

Married at First Sight [On-Going]

Chapter 4541

Everyone stared at Romina in silence.

Her voice trembled. “Grandpa, why won’t you say anything?”

Was it possible she really *had* done something to River?

But all she remembered was throwing a drink at him and kicking him. There was no way she kissed him, let alone enough to cover his face and neck with lipstick.

River finally spoke up. “Romina, you were drunk last night. Maddox was about to take you home, but when you left the Lacroix estate, you suddenly blocked my path. I was on my way to say goodbye to Mr. Lacroix. You stopped me, called me handsome, grabbed me, touched my face, threw yourself at me, and kissed me. I couldn’t even fight off your... claws.”

Romina’s face turned pale.

“What? That was *me*? No way! I wasn’t drunk—I can hold my liquor better than most men! Sure, I drank a lot last night, but I wasn’t drunk. River, stop making things up! You must’ve messed around somewhere else and now you’re blaming me. Don’t even try it!”

She turned to her family. “Grandpa, Mom, Dad—you have to believe me. I didn’t do those things! He’s just trying to get back at me for what I did last night. I spilled a drink on him—he’s just being petty, showing up now to humiliate me in front of all of you. He and I don’t even get along! Why would I ever throw myself at him? If you don’t believe me, we can check the security footage at the Lacroix estate. That’ll prove whether he’s lying.”

River chuckled. “Romina, your grandpa already watched the footage. He was at the Lacroix house earlier this morning. When I got here, your brother called him. He reviewed the cameras himself—everything I said checks out. That’s why he rushed back home, to confront you about it.

“Oh, and Maddox can confirm it too. You ditched him, blocked my way, and threw yourself at me right in front of him. He didn’t take you home—I did. I even called your brother to come open the door. He saw me, saw the lipstick all over me. He’s a witness.”

River paused, his tone turning pointed. “You called me your husband in public the other day and misled everyone into thinking we were together. Then last night you molested me, kissed me repeatedly, and tried to *strip me*. You kept saying you wanted to see my... well, let’s just say I had to hold onto my pants for dear life. You were so aggressive, I couldn’t fight you off. If you hadn’t passed out, I might not have gotten out of there in one piece.”

Romina was stunned.

No. It couldn’t be true.

She wasn’t drunk—she *couldn’t* have been. She had a high alcohol tolerance. She could drink like a fish and never lose control. Looking at the lipstick all over River, though, her stomach turned.

Did she really say she wanted to see his...? Oh god.

Her mother had told Maddox to keep an eye on her. She’d brushed it off, insisting she could handle her drinks.

Now this.

She looked up sharply at River. “You didn’t knock me out, did you? I don’t believe for a second that a grown man like you couldn’t stop a woman like me.”

Chapter 4542

Romina was still convinced River had done it on purpose.

River fired back, “You think you’re a weak woman? When you’re drunk, you’re a beast. If you don’t believe me, go call Maddox. He saw the whole thing—watched you come after me without lifting a finger.”

Romina had no response.

She turned to her family, searching their faces for some sign of support.

“Romina...” Donovan sighed. “River’s telling the truth. He brought you home last night, just like this. Maddox called me, I questioned him, and he confirmed it—you went after River.”

Romina squeezed her eyes shut.

She wanted to crawl under a rock and never come out.

Why did she have to drink so much last night? And if she *had* to get drunk, why couldn't she have just let Maddox take her home? Why did she go after *River*?

Now, she was in so deep even the Yellow River couldn't wash her clean.

Several minutes passed before she finally opened her eyes, stared at River, and asked, "What do you want?"

Serenity cleared her throat and stepped in. "Romina, River has always kept himself clean—no scandals, a good reputation. Last night, you crossed a line. Everyone knows. You ruined his name. So we came here today with a little gift, something we put together quickly. River says it's a betrothal gift. You took advantage of him, so now he wants you to take responsibility.

"Don't worry—this is just symbolic. If the marriage is agreed upon, I'll call home and have our family send over a proper bride price. The York family won't treat you unfairly. Whatever is owed to you, you'll get—maybe even more than other daughters-in-law."

Romina gasped. "Sister Seren! I was drunk—I wasn't thinking straight. I can clarify things to the public, issue a public apology, and I'll pay for any emotional damages. Whatever amount, as long as it's reasonable, I'll pay. But marry River? No way! We're not even dating. There's no love between us. How can you expect us to marry?"

Mrs. Lafond chimed in, "Miss Hunt, Mr. York, Romina was clearly in the wrong. We're willing to apologize and offer compensation. But a marriage between two people with no feelings? That's not right. A forced marriage won't end well—it'll only lead to resentment. That's not good for anyone."

Mr. Lafond nodded in agreement.

But Old Mr. Lafond remained silent, his eyes shifting between his granddaughter and River.

River was clearly being petty, but there was something more to this. Could it be that after years of bickering, River had actually fallen for Romina?

Then he looked back at Romina—clearly at a disadvantage now. She'd put herself in this situation.

They'd warned her repeatedly not to drink. She didn't listen.

She knew River would be there at the party but still drank like she had something to prove.

Even someone with high tolerance could end up drunk.

So Old Mr. Lafond decided to hold back for now—he'd let the two young ones sort this out themselves.

Chapter 4543

Serenity knew coming here to propose marriage wouldn't lead to anything today.

River knew it too—he was doing it on purpose. And of course, Serenity could see that River did have some feelings for Romina.

After all the tension and friction between them, maybe River really did want to marry her.

Serenity looked at her brother-in-law, forced a smile, and said, "Mr. Lafond, Mrs. Lafond, I know it's a bit sudden to show up today with a marriage proposal, but Romina really has damaged River's reputation. This isn't something that can just be settled with a little compensation for emotional distress. River has stayed chaste for years, and now, Romina's actions have tainted that. If he wants to date someone in the future, people will talk."

"He's thirty-one and still single. The elders in our family are anxious about his love life. I came to Eaglioncile this time mainly for tourism, yes—but I also came with a mission from the family: help River find a good woman."

"He works here in Eaglioncile. It's not practical for him to fly back to Wiltspoon just for blind dates. Even if he met someone, it'd end up a long-distance relationship and likely fall apart. So the family's intention is for River to date locally and settle down here."

"But after what happened last night? If that gets out, who would even consider going on a date with him? I've even drafted a marriage profile for River and was planning to submit it to major dating agencies here in Eaglioncile."

She stopped there.

River quietly praised his sister-in-law in his heart.

The Lafayette family exchanged glances.

They thought Serenity was just being diplomatic, but none of them could argue with her.

It was true—River was thirty-one, had no girlfriend, and had never been linked to any scandals. He was a serious workaholic. The only woman he ever clashed with publicly was Romina—his long-time rival.

Now, all eyes turned to Romina.

The Lafayettes didn't dislike River, even though his company, Yantail, was a rival to the Lafayette Group and he'd clashed with Romina for years. Maybe it was because he was just too competent—and too attractive.

Instead of disliking River, they actually respected him.

They had no objection to River becoming a son-in-law. Of course, they were open-minded and would support whatever choice Romina made. Her happiness was their priority.

Romina was clearly in the wrong here. It was up to her how to fix things and clean up the mess.

Under the pressure of everyone's eyes, Romina slowly calmed down. She said to Serenity and River, "Sister Seren, River... I was wrong last night. I shouldn't have taken advantage of him, but I was drunk and not thinking straight. I don't hold my liquor well. When I drink, I have a bad habit—I flirt with attractive guys. I know it's wrong, and I take full responsibility."

"I'm willing to make amends. But there's no love between River and me. If I married him just to take responsibility, I wouldn't be happy—and that would be unfair to both of us. It'd ruin our lives."

"I'll make sure no word of last night gets out. No matter how much it costs, I'll silence anyone who saw what happened. I'll protect River's reputation."

"I'll compensate him for the emotional toll, and if I still owe him a meal, I'll double it next time. And if he's open to dating, I'll help him find someone. I promise I'll only introduce the best."

Serenity replied, "In our York family, when it comes to marriage, we care about character and family background."

Chapter 4544

Romina quickly said, "Sister Seren, don't worry. I would never introduce River to someone with a bad background or character. I take my role as matchmaker seriously. We're all living in Eaglioncile now—we'll see each other all the time. I wouldn't dare mess this up."

"There are plenty of amazing women in the Lafayette Group—smart, kind, from good families. If River's willing, I could line up ten dates in a single day."

"With so many great women around, I'm sure we can find him someone perfect."

Serenity gave River a look, signaling him to speak.

River thought for a moment, then said to Romina, "You were drunk last night and not in your right mind. As long as you keep things under wraps and make sure no word of it spreads, that's step one."

"Then, you treat me to a meal and set up two blind dates for me every day. Since we're both swamped with work, let's not let it interfere. Set up one date at lunch and one at dinner—so I can eat and date at the same time."

"You'll be the matchmaker and the chaperone. You'll cover the cost of each meal. Don't worry—I won't order expensive food just to drain your wallet. Standard meals—two or three dishes and a soup—will be fine."

"One month. That's the deal. You help me find a girlfriend and treat me to meals for a month. If I don't find someone by then, we'll call it even, and I won't bring up what happened again."

Romina agreed instantly.

A month of dinners and matchmaking was far better than having to marry him.

The Lafayette family all turned their eyes to Romina again.

Grandpa Lafond looked like he wanted to say something but held back. He glanced at River twice, then stayed quiet.

Mrs. Lafond had a strange feeling, like her daughter had just walked into a trap. But she couldn't quite put her finger on what was wrong.

River's compensation plan sounded completely reasonable.

"There's one more thing," River suddenly added.

Romina, who had just relaxed, tensed up again. "What now?" she asked, wary. "Don't tell me you're backing out."

"You poured a glass of wine on me and ruined my suit jacket. You owe me ten new suits."

Romina let out a long breath and agreed immediately. "Fine. Ten new suits."

But in her mind, she grumbled about how petty River was becoming.

She'd only splashed wine on him because he made her so mad.

River was getting more and more vindictive. Next time she saw him, she'd need to keep her emotions in check—she couldn't afford to let him get the better of her again.

"Words aren't enough," River said calmly. "Let's put this all in writing—two copies, signed by both of us. That way no one can go back on it."

Romina choked on her own breath but still agreed.

She personally wrote up the agreement based on River's terms. After he reviewed and approved it, River printed two copies.

Chapter 4545

Romina asked, “River, do you have any more questions?”

River took another look at the two agreements and replied, “No more.”

“Then let’s sign them. Starting tomorrow, I’ll arrange two blind dates for you every day for a month,” Romina said. “And don’t worry about what happened last night. I’ll make sure it stays quiet and doesn’t ruin our reputations.”

Romina had no intention of letting last night’s incident leak.

Because if River’s reputation went down, hers would go down with it.

She had no idea how many people saw her flirting with River last night.

“Okay,” River replied calmly. “I trust you.”

So, under the watchful eyes of the Lafayette family, they signed the agreement and pressed their fingerprints on it.

Each kept a copy.

After reviewing the document one more time, River folded it neatly and stood up. He looked at Grandpa Lafond and the others, apologetic. “Grandpa, Uncle, Auntie, I know I was a bit abrupt today.”

Everyone except Old Mr. Lafond stood to see him off.

Mrs. Lafond said, “We’re just glad it’s resolved. You don’t need to apologize—it was Romina’s mistake, unintentional as it was.”

River looked at Romina and said, “If it had been intentional, I wouldn’t have let it slide.”

Then, turning back to the others, he added, “These small gifts are just an apology for dropping in and disturbing you. Please accept them.”

The “bride price” he brought on short notice was modest and symbolic—nothing extravagant.

Mrs. Lafond and the others tried to return the gifts, but after some polite back-and-forth, they agreed to keep half and return half.

After River and Serenity left, Romina plopped down on the sofa, grabbed a fruit plate from the coffee table, and started munching on some fruit.

“I’m starving,” she mumbled as she ate. “River, that jerk—I was drunk, not crazy. And he actually came here to propose, like I’m the one who owes him something.”

Her whole family stared at her.

Romina stuck out her tongue playfully. “Okay, okay—I know I messed up. Stop glaring at me. I swear I’ll never get drunk again.”

“Mom’s to blame anyway. She jinxed me. She told me to drink less before I even left the house. And look what happened.”

Mrs. Lafond tapped her daughter’s head. “You didn’t listen, and now you’re blaming me? I warned you. I even told Maddox. But you ignored us, drank too much, and made a fool of yourself. Don’t you know what you’re like when you’re drunk? Maddox was right there—if you wanted to flirt with someone, why not him? Isn’t he handsome enough?”

Romina chewed a piece of fruit and muttered, “Maddox is good-looking, but River’s just a bit more... striking. Maybe I gave up on Maddox the second I saw River.”

Mrs. Lafond tapped her head again.

Donovan chimed in, “Honestly, River enabled it. Maddox was supposed to take Romina home since he was her date for the night. Everyone assumed our families were moving toward marriage.”

“But River stepped in, claiming he didn’t trust Maddox to get her home safely, so he took over instead.”

Romina paused. “Wait... so I molested him and he gave me the opportunity on purpose?”

That explained why River was the one who took her home.