EXCLUSIVE

BONUS Epilogue

FOR

The Billionaire's Secret Son

SOME SECRETS CHANGE EVERYTHING.
SOME BONDS LAST FOREVER.

ALISON REID

Exclusive Bonus Epilogue

The Billionaire's Secret Son

by Alison Reid

Six Years Later…

Sunlight streamed through the wide windows of the De Luca home, spilling across the long dining table, now transformed into a battlefield of wrapping paper, ribbons, and half-opened gifts.

"Open this one!" a small voice called excitedly from the other room.

Laughter followed immediately.

Gabriella smiled as she listened to the sound of their daughter, Sophia, racing through the hallway, her light footsteps echoing across the polished timber floor.

Six years old and already bursting with energy. Just like her father.

Rafael stood beside the table, watching Dominic examine the latest gift from one of his friends.

His birthday party had only just ended. His friends had gone home full of cake, laughter, and sugar, leaving behind a mountain of presents waiting to be opened.

Dominic—now twelve—turned a small box over in his hands before finally tearing away the wrapping paper.

"Nice," he said with an approving nod when he saw what was inside.

Gabriella laughed softly. "Your standards are getting higher every year."

Dominic flashed her a grin. "Well, I am twelve now."

“An old man,” Rafael said dryly.

Dominic rolled his eyes. “Mum, can you tell Dad he’s not funny?”

“I’m hilarious,” Rafael replied.

Sophia burst into the room at that moment, skidding slightly on the wooden floor.

“Mama! Dominic forgot his cake candles!”

Dominic groaned. “I didn’t forget. I was pacing myself.”

Gabriella laughed again. “I’ll get them.”

She turned toward the kitchen, but Rafael caught her hand as she passed him.

She paused. “What?”

Rafael looked down at her with the same expression that still made her heart flip after all these years. “You’re smiling.”

“It’s Dominic’s birthday,” she said.

“I know.”

His voice softened. “You look happy.”

Gabriella glanced toward the living room where Sophia’s laughter was echoing again.

Dominic was already arguing with Sophia about where the candles were supposed to go.

Then she looked back at Rafael. “I am.”

Rafael pulled her gently toward him. “Good.”

Before she could respond, he kissed her. Warm. Familiar. Still capable of making her forget the entire world for a moment. Gabriella laughed softly against his mouth as she wrapped her arms around him.

Footsteps suddenly stopped in the doorway.

“Ugh.”

Both of them turned.

Dominic stood there with his arms folded. "Mum. Dad."

His expression was deeply offended. "Stop kissing."

Gabriella raised an eyebrow. "Why?"

"Because it's gross."

Rafael looked completely unbothered. "It's called affection."

"It's called embarrassing," Dominic corrected.

From the hallway Sophia shouted loudly, "Are you two kissing again?"

Dominic groaned. "See?! Even Sophia knows!"

Gabriella laughed. Rafael just kissed her again—briefly this time.

Dominic covered his eyes dramatically. "Seriously! I'm traumatised!"

Gabriella shook her head, still smiling. "You'll survive."

Dominic pointed toward the kitchen. "Can we just eat cake before you two start doing that again?"

Rafael slipped an arm around Gabriella's waist. "No promises."

Dominic made a dramatic gagging noise. As he wandered back toward the dining table, Gabriella leaned gently into Rafael. The house was full of life. Full of the family they'd fought so hard to rebuild. Rafael kissed the top of her head. Gabriella stepped back just enough to look up at him.

"You know," she said quietly, "I still can't believe we have all this."

Rafael smiled.

"Neither can I."

She glanced around the room. Bright birthday balloons floated lazily near the ceiling. Wrapping paper covered almost every available surface, evidence of an afternoon filled with friends, family, laughter, and just enough chaos to make it memorable. The rich aroma of fresh coffee mingled with the scent of a half-eaten chocolate cake on the kitchen bench.

Home.

"This," she whispered. "All of it."

Rafael followed her gaze. Dominic was pretending not to help his little sister assemble an impossibly complicated toy, quietly correcting each of her mistakes as she happily chattered away, completely convinced she was doing it all herself. She looked up at her brother with absolute admiration. Dominic caught Gabriella watching.

"What?"

Gabriella smiled.

"You know she's going to copy everything you do for the next ten years."

He let out an exaggerated sigh.

"I know."

Sophia beamed.

"I want to be just like Dom."

Dominic tried to sound annoyed.

"Good luck with that."

But Gabriella didn't miss the smile he failed to hide. Rafael leaned closer.

"He's a good big brother."

"The best."

Gabriella watched as Dominic gently untangled a ribbon from his sister's hair without a single complaint.

"He doesn't even realise he's doing it."

Rafael shook his head.

"No."

"He just... looks after her."

A quiet smile spread across Rafael's face.

"I wonder where he learned that."

Gabriella looked at him knowingly.

"I can think of one example."

Before Rafael could answer, a loud crash echoed from the living room. Both parents turned instantly. Silence. Then—

"...We're okay!" Sophia called.

Dominic's voice followed a second later.

"Mostly!"

Gabriella sighed.

"I'm almost afraid to ask."

Rafael squeezed her hand.

"Let's enjoy these three seconds of peace before we investigate."

They didn't make it.

"Mama!" came the inevitable shout.

Gabriella laughed.

"There it is."

They found the culprit almost immediately. A tower of carefully stacked presents had collapsed after Sophia decided they would make "an excellent castle." She stood in the middle of the disaster looking entirely unapologetic.

"It fell."

Dominic pinched the bridge of his nose.

"You climbed it."

"I was testing it."

"You tested gravity."

"It won."

Gabriella bit her lip, trying not to laugh. Rafael wasn't even trying. He burst into laughter. Sophia looked pleased with herself.

"I made Daddy laugh."

“You certainly did,” Rafael agreed.

Dominic shook his head.

“I live with children.”

“You are a child,” Gabriella reminded him.

“I’m twelve.”

Rafael nodded thoughtfully.

“Practically retired.”

“Dad...”

“What?”

“You keep getting less funny.”

“And yet,” Rafael said, “your mother still laughs.”

Gabriella shrugged innocently.

“I married him.”

“So, you’re biased.”

“Very.”

Sophia suddenly tugged on Rafael’s sleeve.

“Daddy?”

“Yes, principessa?”

“When I’m twelve...”

“Mmm?”

“...will you still kiss Mama all the time?”

Dominic groaned before Rafael could answer.

“Please don’t encourage them.”

Rafael looked at his daughter with complete seriousness.

“I certainly hope so.”

“Why?”

“Because I love your mama, and I promised to love her forever.”

Gabriella's smile softened. Sophia considered that for a moment.

"Forever?"

Rafael looked at Gabriella.

"Forever."

She reached for his hand without thinking. His fingers intertwined with hers automatically. Some habits, she'd discovered, became permanent. The best ones did.

"Cake!" Sophia suddenly announced, abandoning the conversation entirely.

Gabriella laughed. "More cake?"

"There's no such thing as too much cake," Dominic declared.

Rafael leaned close enough that only Gabriella could hear.

"I think we've been dismissed."

"We usually are."

He kissed her temple.

"Happy birthday to our boy."

Gabriella watched Dominic laughing with his sister as they argued over who deserved the biggest slice.

"It's hard to believe he's twelve."

Rafael smiled.

"I still remember the first time I saw him in your office."

"So do I."

"He looked so much like me... it terrified me."

"He still looks like you."

Rafael watched his son drape an arm around his little sister as they disappeared toward the dining room.

"Yes," he said quietly. "He does."

Then he turned back to Gabriella.

"Thank you."

She looked up at him.

"For what?"

"For giving me the chance to have this. For forgiving me. For choosing to believe in me again. For letting me prove that our family is the most important thing in my life."

Tears shimmered in Gabriella's eyes as she smiled.

"Thank you for staying."

Rafael slipped an arm around her waist.

"We did okay."

Gabriella rested her head against his shoulder.

"We did better than okay."

The years had given them more than either of them had ever dared hope for. Trust rebuilt one quiet day at a time. A love that had survived its darkest season. Two beautiful children who knew exactly what love looked like because they'd grown up watching it every day. The house echoed with laughter. With teasing. With arguments over cake, candles, and presents. The ordinary chaos of a family.

Once, Gabriella had believed she'd lost all of it.

Once, Rafael had walked away from the life they were always meant to have.

Now, there was nowhere else either of them wanted to be.

Rafael kissed the top of her head once more. She smiled, leaning into him as their children called impatiently from the dining room.

"Are you coming or what?"

Gabriella laughed.

"We're coming."

Rafael looked down at her, his eyes still carrying the same quiet certainty they had all those years ago when he had chosen her all over again.

"I love you."

She smiled.

"I know."

Hand in hand, they walked toward the noise, the laughter, and the beautiful chaos waiting for them. Toward the family they had fought so hard to keep.

And this time, neither of them ever had to wonder if he would stay.

— The End —

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