

Chapter 51 - The Billionaire CEO's Runaway Wife

Lucas paced back and forth near the glass doors. He was more nervous now than he had been since he first faced Sarah when she returned. Outside it was a beautiful day but inside the air conditioning kept it rather chilly. Even a few weeks ago he never imagined he would be waiting at the airport to meet the father he never knew. In fact if not for Sarah pushing him, he might not have finally dialed the contact number he had been given. The conversation, though brief, was still etched into his mind.

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“...Hello, who is this?” a rather gruff voice said.

“Luke.”

“Luke who?”

“...Your son.”

The line suddenly went silent. Lucas held his phone tight glancing toward Sarah who sat beside him listening and waiting. Zoe was already asleep upstairs and they had seen Alan and Kyle off for the night as well after finalizing plans for Zoe’s birthday party.

It was certain to be quite a celebration with Julius, Macey and the kids as well as Silas, Ava and their brood in attendance to say nothing of Nicolas and Aubrey with their little one also. And all of them would be joining them on the farm. Sarah had already arranged to borrow folding tables and chairs from the local community center and they had already finalized the menu. Nicolas and Aubrey would pick up a special birthday cake. Even his great-grandmother was going to be in attendance.

But most important to Lucas was his special surprise for Zoe. He couldn’t wait to see her face when she saw his present. Lucas could only hope Sarah would forgive him for not consulting with her first but he wanted to keep it a surprise.

“...Luke, is that really you?”

“Yeah, how have you been...dad?”

Sarah smiled at his hesitant inquiry. She practically had to twist his arm to get him to make this phone call. In fact she had to dial the number before handing him his phone.

“...Good. I...I must admit I was certain this phone call would never come despite what your grandmother said.”

“Grandma? What did she say?”

“Right after Lidia was born she took me aside and told me to disappear.”

“I know. She paid you ten million to leave.”

“She did. She did that because she loved you and your sister and she didn’t want there to be any confusion about where you came from. I want you to know that...she had the best of intentions,” his father hesitated. “But that day she promised that when she felt you were ready she would tell you about me...tell you the truth.”

“...I see.”

“You haven’t had an easy time these last few years, have you son?”

“You know?”

“I’ve been keeping up with you and your sister in the gossip columns.”

Lucas felt his face warm, “Yeah, I haven’t really been showing my best.”

“But you are doing better. I saw pictures of you out with...your wife and daughter. You looked like you had a good day at the beach.”

Lucas fought a smile as the memories came back to him, “Yeah, they are the best thing that ever happened to me...I was just too stupid to see it at first.”

He stared at Sarah and saw her flush with embarrassment. She looked away. Reaching for her hand he kissed it and stared at the still empty ring finger. It had been almost two months since her return. They were finally on good terms and he was terrified of messing it up but also desperate to get back what they once had. Nicolas promised to bring him more than just the cake. He just hoped he wasn’t making a huge mistake.

“Well...you probably inherited that from me. We both tend to learn our lessons the hard way.”

“...Yeah,” Lucas sighed glancing at Sarah who nodded and silently urged him on. “...Look, this may seem sudden but, ah, it’s Zoe’s birthday in a couple of weeks and we were wondering...if maybe you’d like to come and celebrate and meet her.”

“...I’d like that.”

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Lucas paused in his pacing. They had talked a bit more before his father had to go promising to call them back once he discussed it all with his family. Lucas had waited on pins and needles the next day waiting for his father's return phone call. It was the worst wait he ever endured with the possible exception of hearing the verdict handed down to Lidia after her trial.

Most of the evidence against her was circumstantial. James had already been convicted so any of his testimony would have been subject to scrutiny no matter what deal they might have made with him so Tracy and Tailor had tried a different angle. They were never able to find the server who had delivered the dosed glass Lidia had given to Sarah. Either the person wasn't afraid to live with a guilty conscience or they weren't one of the hotel's actual staff. In either case, Lidia wasn't talking.

She seemed to have an excuse for every inquiry Tracy asked her. Why did she call James minutes after an altercation with Sarah? Why did she meet him at a bar the night before the party? Why did she enter the DaLair's party through the kitchen?

The list went on but the question that finally made her stumble was about a series of text messages she had sent to James. The last one of which asked him why he hadn't sent her pictures she planned to make public. It was immediately clear Lidia hadn't expected that question.

From there they slowly chipped away at her excuses and alibis. They had mountains of text messages from her and her mother sent to Sarah over two years as well as a video of their altercation in the dress shop proving Lidia had ample motive. Her lawyer tried desperately to give her character witnesses but he could only rely on Madeline and Patricia as no one else seemed willing to join them.

Lucas was on the edge of his seat the entire trial. When Lidia was found guilty of conspiracy he practically leapt to his feet and cheered. He paid absolutely no mind to his sister or mother as he scooped up Sarah and held her close surprised to find her trembling. Whether from anger, frustration or simply relief Sarah couldn't seem to stop shaking. She clung to him, burying her face in his shoulder and quietly sobbed.

"I hope you're happy," his mother came up to them as he tried to calm Sarah. "You just sent your own flesh and blood to jail! Do you have any idea what will happen to poor Lidia in a place like that?"

"She was warned," Lucas glared at his mother. "I told her to stay away from Sarah. If she was too stupid to take that warning seriously she deserves whatever she gets."

"Is that anyway to speak about your own flesh and blood like that?" Patricia asked aghast.

"My own flesh and blood is waiting for me at home with her puppy," Lucas replied. "In fact, she's waiting for both of us. Sarah?"

She seemed slightly more collected as she met his concerned gaze.

“Let’s go home. Zoe’s waiting.”

She managed a smile.

“How dare you choose that woman’s spawn over...”

“Over yours?” Lucas finished causing her to stutter. “I want you to know...Zoe will never even know your name. Never show your face to me again.”

With an arm around Sarah he led her out of the courtroom not even sparing a glance at Madeline. Sarah managed to calm herself before they reached home but Zoe still seemed to know something had happened. The little one clung to her mother all night until bedtime. In fact Sarah fell asleep in bed with Zoe. Lucas was tempted to let her sleep there if not for the fact the toddler’s bed was too small to allow her to sleep comfortably.

Reluctantly he picked Sarah up and carried her to bed. She clung to him all night in much the same way she had the first night after the attack. It worried him but though her night was restless she didn’t seem to have any nightmares. Now that the trials were finally over they returned to Brattleboro for some much needed relaxation. Luckily Zoe’s birthday was right around the corner and made for the perfect distraction.

And now here he was waiting for a father he had never known.

“Luke?”

Lucas suddenly jerked to attention and spun around. In front of him was a man a lot younger than he expected. Steve Davis stood the same height as Lucas with the same curling hair. In fact it was like looking in a mirror so much so he could be mistaken as Lucas’s older brother rather than father.

“Surprised?” Steve asked.

Lucas tried to find words but didn’t know where to begin.

“Yeah...your mother had a thing for younger men,” Steve said. “I was eighteen.”

“Oh.” Lucas couldn’t manage more than that. Suddenly a lot of things made sense. Why his biological father was so willing to take the money without a fight, why his grandmother made the deal, why his father had been so devastated to find out about his mother’s infidelity...

“Yeah. Disappointed?”

“No. It just suddenly makes a lot of sense.”

“So...just you?” Steve glanced around but saw no sign of the blonde or the child from the magazine pictures.

“Yeah...ah, they were setting up for the party and Sarah...thought we could use some time alone to talk. It’s a three and a half hour drive so...plenty of time to talk. Do you need to grab your luggage?”

“Right here,” Steve patted the single suit case in his hand.

With a nod they headed out to the sedan waiting in short-term parking. The drive up had been unbearably long and now Lucas wasn’t sure if the drive back would be too long or too short.

“So,” Steve sighed after they got on the road, “tell me about...ah...”

“Sarah.”

“Yes. Sarah. You two were married, right?”

“Yeah, grandma arranged it. I was just too stupid to realize the gift she was handing me.”

“She didn’t tell you how or why?”

“No. Grandma doesn’t tell anyone anything unless they ask the right questions,” Lucas said. “I just...never even thought to ask.”

“But you’re together now?”

“Sort of...”

“Sort of?”

“We’re good now. I mean, we’re working through things.”

“You seem nervous.”

“Well, let’s just say Zoe isn’t the only one I got a surprise gift for. I just don’t know what Sarah is going to say.”

Steve slowly smiled. There was only one surprise that would make a man so nervous to present. It was a shame he didn’t have more of his own life experience to share with his son but at the very least he could be there for support. It was certainly going to be an interesting party.

Fin Until The Billionaire Executive's Miracle Baby