."

"So we have an uncle too?" Aria smiled looking more excited.

"That's right. March is married and he has a son of his own. So you have an aunt and a cousin as well."

Aria clapped happily. This was far more exciting than she first thought it would be. Caden didn't share her enthusiasm but he grinned at the news.

"Do they all live with you in America?"

"That's right."

Aria frowned sharing a serious look with her brother before she asked, "Grandpa, why do all of you live in America but we live in Paris with mommy? Why doesn't our daddy at least live with us? Does he not like Paris?"

"No. That's not it."

"Then...does he not like us?"

"No. He loves you both...or he will once he sees you."

"Our daddy doesn't know about us?" Caden asked.

"...Yes well...you see. Before you were born your mommy and daddy had a fight. Your daddy did a very stupid thing and your mommy decided to leave. That's when she came to Paris and went back to school and had you two."

"But daddy doesn't know that?"

"No. He doesn't. But he has been looking for your mommy."

"Why?"

"My guess is he wants to say he was sorry and make it up to your mommy."

"Do you think he wants to be our daddy?"

"Oh yes. He definitely wants to your daddy."

Aria frowned again looking to her brother. He shrugged but said nothing. Quietly the pair finished their ice cream treats deep in thought but they didn't ask any more questions. Augustus wondered what was going through their minds but he hesitated to ask. It wasn't the first time the twins' uncanny intelligence surprised him.

"So I hear your mommy has another show coming up," Augustus said after a moment.

"Yep, in Amsterdam," Aria said. "Mommy is taking us with her. She says she'll buy us wooden shoes!"

Augustus chuckled. Now they sounded more like normal three-year-olds. But deep down he knew it was all an act. There was nothing normal about his grandchildren though he wasn't certain exactly what was going on in their minds.

* * *

"Caden?" Aria asked looking across the room to her brother's bed. After ice cream with their grandpa they had asked a few more questions about their family and he even showed them some pictures he had on his phone.

While it was exciting to see their family it only made it more clear how much distance separated them. Their cousin was actually quite a bit older than they were. In their experience older kids didn't really care about younger ones but maybe that wasn't true if they were family.

After discussing their family Augustus made them promise not to talk about it to their mother. Their grandpa was convinced she wouldn't like that he told them so much about their waiting family. The twins readily agreed since they didn't want to make their mommy cry.

"Caden?"

No answer.

"You know Caden, you should talk more. It made mommy really worried when you didn't talk for so long. Uncle Paul kept saying you needed to be tested or something."

No answer.

"Caden, are you asleep?"

"No."

"What do you think about what grandpa said today?"

"About our daddy?"

"Well, yeah, duh."

"...Hmm."

"If our daddy is like Grandpa Gus than he has to be really nice don't you think?"

No answer.

"And we have an uncle and an aunt and a cousin too. That's really exciting. So what do you think?"

"Maybe they won't like us."

"You heard Grandpa Gus. He said they will love us. Grandpa Gus loves us so they will too."

"That isn't really how it works."

"It will work out this time. They are our family after all."

"But they've never met us and they don't even know we exist."

"But they will. You heard Grandpa. He wants to get mommy and daddy back together."

"Yeah but it didn't sound like he had a plan."

"...Then...We'll make a plan!" Aria suddenly sat up in bed.

Caden rolled over to look at her as she slipped out of bed and bound across the room to come to his side. Her eyes sparkled bright the way they usually did when she was scheming. Caden looked at her in silence and waited for her to announce her big idea.

"We'll make a plan that will bring mommy and daddy back together again. Then we can be a big happy family again!"

Caden frowned, "What if our daddy doesn't want to be in a family with us?"

"Of course he will," Aria said supremely confident as she always was. "You want a daddy don't you Caden?"

"...Yeah. I do."

"Well, we have a daddy out there. We just have to meet him. That can be part of our plan."

"Actually part one should be letting daddy know we even exist. Grandpa Gus said mommy left before she told him she was going to have a baby remember?"

Okay, okay. So part one: we show daddy we exist. Part two is we get to know him. That way we can be sure he's the kind of person we want to be our daddy. What do you think?"

"I guess that sounds good." Caden finally sat up. "But it isn't just our decision. We will have to ask mommy somehow. She might not think it's a good idea."

"Mommy's been missing daddy for a long time. She's definitely going to agree."

Caden gave his sister a dubious look. Grown-ups seldom did the things they expected them to. In fact usually the things grown-ups did defied explanation. He had a hard time trying to understand their logic for the decisions they made. Like why did their mother decide to move to Paris just to get away from their father only to miss him every night? Wouldn't it have been better to stay closer so they could talk about whatever separated them in the first place?

Still, it would be nice to have a daddy. Whenever they went to one of their mother's shows she and Aria spent a lot of time matching clothes and having fun shopping. It would be nice if he could do that too. He wouldn't even mind wearing a suit if it meant he could match his daddy.

But still. There had to be a reason their mommy and daddy weren't together and he doubted they would be willing to get back together so easily, especially their mother. After all she left home to come all the way to Paris. There had to be a reason she did that. At the very least their daddy would probably have to apologize before their mother gave him another chance.

"We should make sure daddy apologizes," Caden finally says. "Mommy will probably be more willing to agree if he did that."

"Hmm." Aria sighed. There really was no reason to fight her brother on that point. When Caden got an idea in his head he seldom just let it go. "Fine. Part one, we show daddy we are here. Two we spend time with him so he can get to know us. That way he will have a reason to really make it up to mommy if he wants to keep seeing us. Three, we let mommy and daddy talk and make up."

Caden nodded. It sounded okay. At least it sounded doable but he wasn't certain it would be enough to bring their family together. He bit his lip, "Do you think that will be enough?"

Aria frowned. Her brother had a point. Anyone could say they are sorry and just walk away. They had to make it so their daddy wouldn't walk away. They had to show him and their mommy that being a family was better than not being a family. Aloud she said, "Part one we show ourselves to daddy. Part two we spend time with him so we can all get to know each other. Part three we make mommy and daddy have a proper talk. Part four we show them that being a family is best. Part five, daddy proposes!"

Caden nodded. That seemed like a logical plan. But for any of it to work they had to get to America, or their daddy had to come to Paris. He wasn't sure how they would do that but their grandpa said he wanted to bring their parents back together so perhaps they could rely on him for that part. In any case they had a plan.