

MARITAL BLISS

by

Lori B. Crawford

Email: loribethcrawford@yahoo.com

Twitter: [@loribcrawford](https://twitter.com/loribcrawford)

Instagram: [@loribethcrawford](https://www.instagram.com/loribethcrawford)

INT. CHURCH - FOYER - DAY

A hand, well manicured except for the one torn, bloody, pinky nail, pounds on a door marked "Bridal Chamber."

The hand is replaced with a head half full of rollers belonging to IVA LEVY (28) when she leans in to listen.

IVA

Madeleine! Unlock the door. The wedding is about to start.

Loud sobs answer her from behind the thick wood.

Iva huffs and turns around to lean her back against the door. She wears only a white corset, white panties and white thigh high stockings on her buxom frame.

She turns and kicks the door in a fit of temper.

IVA (CONT'D)

Maddie! You open this door right now! Do you hear me?

Something thumps against the door from the other side.

MADELEINE (O.S.)

I can't go out there. Not looking like this.

PRESTON (O.S.)

What's going on back here? Everyone's waiting.

Iva spins to see PRESTON SAUNDERS (32), the definition of gorgeous hunk, as he slips out of the sanctuary.

Iva tries to cover herself with her hands. Realizes the futility of the gesture and gives up.

IVA

How determined are you to get married today? Try it again tomorrow?

Iva gives him a hopeful shrug.

PRESTON

You can't be serious. There are over five hundred people out there waiting.

His statement kicks off a fresh round of sobs from Madeleine.

PRESTON (CONT'D)

What's the deal?

IVA

Her dress makes her look fat.
'Cause she managed to gain so much
weight in the twelve hours since
she last tried it on.

PRESTON

That's ridiculous. She's what? A
size zero?

He pounds on the door.

PRESTON (CONT'D)

Madeleine? Open the door.

IVA

'Cause that worked so well when I
tried it.

He looks at Iva and shrugs.

PRESTON

So we just leave her in there.

Iva gives him a surprised look. She can't. Can she?

IVA

I can't go out there looking like
this. I'm in my underwear.

Preston slowly peruses her body and gives her a wicked grin.

PRESTON

I dunno. You look darn good to me.
Besides, why get all gussied up
when I'm just gonna ungussy you
later.

He steps closer, invading her space. Tips her chin back with
a finger. Iva stares at him. She's head over heels with this
guy.

She shakes her head, coming to her senses.

IVA

I don't put on the dress, you don't
get to take it off.

He steps closer, pressing her into the door.

PRESTON

There's nothing I can say to persuade you otherwise?

Iva looks really tempted. She takes a shaky breath and pushes him away.

Preston kisses her forehead then sighs and backs off. He pulls a lock picking kit from his tuxedo pocket.

Iva raises and eyebrow.

IVA

I thought we agreed to leave work at home.

PRESTON

You want the dress, right?

Good point.

He makes short work of opening the door.

PRESTON (CONT'D)

Where?

Iva points him in the right direction. Preston yanks open the door and ducks inside. She pulls the final rollers from her hair while she waits.

Madeleine's sobs stop for a surprised moment, then start up even louder.

MADELEINE (O.S.)

You have to talk to Iva. I can't go out there looking like a blimp. Iva... she pulls it off. I can't.

Iva deflates at the comment. She slouches against the wall and fights tears.

Preston reappears with Iva's bridal gown and shoes.

He takes one look at Iva's sad face and plants toe curling kiss on her lips. When they part, he gives her a tender smile. Brushes a stray curl off her forehead.

PRESTON

I love you.

Iva smiles tentatively. He unfastens the gown's top hook. Frowns at all the buttons down the back.

PRESTON (CONT'D)

How do you get in this thing?

IVA

Good thing I'm not superstitious.

She balances with his shoulders and steps in the gown. He slides it up and refastens a couple of the buttons.

IVA (CONT'D)

That can't be all of them.

He checks the long row of tiny pearls running down her back.

PRESTON

All of these? There's gotta be two hundred buttons here.

IVA

Two hundred and fifty three.

PRESTON

What if I just hook strategic ones?
Easy in, easy out.

IVA

Yeah. It's the easy out I'm worried about in front of everyone we know. Besides, it won't fit right.

Preston sighs and kneels behind her. Fastens each one.

PRESTON

I hope you're not too attached to these buttons. I see a knife in their not so distant future.