

The Billionaire's Twins Play Matchmaker Book One: Chapter 30



"See auntie! Your favorite!" Aria announced.

"Tu as raison! Magnifique!" Victoria laughed as they reached the lavish hors d'oeuvre table. She never saw so much shrimp circling such a large bowl of dipping sauce. Victoria offered shrimp to the little ones and helped herself before looking to Macey saying, "Okay spill it."

"What?"

"Don't what me, lady. You've been gone for a week and the day after you leave I get a mysterious invitation to this event. So here I am and one of the first things I see is you in the arms of a very handsome man who just happens to be your ex and father of your children. So...spill it. Rose wants to hear all about it too, don't you? She's just too polite to demand it. So?"

"What do you want me to say?" Macey said. "You think I'm an idiot for getting back together with him, don't you?"

"I didn't say that," Victoria shook her head. She hated it when people made assumptions. "Don't you dare put words in my mouth. I know you've been carrying a torch for him all these years. Or have you forgotten all our girl talk?"

Macey sighed. Rose watched her waiting. She knew Macey's feelings for Julius couldn't have been shaken so easily. Their connection was just too deep but like Victoria said she didn't want to force Macey into saying something she didn't want to reveal.

"Tell me everything!" Victoria insisted. "And you can start with that blonde."

"Why her?"

"I've known you for years and you've never been hostile outside of defending the twins. But the way you looked at her you were ready to start her on fire. Who is she?"

"Well...she is apparently Julius's self-proclaimed fiancée."

"I beg your pardon?"

"It's a long story. Rose just told me tonight after I met her," Macey said.

She glanced at Rose who nodded and proceeded to tell Victoria the story. Victoria listened, her face a neutral mask except when she spoiled her godchildren as they continued to dance around the trio. Rose ended with the confrontation in the bathroom and how she had seen Katherine exit with a smug smile.

"That woman is not just la poufiasse she is la chienne folle," Victoria muttered. "And she dared confront you?"

Macey shrugged.

"Well, that explains a lot. But that does not get you off the hook. Your ex...Start."

Macey sighed. She had hoped to avoid this conversation at least for the night but the look in Victoria's gaze was serious. So she started from the beginning with Augustus announcing how he wanted to start a gallery devoted solely to her work. Macey had been on the fence at first but he had been so passionate about it that in the end she just couldn't say no.

He timed the grand opening to coincide with her latest series. Macey had to admit the more he talked about how well the gallery was coming along the more excited she was to see it all finished even if that meant returning to the one place she had run away from and avoided until now. Skipping some of the less noteworthy events she eventually moved on to seeing Julius again.

"Augustus asked me to attend a party for a Picasso..."

"Who you hate with the passion of a thousand suns."

"You do?" Rose looked at her. "Why?"

"Long story. I'll tell you later," Macey gave her a smile. "Anyway we were there and I went to the ladies' room to freshen up. I came out of the bathroom and some man grabbed my arm asking me how much."

"He did not!" Victoria gasped. "What did you do?"

"I told him he had three seconds to let me go or I was going to knee his balls so hard he'd never find them again."

"Bravo! That's my girl!"

"And that's when Julius showed up," Macey said. "Honestly I thought he was going to kill him...the look in his eyes was intense."

"If he heard what that man said I can see why," Rose said. "He would never let that kind of insult go."

"And then?" Victoria prompted.

"...We kissed."

"Oh?" Victoria and Rose watched her waiting for details. "Well? Come on. Don't stop now!"

Macey blushed at their eagerness but she couldn't hold back her smile at the memory. "It was...nice. Like the whole world just stopped."

Victoria smiled, "Le seul vrai langage au monde est un baiser." [1]

Macey's blush deepened.

"And then?"

"I panicked," Macey said. "I couldn't think straight so I said I should go get the kids and bring them home."

"Macey!" Victoria admonished. One did not bring up kids when they were in the middle of a passionate embrace. Had Macey learned nothing from her time living in Paris?

"So he drove me to Rose's to pick up the kids and brought us all home."

"So that is why he was there with you," Rose nodded recalling the long conversation she and March had about why Julius was the one who brought Macey home.

"And did he stay the night?" Victoria asked.

"No...he left."

Victoria gave an exasperated sigh and gulped her champagne. Leave it to Macey to cut a perfect night short of its climax.

"He stayed the next night," Macey added.

"Did he?" Victoria's interest was piqued.

"I had a photo shoot planned at the Botanical Garden and he took the kids to the zoo. Then he made me dinner: chicken Alfredo."

"A man who cooks is definitely a keeper," Victoria sighed. "And he stayed...all night?"

Macey nodded biting her lip as she blushed.

"And how was it?"

"Do we have to talk about this now?"

"Just tell me one thing...was it good?"

Macey's blush deepened.

"Oh, then it was very good!"

Macey hid her face as she fought her embarrassment. She glanced around them but no one seemed to be paying attention to their conversation.

"Darling, it's fine!" Victoria laughed. "You have been living like a nun for six years! It's okay to enjoy it! Especially with a man built like him."

Macey couldn't stop her laugh and playfully swatted her best friend. Rose chuckled at their antics. It was good to see Macey like this.

"One more thing," Victoria said dropping her voice low and forced them to lean in to hear. "How many times did he make you cum?"

"Vicki!" Macey exclaimed earning several looks from those around them.

Victoria chuckled but her gaze said she was still waiting for an answer.

"Twice," Macey finally managed to whisper when their audience went back to their own conversations.

"Only?" Victoria prompted.

"Yes...the first night...five the second night."

"Oh sweetie! If I could find a man or woman capable of that I'd never let them go!" Victoria hummed. "Right Rose?"

"I'm not sure if I should be hearing this about my brother-in-law."

"Don't worry, you married his brother so I'm sure you already know all about it."

It was Rose's turn to blush. Despite the flow of conversation Victoria kept an eye on Julius. She had positioned herself to give her a good view of him. Though she encouraged Macey she also wanted to be sure Julius wouldn't hurt her again. A heart could only take so much. More than anything Victoria wanted Macey to have the happiness she deserved.

As they talked Julius's gaze continued to seek Macey out as if to assure himself she was safe and close by. It spoke of a man terrified of losing his love again. Everything she saw pleased her and gave her hope Macey would indeed have her happily ever after just like in her favorite movie. Though she wanted more details people started recognizing and approaching them.

Because of Victoria's view she saw Paul's approach immediately. Had she known what she would find at this event Victoria would never have dragged him with her. But how could she have known? There was nothing she could do to stop what happened next as Paul confronted Julius. Victoria was too far to hear their conversation but it was clear Julius was livid. She expected a fight any moment but surprisingly Julius maintained control and walked away.

To make it up to him Victoria whispered a suggestion to Aria and Caden and sent them to his side. She was delighted to see him immediately scoop up both of them and hold them tight. Not only had he managed to recapture Macey's heart he definitely earned his children's hearts as well. Aria and Caden had always been particular never giving their attention to someone they deemed unworthy. Victoria was satisfied so when he looked in her direction she smiled and gave him a wink.

Eventually Macey and Rose made their way back to their men and Victoria went in search of Paul. She found him as he exited the bathroom. He stumbled a bit leaning on the wall. The smell of vomit was apparent and she quickly handed him a mint.

"Have you embarrassed yourself enough?" Victoria asked. "Or do you want to go for round two?"

Paul scowled.

"Unbelievable," Victoria sighed. "How could you do this on Macey's big night?"

"You saw him with her."

"I did. And it's obvious he loves her...and she loves him. And the kids adore him."

"How could she love him after what he did?"

"Macey never stopped loving him," Victoria said. "You knew she was still in love with him when you met her."

"He broke her heart."

"A woman's love is as deep as the ocean and just as mysterious," Victoria shook her head. "Mais ce qu'a lié l'amour même, le temps ne peut le délier." [2]

"Stop talking in proverbs. This is real life."

"Life and love aren't logical," Victoria admonished. "Macey has loved him since they were kids."

"What?" Paul jerked to attention.

"You didn't know? They grew up together. She's loved him since she was ten. That is not a love that can be undone in a mere six years."

She spared him a sympathetic look. Victoria knew Paul had a crush on Macey from the day he met her but had said nothing to Macey about his affection. She warned him Macey still loved her ex but he didn't seem to care so Victoria backed off and watched. If he could win Macey's heart she wasn't going to stand in the way. Yet though he tried to get close Macey always kept him at arm's length. What he wanted she would not, or could not, give.

After the twins were born Paul thought to win her heart by showing off his parenting skills but even there fate conspired against him in the form of the twins. They seemed to know instinctively that place beside their mother was reserved for another. Despite the fact he was the closest male figure they had to a father they never saw him in that light. For school events where a father was requested they never asked him to participate preferring their mother and once their paternal grandfather. Yet Paul continued to wait and hope.

"Did you know she likes honey?"

"Are you kidding?" Victoria scoffed as if that should be obvious. "She drowns everything in it. How many brunches have you had with her and never noticed?"

"I always ordered us strawberry shortcakes for dessert."

"You ordered for her? My god, Paul. A woman is more than capable of making up her own mind about food and men," Victoria rolled her eyes. She loved the man but sometimes Paul's ideas were decades out of date. "This is Macey's night so don't make any more scenes."

"But what about him?"

"If he wants to be in her life and she wants him in it then that is all there is to it." Victoria shrugged.

Victoria had only known Macey since her move to Paris. Perhaps if she had known Macey before and seen how difficult her marriage with Julius had been she would have a different view but everything she had seen of Julius so far indicated a man desperately in love with one woman and eager to have his family by his side. Whatever their past Victoria was confident he would not hurt Macey or the twins again.

A round of clapping brought them to attention. Wondering if a new event was starting they left their corner and made their way through the crowd. When they finally made it through they were shocked by what they saw.

[1] "The true language of the world is a kiss." (Alfred de Musset)

[2] "But what love has bound together, time cannot unbind." (Germaine Nouveau)