



The Nanny Plan (Billionaires and Babies)

By Sarah M. Anderson



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Trish's goal is to help Nate in exchange for a big donation to her charity for Lakota kids. Falling for her bachelor boss—and his adorable baby girl—is not part of the plan. But when the month is up, will she be able to walk away?



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The Nanny Plan (Billionaires and Babies) By Sarah M. Anderson Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #299190 in eBooks
- Published on: 2015-04-01
- Released on: 2015-04-01
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Sarah M. Anderson won RT Reviewer's Choice 2012 Desire of the Year for *A Man of Privilege*. *The Nanny Plan* was a 2016 RITA® Finalist. Find out more about Sarah's love of cowboys at www.sarahmanderson.com

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The auditorium was filling up, which was exactly what Trish wanted. Maybe four hundred people had crowded into the lower level and, in addition to the journalists from the college paper, some reporters from the San Francisco television stations were in attendance. Excellent. A good crowd would leverage some social pressure on her target. No billionaire would risk looking heartless by saying no to a charity in front of a big crowd.

Trish had been sitting in her spot—end of the third row, to the left of the podium on the stage—for over an hour. She'd gotten here early enough that no one had seen her smuggle in the check. She wished she could afford a cell phone—then she could at least play with that until the talk started instead of being the only person in the room who wasn't connected.

She was as ready as she was ever going to be. She just had to wait for her moment. Timing an ambush of one of the wealthiest men on the planet required precision.

Trish had planned everything down to her shirt—a great find at Goodwill. It was a distressed blue T-shirt with a vintage-looking Wonder Woman logo emblazoned over her breasts. It was a half size too small, but she had on her black velvet suit jacket, so it looked fine. Polished, with a geeky air.

Exactly like her target, Nate Longmire.

People continued to filter in for another thirty minutes. Everyone was here to see Longmire, the newest billionaire to come out of Silicon Valley's wealth generators. Trish had done her homework. Longmire was twenty-eight, which didn't exactly make him the "Boy Billionaire" that the press made him out to be. As far as Trish could tell, there wasn't anything particularly boyish about him.

He was six foot two, broadly built and according to her internet searches, single. But the plan wasn't to hit on him. The plan was to make him feel like she was a kindred soul in all things nerd—and all things compassionate. The plan was to box him into a corner he could only donate himself out of.

Finally, the lights in the auditorium dimmed and the president of the Student Activities Board came out in a remarkably tight skirt. Trish snorted.

"Welcome to the Speaker Symposium at San Francisco State University. I am your host, Jennifer McElwain..."

Trish tuned the woman out as Jennifer went on about SFSU's "long and proud" history of social programming, other "distinguished guests," blah-blah. Instead of listening, Trish scanned the crowd. Over half of the mostly female crowd looked like they were hoping for a wild ride in a limo to happen within an hour.

The sight of so many young, beautiful women made Trish feel uneasy. This was not her world, this college full of young, beautiful people who could casually hook up and hang out without worrying about an unexpected pregnancy, much less how to feed that baby. Trish's world was one of abject poverty, of neverending babies that no one planned for and, therefore, no one cared for. No one except her.

Not for the first time, she felt like an interloper. Even though she was in her final year of getting a master's degree in social work—even though she'd been on this campus for five years—she still knew this wasn't her world.

Suck it up, she thought to herself as she counted the number of television cameras rolling. Five. The event was getting great press.

She was a woman with a large check and a secondhand Wonder Woman T-shirt waiting to ambush one of the richest men on the planet. That was her, Trish Hunter, in a nutshell.

"...And so," Jennifer went on, "we are thrilled to have the creator of SnAppShot, Mr. Nate Longmire, here with us tonight to discuss social responsibility and the Giving Pledge!"

The crowd erupted into something that wasn't quite a cheer but came damn close to a catcall as the Boy Billionaire himself walked on stage.

The audience surged to their feet and Trish surged with them. Longmire walked right past her. She had an excellent view of him.

Oh. Oh, wow. It's not like she didn't know what Nate Longmire looked like. She'd read up on his public persona—including that ridiculous article naming him one of the Top Ten Bachelors of Silicon Valley, complete with a photo spread.

But none of the pictures—not a single one of them—did the man justice. Attraction spiked through her as she studied him. In person, the tall frame and the broad shoulders weren't just eye-catching, they moved with a rippled grace that left her feeling flushed. He had on hipster jeans and Fluevog boots, but he'd paired them with a white tailored shirt with French cuffs and a purple sweater. A striped purple tie was expertly tied around his neck. He wore a scruffy beard and thick horn-rimmed glasses. They were the nerdiest things about him.

Longmire turned his face to the crowd and Trish swore she saw him blush as the thunderous noise continued. He did not preen. If anything, he looked almost uncomfortable. Like he didn't quite fit in up there.

"Thank you," he said when the noise did not let up. "Please," he asked, a note of desperation in his voice, motioning for everyone to sit down. That, at least, worked. "There we go. Good evening, San Francisco State University!"

More applause. Trish swore he winced. He sat on a stool in the middle of the stage, gestured and the lights went down. A single spotlight fell on him. Behind him, a screen lowered to the ground and a slideshow began.

"Technology," he started as the screen flashed images of attractive people on tablets and smartphones, "has an enormous transformative power. Instant communication has the power to topple governments and reshape societies at a rate of speed that our forefathers—Steve Jobs and Bill Gates—only dreamed of." The audience

laughed at this joke. Longmire gave them a tight smile.

Trish studied him as he spoke. He'd obviously memorized his remarks—not surprising, given that the press had reported his IQ at 145—just above the threshold for a true genius. But when the audience responded in any way, he seemed to draw back, as if he didn't know what to do when he went off script. Excellent. That was exactly the sort of speaker who wouldn't know how to tap-dance out of a blatant donation request.

"And you are on the cusp of this technological revolution. You have that power at your fingertips, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week." Longmire paused to take a drink from a water bottle and clear his throat. Trish had the distinct impression that he was forcing himself through this. *Interesting*, she thought.

"The problem then becomes one of inequality," Longmire went on. "How can you communicate with the rest of humanity if they don't have those things?" Images of tribal Africans, destitute southern Asians, aboriginals from Australia and—holy crap, had he actually found a picture of... Trish studied the photo hard before it clicked past. No, that hadn't been her reservation out in South Dakota, but it might have been the Rosebud lands.

Well. Yay for him acknowledging the state of the Native American reservations in a five-second picture, even if the montage did irritate her. All the people of color had been relegated to the poor section of the talk.

"We have a responsibility to use that power—that wealth," he went on, "for the betterment of our fellow humans on this planet."

Longmire talked for another forty-five minutes, calling for the audience members to look beyond their own screens and be conscious consumers of technology. "Be engaged," he told them. "A rising tide lifts all boats. Solar-powered laptops can lift children out of poverty. Make sure the next Big Thing won't be lost to poverty and disease. It all starts with *you*." This time, when he smiled at the crowd, it was far more confident—and far more practiced. "Don't let me down."

The screen behind him shifted to the official Longmire Foundation photo with the Twitter handle and website. The crowd erupted into applause, giving him a six-minute standing ovation while Longmire half sat on his stool, drinking his water and looking like he'd rather be anywhere but here.

The emcee came back out on stage and thanked Longmire for his "absolutely brilliant" talk before she motioned to where the microphones had been set up in the aisles. "Mr. Longmire has agreed to take questions," Jennifer gushed.

Timing was everything. Trish didn't want to go first, but she didn't want to wait until the reporters started to pack up. She needed a lull that was just long enough for her to haul out her check and get to the microphone before anyone could stop her.

About ten students lined up in either aisle. Some questions were about how Longmire had started his company in his dorm room and how a regular student could come up with a billion-dollar idea.

"What's something that people need?" Longmire replied. "I wanted a way to take my digital photos with me. Adapting a simple idea that would make it easier to share photos with my parents—and make it easy for my parents to share those photos with other people—led me to adapting the SnAppShot app to every device, every platform available. It was ten years of hard work. Don't believe what the press says. There are no overnight successes in this business. See a need and fill it."

When he was replying, Trish noted, he had a different style. Maybe it was because he was really only talking to one person? But his words flowed more easily and he spoke with more conviction. The power in his words filled the auditorium. She could listen to that voice all night—he was *mesmerizing*.

This was a problem. Trish rubbed her hands on her jeans, trying to steady her nerves. Okay, so he spoke quite well off the cuff—which he demonstrated when a few people asked antagonistic questions.

Instead of acting trapped, Longmire's face would break into a sly smile—one completely different from the cautious movement of lips he'd used during his prepared remarks. Then he would dissect the question at an astonishing rate and completely undercut the argument, all without getting off the stool.

Ah, yes. This was his other reputation, the businessman who, much like his technological forefathers, would occasionally sue people for fun and profit. Nate Longmire had amassed the reputation of a man who never gave up and never surrendered in the courtroom. He'd completely bankrupted his former college friend, the one he'd started SnAppShot with.

Trish caught herself fidgeting with her earrings. Okay, yes—there was always the chance that her little stunt wouldn't go over well. But she was determined to give it a shot. The only people who lost were the ones who never tried.

Finally, there was only one person in line on her side and Longmire was listening intently to a question from the other aisle. Trish looked back and didn't see anyone else coming forward. This was it. She edged her check out from behind her seat and then stood in line, less than two feet away from the check. She could grab it and hoist it up in seconds. This would work. It had to.

The person in front of her asked some frivolous question about how Longmire felt about his status as a sex symbol. Even as Trish rolled her eyes, Longmire shot beet red. The question had unsettled him. Perfect.

"We have time for one more question," Jennifer announced after the nervous laughter had settled. "Yes? Step forward and say your name, please."

Trish bent over and grabbed her check. It was comically huge—a four-feet long by two-feet tall piece of cardboard. "Mr. Longmire," she said, holding the check in front of her like a shield. "My name is Trish Hunter and I'm the founder of One Child, One World, a charity that gets school supplies in the hands of underprivileged children on American Indian reservations."

Longmire leaned forward, his dark eyes fastened on hers. The world seemed to—well, it didn't fall away, not like it did in stories. But the hum of the audience and the bright lights seemed to fade into the background as Longmire focused all of his attention on her and said, "An admirable cause. Go on, Ms. Hunter. What is your question?"

Trish swallowed nervously. "I recently had the privilege of being named one of *Glamour's* Top Ten College Women in honor of the work I'm doing." She paused to heft her check over her head. "The recognition came with a ten-thousand dollar reward, which I have pledged to One Child, One World in its entirety. You've spoken eloquently about how technology can change lives. Will you match this award and donate ten thousand dollars to help children get school supplies?"

The silence that crashed over the auditorium was deafening. All Trish could hear was the pounding of blood in her ears. She'd done it. She'd done *exactly* what she'd set out to do—cause a scene and hopefully trap one

of the richest men in the world into parting with just a little of his hard-earned money.

"Thank you, Ms. Hunter," the emcee said sharply. "But Mr. Longmire has a process by which people can apply for—"

"Wait," Longmire cut her off. "It's true, the Longmire Foundation does have an application process. However," he said, his gaze never leaving Trish's face. Heat flushed her body. "One must admire a direct approach. Ms. Hunter, perhaps we can discuss your charity's needs after this event is over?"

Trish almost didn't hear the *Oohs* that came from the rest of the crowd over the rush of blood in her ears. That wasn't a *no*. It wasn't a *yes*, either—it was a very good side step around giving a hard answer one way or the other. But it wasn't a *no* and that was all that mattered. She could still press her case and maybe, just maybe, get enough funding to buy every single kid on her reservation a backpack full of school supplies before school started in five months.

Plus, she'd get to see if Nate was as good-looking up close as he was at a distance. Not that it mattered. Of course it didn't. "I would be honored," she said into the microphone and even she didn't miss the way her voice shook, just a little.

"Bring your check," he said with a grin that came real close to being wicked. "I'm not sure I've ever seen one that large before."

Laughter rolled through the auditorium as Longmire grinned at her. Behind his glasses, one eyebrow lifted in challenge and then he pointedly looked offstage. The message was clear. Would she meet him backstage?

The emcee was thanking Longmire for his time and everyone was applauding and the rest of the evening was clearly over. Trish managed to snag her small purse—a Coach knockoff—and fight against the rising tide of college kids who had not been invited backstage for a private meeting with the Boy Billionaire. With her small purse and her large check, Trish managed to get up the steps at the side of the stage and duck behind the curtains.

The emcee stood there, glaring at her. "That was some stunt you pulled," she said in a vicious whisper.

"Thanks!" Trish responded brightly. No doubt, Jennifer had had grand plans for her own post-interview "meeting" with Longmire and Trish had usurped that quite nicely.

"Ah, Ms. Hunter. Hello." Suddenly, Nate Longmire was standing before her. Trish was a good five-nine—taller in her boots—but she still had to lean her head up to meet his gaze. "Excellent," he went on, looking down at her as if he was thrilled to see her. "You have the large check. Jennifer, would you take our picture?"

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