

'The Bachelor' Season 15, Episode 9: A South Africa Safari Ride



By Krissy Dolor

After last week's intense hometown dates, Brad Womack and the final three bachelorettes (Chantal O., Emily and Ashley H.) find themselves in South Africa, a first in the show's history. The producers of ABC's *The Bachelor* chose Sabi Sands, a gorgeous reserve, to set the perfect backdrop for this week's episode. Let's take a look back at what happened last night:

Brad's first date was a safari ride with Chantal, complete with a safari hat (see above). The day's highlight (besides seeing the lions, wildebeests and hippos, oh my!), was watching Brad and Chantal analyze each species they passed, including the giraffe, which, according to Chantal, is "gorgeous, in a weird way." At their picnic, Brad asked, "Who

does this?" What, go on safari rides through the African bush? Well, Brad, you do – and we are all immensely jealous of your life.

While everyone knows that Brad and Chantal are the most open with each other, Chantal said she wanted to prove how much she's in love with him, even though she makes her feelings clear every week. Perhaps a trip to the fantasy suite will do the trick! The two pushed aside their dinner and hurried to their room – which was actually an open air tree house. Chantal compared the fantasy suite to being in Vegas: "What happens in the fantasy suite, stays in the fantasy suite." Well, then. We'll just have to use our imaginations.

Date number two was with Emily, who rushed over to Brad (and he to her) like they haven't seen each other in years. "I've been counting the seconds," Brad said dramatically. But oops – he forgot something. What could it be? If you guessed an elephant, you'd be correct, as Brad returned to Emily on top of one. For the next five minutes, we got to hear Emily's two catch phrases: "Oh my goodness gracious," and "Oh, dear Lord." I mean, *really* – is she not the cutest thing? "This is like *The Lion King*, but better," she said. We agree. At lunch, Emily asked Brad if he was ready for a five-year-old. He said he is, and added that he loves that she is a packaged deal. This leads to a classic Brad-Emily kiss, fully backed by the ridiculous, sweeping love music ABC chooses to play each time they make out.

At dinner, Brad was a nervous wreck, as Emily always turns him into a stuttering ball of mush. What was interesting about this date was that Emily told the cameras beforehand that she is in love with Brad, but was scared to tell him. "I have only said I love you to one person in my life," she said. Though Emily accepted the fantasy suite card with a bit of hesitation, she opened up inside their suite and told him her feelings, which stunned Brad – in a good way, of course.

But someone's date had to go badly, and this week, it was Ashley's. The Madawaska, Maine native, after seeing the helicopter for her date, ran away screaming. She came back, of course, but it set the tone for the rest of their day. During their picnic, Brad asked Ashley where she wanted to live after she was done with school, and she said she'd want to move to southern Maine to be closer with her sister. While it seemed like an innocent enough question, we all know Brad is looking for someone who wants to share a future with him. Later at dinner, he told Ashley that in their conversations they have never meshed their futures together – which concerned Brad. “Not once did you mention Austin,” he said.

Ashley immediately put up her defenses, and said, “I feel like you're just looking for a wife.” Insert collective gasp here. “I'm not looking for a perfect person,” he said. “I'm just looking for a situation perfect for two people.” Silence followed, as Brad did his awkward eye dart thing, while Ashley's eyes teared and she picked at her food. Hoping to salvage what was left of the night, Brad offered her the fantasy suite card, which she accepted. “I just want my Ashley back,” he told the camera. “The one I fell for.”

Regardless, whatever happened that night wasn't enough, as Brad went into his heart-to-heart with Chris Harrison knowing he was going to say goodbye to Ashley. In fact, Brad decided to pull her away before the rose ceremony began so he could tell her how he felt. “I don't know how we have such bad miscommunication,” he said. But Ashley, who sensed what was coming, had already given up. “I feel like we could have had something so good,” she told him. “There's really nothing I can do now.” And with that, Brad said goodbye.

While Brad expected more of a reaction, Ashley (again) put up her defenses: “I'm not going to beg you to change your mind.” In the car, she told the camera, “I wish I could have smiled and been myself...but when you have a heavy heart it's hard to find the strength.” Though Brad knew he made the right

decision, he said, "I always thought Ashley would meet my family; I always thought she would be one of the last two standing." Personally, I don't think Ashley stood a chance. Her guard was up too high throughout the season and they always seemed to be "taking steps back," and "trying to reconnect," with each other. Spark simply wasn't enough to keep these two together.

And then there were two. Brad told Emily and Chantal that he said goodbye to Ashley, but insisted that the rose ceremony take place, as he is first and foremost a gentleman and wanted their permission to continue on to the last week. Afterward, the women find out that yes, they will meet Brad's family – but they are staying in South Africa and going to Cape Town! Looking forward to another week where America's audiences at home can continue to be jealous.

Do you guys think Brad made the right decision? Let's chat in the comments below.