

Ready for Love, Episode 8: Home in Houston



By [Angela Zatopek](#)

This week on *Ready For Love*, Ben came to Houston to finally meet my family! I was missing them like crazy and knew that, by meeting them, he would get a better look at who I was as a person.

Rather than a quiet date, I thought I'd show him another side of me and brought him to a skeet shooting range. I am so sad to see that our date didn't make the edit – it was so fun! You can tell that we were there because when they interviewed me for this episode, I have clear glasses on my head that we had to wear for protective reasons. Just wanted to clear up that I'm not usually sporting those lovely glasses!

My twin brothers also didn't make the cut during the episode, but everyone was there, and the date couldn't have gone better. First, we went skeet shooting, and to spice it up, we decided to make different bets based on who would shoot the targets. We had a blast, and it was a close call, but I think Ben may have beaten me by a few shots. I couldn't totally school him!

After that, we headed to my parents' house where my hilarious stepfather John greeted us at the door. You can clearly see his Italian roots and his dry sense of humor. It's so funny to watch because I had no idea what took place in the study that day until now. Even though he comes off harsh, it definitely was his way of having fun with the process and being protective of me. It is a big step for me to introduce someone to my family in that way, and it definitely created a stronger bond between us.

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My parents actually got Ben a few Texas-themed gifts that day to welcome him. One that I loved was a Texas Longhorn polo since my family are all Texas alums. Although Ben went to Penn, my mom said he was officially inaugurated into the "burnt orange cult" as we jokingly call it. My birthday was coming up, so my mom made my favorite, red velvet cake, to celebrate. The *real* celebration, though, was coming up that next week when I got to spend it with Ben in Dallas.

It was so nice to be out of California and back home in Texas. After having him come to Houston to meet my family, I was nervous but excited to head to Dallas to see what life could be like after *Ready for Love*. At this point in the process, you're so emotionally invested, but you've also come to realize you could be sent home. Being in the final two, I knew that him and Allie also had a strong connection, but I continued to open my heart to him.

Speaking of Allie, as I mentioned in my last blog, the two of us have been close since the first day of production. Now, we were at the end of this process, and ironically, I found myself competing against her. It was such a weird dynamic to be close friends but also have an invisible wall that separated us at the end of the day, knowing one of us would go home eventually. Before we got to the end, we spoke about the scenario and how we would be happy for the other no matter what. It was important to me that we kept things positive.

During that last week, things were so different than the previous weeks. We moved out of the house and into a hotel where we all were completely separated from everyone. Allie had lent me a bag that needed to be returned, so I decided to write her a note and slipped it into the bag before production gave it back to her. At this point, I didn't know if I would see her again.

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I spent a lot of time writing that letter. We had shared all of our past relationship stories with one another, and knowing our love lives were about to change after the finale, I felt that it was the appropriate thing to do. Just like me, she'd been with boyfriends who weren't right for her. I told her if she was the final choice, I was happy she could be with someone like Ben. If I was the one in the end, I wrote for her to promise me to never settle and wait for God's best when it comes to love. I had no idea what to expect for the finale, but woman-to-woman, I genuinely meant what I wrote.

I was thankful for our friendship, and regardless of what happened in the end, I hoped that we could be friends later in life. Knowing that it'd be an awkward situation with us both "dating" the same guy all summer, we understood that we most likely wouldn't talk for a while after the show ended. After I put the note in her bag, I only saw her once more, which was

the night of the finale.

Tune in for next week's finale to see what happens...!