

## TV Show 102

Chapter 102: You Lost Money, but I Lost Love

**\*\*Apartment 520.\*\***

"Raise!"

The scene was familiar. Monica, who had already lost once, still confidently chose to raise—she was always so sure of herself.

"I'll raise by \$500, making it a total of \$1,000!"

"Wow!"

Phoebe gasped. "That's a big bet!"

"Are you sure?"

Chandler chimed in, "You were this confident last time too, and now you owe Adam \$431."

Monica froze for a moment but then saw Adam grinning at her. Her fiery temper flared up instantly. Gritting her teeth, she said, "I'm sure! I refuse to believe I can't win even once. Adam, do you dare to bet?"

"How about we keep it small?"

Adam kindly reminded her, "Anything is possible, you know."

Monica hesitated a little, but then, overhearing Rachel's conversation with her father, she suddenly smiled. With a dramatic wave of her hand, she declared, "A thousand bucks it is!"

**\*\*Meanwhile...\*\***

Rachel was on the phone, explaining to her father.

"Sorry, Dad, I just suddenly realized I don't love him at all."

"Love doesn't matter! The wedding must go on—I spent \$40,000 on it! I won't let you waste my hard-earned money just for some ridiculous so-called love!"

Her father's furious voice could be heard faintly through the phone.

Rachel snapped, "Love is important to me! You only lost \$40,000—you can make that back with a few surgeries! But I lost my love and my future!"

There was silence on the other end. Her father was rendered speechless by his daughter's self-righteous argument.

"Listen, Dad."

Sensing his silence, Rachel panicked a little. After all, she had relied on him her whole life. After running away from her wedding, the first person she wanted approval from was him. So, she quickly scrambled for an explanation.

"It's like... my whole life, everyone has been telling me, 'You're a shoe, you're a shoe, you're a shoe.' But today, I stopped and thought—what if I don't want to be a shoe? What if I want to be a purse? Or a hat?"

On the other end, Rachel's dad finally sighed in relief—he *\*finally\** understood her logic. This, he could grasp. So, he chuckled and said, "If you come back and attend the wedding, I'll buy you all the purses and hats you want!"

"..."

Rachel was dumbfounded. "That's not what I meant, Dad! It was a metaphor!"

"Then what do you want?!"

Now her father was getting annoyed.

"Dad, this is my life—"

Rachel tried desperately to gain his approval, but before she could finish, her father cut her off.

"If you don't listen to me, you'll get nothing. No money. What do you plan to live on the streets?"

"Maybe I can stay with Monica," Rachel mumbled.

"Fine, go live with her. If you don't come back, don't expect a single cent from me!"

Her father's voice was cold.

"Hah! Maybe I don't *\*need\** your money!"

Rachel responded nonchalantly, still expecting things to go as usual—where her father would eventually give in, reassure her that she could still have her allowance, and maybe even buy her gifts.

But instead...

*\*Beep, beep.\**

The call was disconnected.

Rachel immediately panicked and instinctively shouted, "Wait! I said \*maybe\*, Dad!"

She stared at the phone in disbelief, then glanced around at her friends, who were all watching her. Embarrassed, she forced a smile.

"Well... looks like we've found Monica's new roommate," Chandler quipped.

Monica smirked and shot Adam a triumphant look, as if to say, \*See? The wedding's officially off. I'm definitely winning this bet.\*

\*"You think you can outplay me?"\*

Adam chuckled and asked, "Want to raise the stakes again?"

"Fine, I—"

"Monica, what are you doing?!"

Ross, always careful with money, stopped her. "You \*can't\* outbet Adam. He's rich—losing a few hundred bucks means nothing to him. But if you keep raising, can you even afford to lose?"

"What are you guys betting on?"

Rachel asked curiously.

"Uh... nothing," Monica quickly muttered, suddenly at a loss for words. She abandoned the idea of raising the bet and hurriedly changed the subject. "So, Rachel... you're really not going back?"

At the mention of it, Rachel immediately teared up.

"My dad doesn't understand me. And now he's cutting me off. It's *\*so\** unfair!"

"Here," Monica handed her a paper bag. "Breathe, deep breaths."

They say breathing into a paper bag helps regulate breathing and calm emotions. Whether it actually works... well, that depends on the person.

*\*"Raindrops on roses, rabbits and kittens, and little bluebells..."\**

Phoebe's *\*soothing\** singing filled the air.

Rachel instantly stopped crying and rolled her eyes. "You can stop singing. I feel better already."

"Look on the bright side—you're independent now!"

Monica comforted her.

"If you ever need anything, just come to Joey. Chandler and I live right across the hall, and Chandler's hardly ever home~"

Joey teased, casually draping an arm over Rachel's exposed shoulder.

Adam glanced at Ross, expecting him to react, but Ross didn't seem to care. *\*Damn. Respect.\**

"Joey, stop flirting with her," Monica scolded. "Today was supposed to be her wedding day."

"So what?"

Joey shrugged. "Is there a rule that says I can't?"

\*Beep!\*

The apartment intercom buzzed.

Chandler strutted over, pressed the button, and said sarcastically, "Could you \*not\*? It's super annoying."

"I'm Paul."

A male voice came through the speaker.

"Let him in."

Monica immediately let go of Rachel and stood up.

"Paul?"

"Wait... your date is \*that\* bartender Paul?"

"He finally asked you out, huh?"

Everyone started gossiping.

In such a close-knit group of friends, it was nearly impossible to keep secrets.

Adam and the others had all been to Monica's restaurant and had seen Paul the bartender before.

He *\*was\** good-looking—no wonder Monica had been interested.

That's right.

Even when she had a thing for Adam back then, it didn't mean she couldn't appreciate other handsome men.

Men and women were the same—being *\*completely\** devoted was a fairy tale. In reality, everyone just wanted *\*more\**.

"Rachel, do you need me to stay—"

Monica, though excited, still prioritized her friend. Even if this *\*plastic bestie\** hadn't even invited her to the wedding.

"No, I'm fine."

Rachel waved her off with a smile. At least she had some self-awareness.

"Ross, do you need me to stay with you?"

Monica didn't forget about her *\*tragic\** brother either.

"That would be—"

Ross put on a pained expression, making Monica hesitate, but then he suddenly burst into laughter. "—ridiculous! Go! He's *\*Bartender Paul\*!*"

Monica left for her date.

Rachel stayed, officially joining the \*Friends\* group.