

Married at First Sight [On-Going]

Chapter 4581

Donovan looked at River, clearly waiting for an answer.

River took a sip of his coffee, set the cup down, met Donovan's eyes, and said, "I didn't realize I had feelings for Romina at first. But that night at the business gala, when I saw her show up with Maddox, something just snapped. I felt really upset—jealous even. I wanted to punch Maddox and separate the two of them."

"That's when I knew things had changed. It wasn't just rivalry anymore. After all the years of clashing, something deeper had taken root. So yes, Brother, since you're asking—I do like Romina. A lot."

Donovan let out a long breath, as if finally relieved.

So, River was serious. He wasn't just playing games with his sister.

Donovan had noticed that River was becoming more gentle with Romina lately. His tone, his looks—everything about him had softened.

"Then if you like her so much," Donovan asked, "why are you still asking her to set you up on blind dates?"

River smiled. "If I didn't, would she even have dinner with me? It's just a blind date. I show up, but there's no real commitment. Not all blind dates end in marriage."

"But aren't you worried some of those women might cling to you?" Donovan asked. "It could mess things up between you and Romina."

River didn't answer right away. Instead, he asked, "Brother, you seem genuinely happy about the idea of Romina and me being together."

Donovan nodded. "You're a good man. After watching you all these years, I know you're loyal. You've never had a scandal, and you've always politely rejected the women who pursued you. You've never misled anyone. That tells me you were raised right—and that you're a real gentleman."

He added, "Yeah, you and Romina clash. You're blunt with each other, but that's because you're rivals. No one is nice to their competition—it's understandable. Romina can be fiery too, and just as rude to you. So it balances out."

"In business, you're opponents. But as a man, you're someone I believe my sister can trust with her life."

River smiled. "Thank you for your trust, Brother."

He was truly grateful that Donovan saw him as a good match for Romina.

Donovan shook his head. "Don't thank me. I'm just her older brother. Romina makes her own decisions. Not even our grandfather can force her into a marriage. If she doesn't like you, there's nothing I can do."

River answered with confidence. "I believe I can win her over."

Donovan took a slow sip of his coffee and then said, "It won't be easy. Unless you're ready to make some serious sacrifices, your relationship won't move forward."

"What kind of sacrifices?" River asked. "As long as Romina can accept me and stop fighting with me, I'll love her like any devoted partner. I'll do whatever it takes."

"Really?" Donovan raised an eyebrow. "You're the second-largest shareholder of Yantail. You've helped build it into what it is today. But Yantail is in direct competition with Lafond Group. Have you considered that if you and Romina are together, you may not trust each other? Or she may not trust you?"

"Think about it," he continued. "Will you both feel secure enough to fall asleep next to each other at night, or will you be scared the other might steal company secrets in their sleep?"

River fell silent.

Chapter 4582

River hadn't thought about that at all.

Seeing his reaction, Donovan let out a quiet sigh. As expected.

Romina had already considered this angle. She was always the cautious one.

After a while, River asked, "Are you saying I should leave Yantail? Or... let the Lafond Group acquire it?"

Donovan shook his head. "That's for you to figure out. I won't make that decision for you. I get it—men value their careers. You worked hard to build Yantail from the ground up after coming to Eaglioncile. It wouldn't be right for me to ask you to throw all that away for Romina."

"But," he continued, "there might be a middle ground. What if Yantail shifted into a different industry? As long as you're not in the same field as Lafond, there's no conflict, no competition. No reason for suspicion."

“River, we all respect you. You’re incredibly capable. Even if Yantail changed direction, I’m sure you’d still succeed.”

Donovan glanced out the window. “Lafond is a massive group. We’re involved in multiple industries already. It’s not easy for us to change course quickly. But we’re trying. The current industry landscape is getting more difficult by the day.”

While Lafond Group was diversified, some sectors were more difficult to pivot out of. But Donovan didn’t mention that to River.

River, on the other hand, didn’t say what he was really thinking either. Lafond’s diversification made it easier to shift out of one industry without destabilizing the whole company. But Yantail was just starting to branch into new markets. It wasn’t stable yet.

Still, if Yantail’s new sectors started showing real profits, River would be ready to lead a full transition.

He knew Donovan was testing him—to see how much he was willing to give up for Romina.

River replied, “I’ll think it over carefully. But no matter what happens, my feelings for Romina won’t change.”

The men of the York family were known for their loyalty. When they gave their heart to someone, it was for life.

If Romina refused to be with him in the end, River would remain single forever.

He had plenty of nieces and nephews. There was no pressure to marry or have kids of his own. And even in old age, he’d never be left behind.

The York family would never let their beloved Uncle River go hungry.

Donovan gave a thoughtful hum. “There’s no rush. Think it through. This is your future we’re talking about—your whole life.”

He understood that asking someone to give up their career was a huge ask. And he also knew River wouldn’t be able to decide immediately.

Part of him regretted that River had to be Yantail’s boss of all people.

After finishing his coffee, Donovan checked the time and said, “I’ve got a lunch meeting, so I’ll head out. The coffee’s on me.”

“Thanks for the treat, Brother.” River stood to see him off.

Romina still hadn’t arrived. It wasn’t quite noon yet.

Knowing her, she wouldn't rush. She'd wait until work officially ended, maybe even take her time.

With traffic, she probably wouldn't get to the hotel until around one in the afternoon.

Chapter 4583

Still, River sent Romina a message: *What time are you arriving?*

Romina replied that she'd be there around 12:30. She had already booked a private room and ordered the food. When he and his blind date arrived, they could eat right away—no need to go hungry.

She also told him there was no need to rush. But if he was eager, he could go ahead and wait in the private room she had prepared.

As the Lafond family's eldest daughter, and since Eaglioncile Hotel belonged to the Lafonds, it was normal for Romina to reserve a room and order food in advance. She was a regular there.

Sometimes she ate at home, but more often she came here.

River texted back, *Got it.*

After putting his phone down, he didn't head straight to the private room. Instead, he took his time finishing his coffee.

His mind was full of thoughts—especially about how to shift his relationship with Romina, his longtime rival.

Could he really give up Yantail?

The answer was no.

He had built Yantail from scratch—revived it from the brink—using none of the York family's influence. It was his own achievement, proof of his ability and resilience.

He had poured heart and soul into Yantail. Giving it up was out of the question.

Now, with the company branching out into other sectors, the results were just a month or two away. Soon, he'd know if those efforts would pay off.

Still feeling a bit conflicted, River picked up his phone and called his eldest brother, Zachary.

Whenever the younger York brothers hit a crossroads, they naturally turned to Zachary. He was the pillar—the one they could always count on for solid advice.

Zachary picked up quickly. “What’s going on, River? Did something happen to your sister-in-law? I just saw her post a video in the family group of the kids playing.”

Zachary’s first concern was always his wife and kids. If it wasn’t about them, he rarely panicked.

River smiled and reassured him, “Sister-in-law’s fine. She took the kids out with the bodyguards and nannies. You know she knows martial arts too—she can handle herself. Like you said, she just posted in the group.”

Zachary exhaled. “Alright, then why are you calling?”

“Are you free right now, Brother?”

“Not really—I’m on my way to meet a client for lunch. I’ve got about ten minutes. Make it quick.”

River got to the point. “Big Brother, I like someone.”

“I know,” Zachary said instantly. “Your sister-in-law saw it the moment she got to Eaglioncile. You’ve fallen for your enemy. Grandma’s always laughing that it’s a perfect ‘love-hate’ drama. She wishes she could see it unfold in person.”

River chuckled. Grandma just loved a good story.

“I just talked to my future brother-in-law—Romina’s eldest brother,” River continued. “He brought up what my relationship with Romina might look like down the line. He said our companies are direct competitors, and unless one of us gives something up, there’s no real future. What do you think?”

He sighed. “Yantail was a dying company when I took it over. I rebuilt it from the ground up—working nonstop, day and night. It means a lot to me. It’s not just a business. It’s my life’s work. I built it without relying on the York name. How could I let that go?”