

A Shotgun Marriage Chapter 2

Chapter 2

Tia froze for a good while, having trouble believing what she had just heard. At that, she tugged her lips and immediately left after paying the bill while a wave of helplessness surged within her. At that moment, she was starting to regret finding matches online. After the fiasco known as Vincent, Tia immediately unregistered her account on the website and went to a legit matchmaking agency, continuing her search for the man who would be willing to register their marriage the day after their first meeting. That day, Tia hurriedly sorted out her unfinished tasks before it was time to clock off. She had another blind date tonight, and she would have to go home first. According to her grandmother, she had to do a quick change of clothes and put on some makeup at the very least. She had met up with eight men this week, and she was even beginning to consider doubling her dates next week if this one was still a no-go. All her colleagues said she was getting obsessed, stopping at nothing to get herself married off. There was no reason for a woman to obsessively marry herself off like this, was there? However, only she knew she'd be running out of time if she still couldn't find the man willing to register their marriage the day following their first meeting. Meanwhile, Lydia Zeller, who sat next to Tia in the office, got up from her seat with her bag when she saw that the woman was getting off work. "I'm going home too. Let's leave together." Tia nodded at that, and the two then headed out of the office. When they got to the building's exit, Lydia, who usually didn't talk much, turned to Tia. "It's not hard to find a guy who's willing to marry you the next day, but it's doubtful he'll spend the rest of his life with you after that." Tia looked at her in response, knowing what she was trying to say. "Lydia." "I don't know why you're so eager to marry yourself off." Lydia sighed under her breath. "However, this is a lifetime decision, so you shouldn't be so hasty. A man who is willing to marry you the next day might give you marriage, but he can't give you love." Tia only smiled lightly in response. There was a hint of bitterness as she mumbled inwardly, I've never wanted love. At that, Lydia couldn't help pointing out, "Tia, I'm sure you know Mr. Garrett likes—" She immediately interrupted Lydia at that, knowing what the woman was going to say next. "Lydia, Mr. Garrett and I are just employer and employee. Other than that, we're just schoolmates. That's all there is." Lydia said nothing more after hearing that, sighing under her breath as she shook her head. When Tia arrived home, Elizabeth, her grandmother, was still sewing several red drawstring pouches. She would make sure to sew a thousand of them every day since sewing one would earn her fifty cents. "Grandma, don't sew these anymore. Your vision isn't good," Tia said with a hint of frustration as she put her handbag on the couch. If anything, they weren't strapped for cash. Elizabeth used to be a high school teacher, and after retiring, she was still able to get around three thousand each month from her pension. Besides, Tia was already a working adult, and the two didn't have high living expenses. However, Elizabeth pushed her reading glasses and said, "It's fine. I've got nothing to do at home anyway, so why not sew one or two?" As she spoke, she put the needle down to check her watch. Then, she looked up at Tia and urged, "Hurry up and sort yourself out, Tia. Our neighbor, Mrs. Gray, said the fellow has agreed to meet you at the cafe at 7.00PM." "Alright, I got it." Tia nodded and headed into her room with her handbag. After chucking her bag on the bed, Tia lay down lifelessly and stared at the ceiling for a long time before she pulled herself together and rummaged through her closet. When Tia got to Island Cafe, her date had already arrived, and he was sitting upright at the table, seemingly in deep thought. With that, Tia knocked on the table twice to bring his attention back to reality. The man looked up in response, allowing her to get a good glimpse of his face. Beneath his thick brows were a pair of fathomless eyes, and despite having a rather thin profile, his masculinity couldn't be ignored. Judging on looks itself, he was an excellent man. "Miss Carter?" the man asked when he saw Tia, who nodded in response while moving her gaze away. Following that, she put her bag aside and sat across from him, asking, "Are you Lewis Harvey?" The man nodded, affirming her guess. "Have you had dinner yet?" he asked, looking at Tia. "I did. Coffee will do, please." After her blind date experience with Vincent, she dared not order anything else. Though she wasn't a fan of coffee, finishing a cup of it was relatively easier than a large mug of milk tea. Lewis nodded in response and asked no more, pressing the call bell. However, apart from coffee, he also ordered a simple snack platter. The workers in this cafe were efficient, for they served Tia's coffee and the snack platter in no time. With that, she put some sugar in her coffee and took a sip. After putting the cup down, she looked at the man before her eyes and asked, "Is there anything you'd like to ask?" This man was unlike the others she had met on her previous dates—he was too quiet. "Ladies first," Lewis said plainly as he looked at her. "Why don't you go first? My request is rather unusual." Frankly speaking, she didn't mind who went first. It was just that her request was so unusual that it was pretty much a dealbreaker for most people, and it was also the reason she still couldn't find a match after meeting eight guys this week. "It's fine. My situation is rather unusual too," Lewis answered again. Tia popped the question at that, no longer insisting that he ask. "Do you mind registering our marriage tomorrow?" That was her only request—she wanted to find a man and marry him within the shortest time. She could overlook his looks, job, and even family. She only wanted a marriage, and that was it. She didn't trust this thing called love. If she had the chance, she didn't even want to marry, for she had watched her own mother stab her father to death with a kitchen knife. Following that, her mother ended her own life right in front of her, leaving her to watch her parents lying bloodily on the floor. Ever since then, she didn't believe in love. The only reason she decided to marry herself off was because of her grandmother. She knew well how Elizabeth wished to see her marry off and have kids of her own. Her grandmother was the only relative she had left, so even if she didn't want to, she would still do it to make Elizabeth happy. That was why she ended up in this situation, going on blind dates and asking every date if they could accept marrying her the following day. She only wanted a marriage, and she couldn't care less about love or relationships. Lewis, on the other hand, stared at her for quite a while before he finally answered, "That is indeed an unusual request." Tia quirked her lips in response, then took another sip of her coffee while waiting for his next words, guessing if he would agree or reject her request. She guessed he would reject the idea as well, for anyone with a straight mind would do so. It was another long while before Lewis spoke again. "I'm a divorcee, but I have no kids. Also, my job takes up a lot of my time; I won't be able to come home frequently." Tia looked up at him in response, surprised by his words. Throughout the eight blind dates she had been on, there were a couple who had divorced too, but this was her first time encountering one with such a... how should she put it? At that, she asked tentatively, "Well, what are you trying to say?"