

LIFE THROUGH THE AMERICAN TV SHOW WORLD

Chapter 3: The Duncans

The Duncan Residence.

"Hey, Charlie, look at you! Only nine months old and so adorable!"

A blonde teenage girl, around fourteen or fifteen years old, aimed a camcorder at a baby girl. The baby, looking a bit confused, still obligingly clapped her hands. After all, this was her older sister who often took care of her – best not to upset her!

"And look how cute I am!"

The blonde girl, Teddy, was at the age where she loved being in front of the camera. Even though her baby sister's clapping was incredibly cute, she

quickly shifted the camera away and focused it on herself, taking a flattering selfie video.

"I'm your sister, Teddy, and I'm making a video diary to help you navigate our, um, unique family! These are Mom and Dad!"

Teddy panned the camera towards a middle-aged couple. The man was tall and burly, with the predictable receding hairline. The woman had blonde hair and a motherly expression. Both were clearly dressed up for a special occasion.

"Teddy, are you sure you can handle this?"

Amy Duncan, the mother, seemed a bit worried. "Maybe we should just stay home, Bob?"

"Teddy?"

Bob, the father, looked inquiringly at his eldest daughter.

"I can handle it!"

Teddy insisted. "You guys can't even remember the last time you went out on a date alone. Just go have fun tonight, and don't worry about how late you come back! Besides, we still have PJ! Ha, speak of the devil, here he comes!"

PJ walked in the door.

Teddy quickly went to greet him, pointing the camcorder at PJ. "Charlie, this is your big brother, PJ..."

"Call me Adam!"

PJ interrupted, smiling at the camera. "Charlie, I'm your big brother, Adam!"

Using a video diary to record his little sister's growth and the family's daily life was a loving gesture, and Adam naturally wanted to support Teddy. Besides,

as an ordinary, unremarkable guy, he wasn't afraid of being on camera. After all, he was always just... ordinary!

"Okay, looks like big brother really doesn't like the name Grandpa gave him~"

Teddy shrugged with a smile. "But I get it. If Grandpa had named me after two bathroom fixtures, I would have gone crazy! It's pretty impressive that Adam has endured it for so many years!"

"All hail understanding!"

Adam raised both hands in agreement.

"Hmm, someone seems to be in a good mood!"

Amy noticed Adam's cheerful demeanor and became wary. "Don't tell me you and that Duncan girl are back together? Let me tell you, we don't like her, do we, Bob?"

"Haha."

Bob chuckled but didn't agree with his wife, giving Adam a look that said "you're on your own."

"Teddy?"

Amy glared at Bob and then turned to Teddy.

"Charlie, quick, ask your big brother what's got him so happy?"

Teddy didn't answer directly, instead choosing to change the subject and tease her little sister.

She did dislike Amy Duncan, but she couldn't agree with her mother. After all, she was also getting ready to start dating, and if her mom disapproved and

rallied the whole family against her potential boyfriend, what would be the point?

She absolutely couldn't let that precedent be set!

"You ungrateful little..."

Amy grumbled with frustration.

"Hey, Mom, aren't I good enough? I'm the one who suggested you guys go out and have fun!"

Teddy said with a placating smile.

"Oh, that's right!"

Adam chimed in. "You guys go ahead. Charlie has me and Teddy, so don't worry. Mom, don't overthink it. Amy and I are completely over. She's already on her way to New York. The reason I'm happy is that I've suddenly seen the light!"

"That's wonderful!"

Amy jumped up and clapped her hands with joy. "PJ, oh no, Adam, I'm so glad you've come to your senses! Mom knew it all along, that Amy Duncan was not right for you. Who treats a man like a doll? You're so innocent, I was really worried she would take advantage of you. It's good that she's gone; let her go bother someone else, as long as it's not you! Thank goodness!"

Adam's acting skills were impressive and dedicated, even fooling his own family. He often had his mother worried and frustrated.

Teddy rolled her eyes, thinking to herself, "He's innocent? Ha!"

Adam understood what Teddy meant and smiled modestly. Although he had dated many girls and had been forced to become a good actor, he really was a good boy!

"Honey, it's almost time."

Bob held his watch up for Amy to see. They had a fancy dinner reservation tonight.

"Go on, have fun!"

Teddy held Charlie and followed Bob and Amy to the door. Looking down at her little sister, she added, "But don't get carried away, we have enough kids in the house already!"

"Haha."

Amy and Bob both laughed. Amy teased little Charlie and then pushed the door open to go outside. Bob was about to follow when Teddy stopped him with her hand.

"I'm serious!"

Teddy said seriously.

"..."

The corner of Bob's mouth twitched, and he couldn't laugh anymore. He certainly understood what Teddy meant...

"Bob?"

Amy's urging voice came from outside the door.

"I'm coming!"

Bob gave an awkward smile and hurried out.

"Okay, now let's divide the tasks evenly."

Teddy, holding Charlie, suggested, "We each take care of Charlie for an hour. Who wants to go first? Adam? Gabe?"

"You're just thinking of me now?!"

A boy about ten years old sat on the living room sofa with his arms crossed, complaining, "I thought you guys couldn't see me!"

"Of course not, I was just planning to save the best for last. You know the most important people always make their entrance last."

Teddy was a little embarrassed. She had actually forgotten about her younger brother, but she wouldn't admit it. She quickly handed Charlie to Adam, grabbed the camcorder, and pointed it at Gabe, "Charlie, this is your second brother Gabe! Gabe, do you have anything you want to say to Charlie?"

"Heh."

Gabe sneered at the camera, "You ruined my life!"

"Okay, it seems Gabe still needs more time to adapt to you."

Teddy forced an explanation to the camera, "Because you're kind of like a surprise!"

"I thought surprises were good things!"

Gabe retorted sharply.

"Okay, Teddy, just the two of us will take care of Charlie!"

Adam held Charlie and said with a smile, "We'll take turns every hour. You wouldn't really dare let Gabe take care of her, would you?"

"You could try~"

Gabe snickered mischievously.

"You have a point!"

Teddy thought about Gabe's usual mischievousness and immediately dismissed the idea of letting him take care of Charlie. She didn't want to see a family tragedy.

"Since we're not counting Gabe, can we each take two hours? You go first. You know, I have a study date later, and one hour is not enough..."

"A study date?"

Adam understood and teased, "That's perfect. I just finished tutoring up to eighth grade. Let's study together! Let Charlie play on the side. Charlie is very well-behaved and won't disturb us, right, Charlie?"

"Ha!"

Charlie was swayed by Adam and clapped her hands, laughing.

"..."

Teddy was dumbfounded. She had persuaded her parents to go out on a date, and she had even prepared lipstick and mouth freshener. Was it all for studying with her older brother while taking care of her little sister?

(End of Chapter)