



Chapter 67

When Adrian discovered his stepmother was plotting to humiliate Riley, he knew he had to come clean about Riley's recent divorce. He could always try to prevent Tonet from telling his father, but Adrian knew the truth would eventually come out. Thus, he had requested the wedding planner to give him and Riley a chance to share their story.

"How did our couple meet? Was it love at first sight?" The host asked. "Let's give the floor to our engaged couple, Mister Adrian King and Miss Riley Allen."

They were settled at the frontmost table. Riley's nervousness was noticeable. So, Adrian leaned closer and whispered, "It's going to be okay, Riley. They will understand."

The couple moved to the center of the ballroom. Adrian, in his wheelchair, stood beside Riley while she shared how they first met. She smiled and said, "I met Adrian seven years ago in marketing class. He -"

Riley flushed. She shrugged and revealed, "He challenged me."

She told the story about how they ended up doing their marketing presentation solo, and the crowd before them laughed.

Mrs. Ventura remarked, "And that's how a good woman catches a good man!"

Applause echoed, and when the hoots died down, Riley said, "I'm not really sure if that was how I got Adrian's attention. I think it was because he stole a kiss from me, and he was smitten."

Their guests were cracking up at what Riley revealed and wanted to know more. Eventually, Riley told them about how she fell off the jetty for a



stupid box of chocolate and how Adrian saved her. She said, "He gave me CPR. That was the kiss."

Riley skipped the part about how she never knew Adrian had saved her. Instead, she went on, saying, "We became friends, but sadly, nothing bloomed from there because Adrian met an accident."

Adrian took his turn and said his side of the story. He claimed, "No, it wasn't the CPR. It was simply Riley, everything about her, her wit, her stubbornness, and the little things that she was willing to die for, like a box of chocolate."

Yet again, everyone laughed, but there was also a mix of awe. Some guests had heart-shaped eyes, and Adrian knew he had sent his message clear.

"Riley stole this, but she didn't know it." Adrian tapped on his chest, the same part where his heart was. "I had an accident and was gone for a year. When I returned, she was already in a relationship."

"The thing about thieves is they don't return what they stole," Adrian said. His voice was very calm, but his words were entertaining. Their visitors were cracking up again at the way Adrian described it.

"I did not know that the great Adrian King had a sense of humor," Engineer Philips teased. 

Adrian gave Engineer Philips a death glare. He defended, "I wasn't joking. It's the truth about thieves."

Riley laughed so hard that she clutched her stomach. She announced, "I'm just as surprised as everyone else. Actually, Adrian surprises me every day that we are together."



Adrian grabbed Riley's hand and kissed her knuckles. Then, he restarted, "Anyway, life went on for both of us. I was recovering from an accident while Riley was in love with another man."

"Here comes the sad part. Four years ago, Riley got married," Adrian finally said.

Silence fell upon the ballroom.

From the corner of Adrian's eyes, he caught his father gasping in shock. He surveyed the venue, ensuring he got everyone's attention.

After what felt like two seconds of dead air, he resumed, "Riley still did not return what she stole."

Giggles cracked through the silence, and then Adrian continued, "Fast-forward to a few months ago; I learned that Riley and her husband were having marital problems. She got a divorce, and I saw that opportunity to take her back."

"She was mine from the start," Adrian claimed. "If I had not gone to Sweden and had not met an accident, I would have pursued her."

Riley took over and shared, "When we met again, I learned how Adrian had always liked me."

"Things moved on quickly because, let's face it, she had never returned the thing she stole from me," Adrian added.

Everyone was amused again. Adrian gave their guests time to settle down before he said, "We are sharing our story because there will always be people who will add lies to the truth."

"We want you all to be the witnesses of our love," Riley said with a smile.



"Adrian and I were given the second chance. We have lost many years, so we are not wasting time. We are getting married tomorrow!"

"What a beautiful love story!" Zia said while getting up. She was in tears while clapping her hands. "You both are meant to be!"

"I second that," Clint echoed.

"I'm happy you found each other," Renee said. Like Adrian, she was in a wheelchair. Riley and Adrian brought her out of the hospital so she could join the celebration.

Adrian knew his father would not oppose him publicly because the people around them had nothing but comforting words and praises. And these guests were not ordinary people. If the Venturas, the Bianchis, and the mayor of Dowel City would adore Riley, Adrian saw no reason for his father to resist. Of course, it helped a lot that Tonet and Fredrick were not present to ruin the gathering.

"Congratulations, Riley and Adrian, for finding your way back to each other after all these years," Abner said with a smile. "Seeing my grandson settle down brings me so much joy."

"What a beautiful love story indeed," the host genuinely expressed. "I propose a toast to our engaged couple. Food attendants, bring in the champagne!"

The doors to the ballroom opened, and attendees served expensive champagne. When all the adults had a glass in their hand, the host exclaimed, "To Riley and Adrian!"

The celebration continued with dinner, entertainment, picture taking,



and many chats. At eight in the evening, the guests slowly said their goodbyes.

Clint approached Adrian and reported, "Tonet and Fredrick had left the mansion."

Adrian nodded and instructed, "Bring in our special guests."

"Yes, Sir," Clint replied.

At eight-thirty in the evening, Tonet came in just as Adrian anticipated.

The man laughed inside, seeing the shocked look on Tonet and Fredricks' faces. For whatever drama they had intended to create, they no longer had an audience. Instead, Adrian turned the tables around.

He threatened Tonet's friend, and Adrian knew Mrs. Lucy Smith would never show her face again. However, Tonet still dared to tell Anthony about Riley's divorce. She said, "I just found out that Riley is a divorcee, and it has not been long."

"I - I already know," Anthony answered.

"What?" Tonet questioned. "What do you mean?"

"Adrian and Riley told everyone earlier. If you had not been late, you would have heard," Anthony sternly said.

"But, aren't you mad?" Tonet asked.

Adrian narrowed his eyes at his father, waiting for his reply. He hoped, but he was also prepared for the worst. To his amazement, Anthony said, "Adrian chose Riley for a reason. I now know why, and I -"

Anthony glanced at Adrian before directing his gaze back to Tonet and Fredrick. He resumed, "I think his reasons are justifiable."

"What?!" Fredrick and Tonet said at the same time.

 **Lilhyz** Author

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 37



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