

Cotton Candy

by Michaela Buzsaki Struchova



“Cotton candy, Radcliffe? Really?”

“Huh...? What do you mean, Joe?”

“How much cotton candy did you have to eat to throw up in Sleeping Beauty’s castle?”

“Way more than it would take you with your chocolate cheese nuggets in a room full of reporters.”

“Ha-ha, very funny.”

“I wasn’t trying to be.”\

“Sure. I see that naughty sparkle that you have in your eyes every time you’re messing with me.”

“Sorry, Joe.”

“You’re so not, Cathy, but you’re forgiven.”

“Thanks.”

“So... Is Vincent still up for that chess game tonight?”

“Of course, he is. He took Jake and Charlie swimming in the Mirror Pool for the afternoon, but I bet he can’t wait to beat the life out of you across the board again.”

“You’re doing it again, Radcliffe.”

“Messing with you? It would never even cross my mind.”

“Of course, it wouldn’t... Well, he said I’m getting better with every game.”

“Vincent’s always been very... diplomatic.”

“Is *that* supposed to lift my confidence?”

“You don’t need any lifting, Joe. You’re the most confident man I’ve ever met.”

“Was that a compliment?”

“Would I ever lie to you?”

“Let me think... I’m trying to count all the times you hid something important from me.”

“That was not lying. That was... withholding important information to protect Vincent and the Tunnels.”

“All right, point taken. But I bet there were other times you went behind my back despite my orders.”

“Well... I admit I’ve always liked a good challenge.”

“A challenge, right? Okay, Radcliffe. I’m challenging you to a game of chess right now, in this cosy and spacious kitchen of your new, lovely family home. We’ll see who’s the loser here. It’s Saturday, and we have the whole afternoon to have fun with it. And stop smirking!”

“OK, calm down, Joe... It’s a deal. But there’s something I need first before we start, to get me into the mood properly.”

“Can I be of any help? Shall I get any snacks? Fruit gushers? Dorritos?... Chocolate cheese nuggets? ”

“Urgh! Wipe that smirk off your face, Maxwell. Well... There is a new stand in Central Park about ten minutes away from our house.”

“Yes...?”

“Could you be so kind, saving me the time while I set up the board and put the kettle on for another round of coffee for us, and...”

“Yes...?”

“Bring me some cotton candy, please?”

END