

TV Show 156

Chapter 156: Introduction**

Night had fallen.

At the Four Seasons Hotel in New York, the banquet hall had been meticulously arranged for an upscale cocktail party.

Uniformed waitstaff—both male and female, all good-looking—moved gracefully through the crowd, providing impeccable service to the guests.

Men in tailored suits and women in elegant evening gowns gathered in small groups, champagne in hand, engaging in lively conversation.

"Adam, let me introduce you. This is Professor James Mudd from Columbia University's Medical School."

Leonard led Adam to a Black professor and made the introductions. "James, this is Adam Duncan, my good friend, a bestselling author, and a future student at Columbia's medical school."

"Professor Mudd, it's a pleasure to meet you," Adam greeted politely.

"Likewise, Mr. Duncan," James replied with a smile. "I have to say, I'm really curious. Leonard here has such a terrible temper—none of us old guys can stand him. How did someone as young as you manage to become his friend?"

"Damn it!"

Leonard cursed playfully. "I have a bad temper? Who was the one always looking for a fight back in the day?"

"Who, me?"

James feigned confusion. "Wasn't that you?"

"It was me?"

Leonard shot him a threatening look. "Want to test that theory right now?"

"Okay, okay."

James shrugged and turned to Adam. "Leonard and I were classmates in med school. I chose to stay and teach at our alma mater, while he stayed on the front lines in the hospital. Back in the day, we were the 'twin stars' of Columbia Med."

"Oh, give me a break."

Leonard scoffed. "I might have barely qualified as a hero, but you? Please."

Adam watched their friendly banter with amusement, enjoying their dynamic.

It was clear that Leonard and Professor James Mudd had a close relationship.

And it made sense. Whether in the East or the West, the bond between classmates was special—one of the purest forms of friendship.

Back then, before anyone had made a name for themselves, they still carried a touch of idealism. But once they graduated and entered the professional world—climbing the ladder, making money, navigating endless competition—they began to cherish those simpler times even more.

Of course, medical school was unique in its own right. The medical profession was competitive from the very start—it had to be.

Without an unshakable sense of confidence and ambition, how could a doctor handle the responsibility of life and death?

Sometimes, even the slightest hesitation could mean the difference between a patient surviving or dying.

The emotional impact of watching life slip away under your hands required a mental fortitude that few possessed.

That's why top doctors tended to be exceptionally self-assured—bordering on arrogant. They trusted no one but themselves.

This personality trait was naturally selected from the moment they entered medical school. Over time, rigorous training reinforced it, pushing them toward the ultimate mindset: *I'm the best, and the rest of you are just amateurs.*

Of course, skill had to back up the attitude. Otherwise, they weren't *the best*—they were just *fools.*

And in medicine, there was no room for self-deception. One major surgery was all it took to separate the truly talented from the pretenders.

If a doctor believed they were the best, it was because they had the skills to prove it.

The intense competition fostered a distinct culture in medical school. But that didn't mean classmates saw each other as enemies.

Compared to the ruthless competition for top positions across the country—where failure often meant leaving to start over elsewhere—the rivalry between med school peers was almost friendly by comparison.

This kind of realization wasn't obvious to students in their early years. But for someone like Leonard, who had been in the field long enough to hit career roadblocks, those days of competing purely to hone their skills probably felt like a nostalgic fairy tale.

Still, judging by the way Leonard and Professor Mudd interacted, their friendship had been strong since med school. Otherwise, even if old classmates remained somewhat close, they wouldn't share this level of camaraderie.

After all, medical school was highly competitive, but friendships were still based on chemistry. If two people hit it off, their rivalry became more of a friendly challenge than a cutthroat battle.

At the end of the day, New York was a massive city with countless hospitals. Surely there was room for both friends to thrive.

"So, Adam," James turned his attention to him after a bit more playful arguing with Leonard, "you're a bestselling author. What made you decide to go to medical school?"

Adam half-joked, half-serious: "I've always admired the nobility of saving lives. No amount of money can compare to that."

"This isn't just talk," Leonard chimed in. "Adam has had this dream since he was a kid. When he applied for college, he chose Columbia's biology program. He even volunteered at NYU Medical Center. He's already passed the MCAT and is applying to Columbia Med this year. He had all these goals lined up long before he became a bestselling author."

"That's impressive."

James nodded in approval.

"And that's not all," Leonard added. "After becoming a bestselling author, he even spent his own money on medical equipment and practiced surgery through hunting. He's been doing it for three years now. I'd bet anything that he'll be the best student in this year's class."

"Now *that's* remarkable."

James looked at Adam with newfound respect.

Having a childhood dream, setting clear goals, and working toward them step by step—that was admirable, but not unheard of.

Doctors had high incomes and prestigious status; even children understood that. Plenty of people aspired to become doctors, far more than those who dreamed of becoming scientists.

That wasn't anything special.

But to actually **spend** money after making it big—to buy medical equipment and practice surgical skills through hunting? That was **exceptionally** rare.

After all, without financial resources, it wouldn't even be an option.

In this moment, money once again demonstrated its unique power.

James could immediately tell that when Adam spoke of saving lives, he truly meant it.

He wasn't just saying the right words while secretly prioritizing wealth and status.

Even in a country where people openly pursued financial success, true passion still carried weight.

"I wouldn't go so far as to say Adam is the **best** in this year's class," James said thoughtfully, "but he's definitely one of the top candidates."

"Huh?"

Leonard raised an eyebrow. "Are you saying there's someone even better this year?"

He knew James too well. If his old classmate wasn't outright agreeing that Adam was the best, there had to be a reason.

And since James was a professor at Columbia Med and involved in admissions, he had access to far more insider information than Leonard, who worked on the front lines in a hospital.

Clearly, there was something—or someone—he knew that Leonard didn't.