TV Show 168

Chapter 168: The Eighth Pawnshop

520 Apartment

"Hey everyone, are you free tomorrow night?"

Chandler pushed open the door, clapped his hands, and asked.

"You have plans?" Adam asked curiously.

He remembered that Chandler had been busy apologizing to Susie recently, but with little progress.

After all, she had been dealing with a psychological shadow for over twenty years.

Ever since Chandler lifted her skirt in public, she had been stuck with the nickname "Panty Susie," a name that haunted her until she left town at eighteen.

Even today, she almost never returns, afraid that someone might recognize her and call her by that humiliating nickname again.

It's easy to imagine how difficult Chandler's journey of apology had been.

"Our company is throwing a party tomorrow night," Chandler said. "We can bring guests, drinks are free, and there'll be live performances. Wanna come?"

A brief flash of bitterness crossed his eyes, but no one seemed to notice.

"I'm in," Joey was the first to respond.

"Me too!" Phoebe raised her hand enthusiastically. "I love parties!"

"I don't want to go," Monica shook her head.

Even though she had made peace with the breakup after hearing that Richard had cried, she was still feeling down.

"You should go," Chandler encouraged her. "You're the one who needs a party the most right now. Right, everyone?"

"Yeah!"

"Yeah!"

"Let's go together!"

"Together!"

Everyone chimed in.

"Okay, okay," Monica finally gave in.

"Adam, Rachel, Ross—are you all coming?" Chandler asked to confirm.

"Of course," the three agreed without hesitation.

This was the first time Chandler had invited them to his company, and they were all curious to see what an advertising firm was like.

If it had been his old IT job, even after a decade, Monica and the others still wouldn't have been able to remember exactly what Chandler did for a living.

Was it really that hard to understand all those data processing terms?

Maybe for Joey.

But for everyone else? The fact that none of them remembered meant they were never really interested in the first place.

"Alright, it's settled then!" Chandler clapped his hands. "Tomorrow night at 8 PM—be there!"

"Okay!"

Everyone responded in unison.

Chandler reminded them once more before quickly leaving.

As Adam watched him go, he sensed something was off.

Was there something special about this party?

Now he was intrigued.

The Next Evening

Everyone dressed up for the occasion.

Chandler, needing to help with party preparations, had gone ahead early.

Adam drove Monica, Rachel, and Phoebe while Ross and Joey took a cab.

Following Chandler's directions, they arrived at the company.

It was a major advertising agency, and the party was high-class.

Adam and the others showed their invitations and entered.

"Wow! So much food!"

Joey's eyes lit up at the sight of the buffet. Without hesitation, he headed straight for it.

"Where's Chandler?"

Rachel looked around, curious. "I don't see him anywhere."

"He's probably busy," Adam said. "Let's keep an eye on Joey."

Following the group to the buffet table, Adam reminded Joey to have some self-restraint. Then, he casually mixed cocktails for everyone.

"Wow! It's so pretty!"

Phoebe admired the colorful drink in her hand.

"Adam, when did you learn how to make cocktails?" Rachel asked curiously.

"Do you even need to learn?" Adam chuckled. "I just watched and figured it out."

A year ago, while investigating William Haver, he had visited the bar where William worked and observed him making drinks from a distance.

With his high IQ, strong memory, and dexterity, mimicking William's flashy moves was no challenge.

In fact, he could pull off even fancier tricks with ease.

Realizing that cocktail-making was a great skill for impressing women, Adam had paid extra attention, practiced a bit at home, and easily mastered techniques that had taken William years to perfect.

"This is so good!"

Phoebe took a sip and exclaimed, "I've never had a cocktail this delicious before! What's it called?"

Cocktails are mixed drinks made from at least two types of alcohol, juices, sodas, or other beverages. They're known for their vibrant colors and unique flavors.

Like a stew, you can throw in just about anything—it all depends on personal preference.

Many people like to name their custom cocktails, with classics like Margarita, Bloody Mary, Manhattan, and Sex on the Beach standing the test of time.

These well-known drinks have fixed recipes, familiar flavors, and broad appeal.

But most cocktails are simply made up on the spot by bartenders, with varying results. It all comes down to skill.

Adam's cocktail was something new for all of them.

"Wow!"

Rachel took a sip and agreed, "It's really good! Does it have a name?"

"The Eighth Pawnshop," Adam said with a playful smile.

"The Eighth Pawnshop?"

Monica gave him a look. "What kind of weird name is that? Does it mean something?"

"Of course," Adam explained.

"Legend has it that Lucifer established a pawnshop in the Fourth Dimension, luring greedy souls into making deals—collecting human souls in return.

The shop was called The Eighth Pawnshop. It accepts anything, not just souls, but emotions like love, hatred, and desire—just like this cocktail, which can contain anything.

Anyone who makes a deal with The Eighth Pawnshop, even the smallest one, will have a mark of darkness imprinted on their soul. Over time, they'll be drawn deeper into darkness until, ultimately, their entire soul is harvested.

And yet, those who trade with the pawnshop always think they're getting a great deal.

The legend has been passed down for centuries. The Eighth Pawnshop exists in the Fourth Dimension. Once you make a deal, there's no way to undo it."

"Oh my God! This is a devil's drink!"

Phoebe gasped. "No wonder it tastes so good!"

"So, do you still want another?" Adam teased.

"Of course!"

Phoebe downed the rest of her drink and handed him her glass. "I've already made a deal with you—I've fallen into the devil's trap and can't stop now. Another, please!"

"Me too!" Joey chimed in.

Just like that superstitious couple Carolyn met, who were so obsessed with their beliefs that they ended up fooling themselves—true faith was becoming rarer these days.

Even though many people still attended church every week, for most, it was more of a social ritual than actual devotion. Among young people, true believers were scarce.

To them, God and the Devil were just concepts.

After all, neither had ever performed a miracle before their eyes.

"Is that story true?"

Rachel held up her drink, admiring the dazzling colors.

"Of course not," Ross scoffed. "Haven't you read Adam's *Lord of the Mysteries*? It's full of weird stuff like this. For all we know, this could be an idea for his next book."

Adam simply smiled and raised his glass.