

## **TV Show 431**

Chapter 431: Who Else?!

Medical Center.

Teaching Room.

"Yes."

Under everyone's watchful eyes, Adam nodded, confirming Dr. Burke's suspicion.

A burst of murmurs immediately filled the room.

"Wow!

Unbelievable!"

"He's just boasting."

"How is that even possible?"

"He even factored that in—this is too over the top."

"I don't believe it; he must have just been guessing."

"I don't believe it either!"

"Even if he was guessing, accounting for that detail is still terrifying."

Everyone was chattering away, unable to believe that Adam could pull this off, yet they were all deeply impressed by his meticulous attention to detail.

It really challenged everyone's usual way of thinking.

"Dr. Duncan, do you have any evidence to back that up?"

Dr. Burke's eyes narrowed as he questioned.

"Of course."

Adam calmly began explaining his approach.

Ever since Dr. Gray pioneered this classic surgery, countless subsequent heart surgery data have been recorded—data that he recited one after another.

They cover surgeries on children, teenagers, adults, middle-aged people, the elderly, men, women, "good men," and even intersex individuals, among others.

"Thanks to Dr. Gray's breakthrough, we now have tens of thousands of cases. For time's sake, I won't list them all—just a few dozen as a sample."

Adam continued, "Using big data analysis, I took the heart surgery data for young girls that Dr. Burke performed and applied it to the original classic procedure, making the necessary adjustments. Admittedly, these are just approximate theoretical figures, but given our current stage of exploration, this is as far as we can go."

The room fell silent.

The camera crew quickly snapped photos of everyone's reactions.

They were professionals who knew how rare a moment like this was.

Normally, they wouldn't take on such a small side job, but they couldn't resist the generous money Adam offered.

Now, though, they felt like they were filming a movie—the energy was infectious.

Hmm.

"We're not doing this for the money—we're doing it for the art!"

The lead photographer, clearly brimming with excitement, thought to himself.

As the saying goes, a photographer who doesn't dream of directing isn't really a good photographer!

With such a captivating subject, a charismatic lead, and this incredible, raw scene, once the footage is out, his directorial debut is guaranteed to be a smash hit.

Who wants to just be a photographer when you can be a director?

And he wasn't just daydreaming about it either.

Many great directors started out as photographers.

If others can do it, why can't he?

At that moment, he even pictured himself basking in success as a director.

No more hiding behind the camera.

No more spending free time doing cheesy photo shoots for second-rate actresses and wannabe stars that tarnish the profession.

He could soon be discussing life, dreams, and scripts with top-tier actresses, fully immersing himself in the lead role's mindset to create even better films.

He would be the king of the world!

"Did you record every piece of data from all the follow-up surgeries after that groundbreaking operation?"

After a while, someone asked hesitantly from behind the camera.

"I did my homework," Adam replied with a modest smile.

"Out of tens of thousands of surgeries, you remember them all?"

Another person pressed, incredulity clear in their tone.

"I have a pretty good memory," Adam replied modestly.

"And from all that data, you just casually derived all these conclusions?"

Yet another voice questioned.

"I'm pretty good at math—I'm sensitive to numbers," Adam said, even more self-effacingly this time.

He was really keeping humble now.

In the realm of mathematics, he was just getting started—a true newbie, so to speak.

Well, for Peggy, that's just the way he is...

Silence fell over the room again; many were simply dumbfounded.

Damn it!

You think you're good?

And you call that "good"?

Then what are we?

Trash?

What happened next was even more explosive.

Every time Adam proposed a new extension of the theory—expanding on either a hypothetical or a real branch surgery with the legendary Alice Gray—someone would immediately jump in with a tricky, off-the-wall question.

It was like the hottest trend on the internet, the first to break the news!

They suspected Adam was just showing off.

All of what had happened earlier seemed too meticulously planned.

No one could be that extraordinary!

In their world, there was simply no room for a peer as brilliant as him!

So, unmasking Adam as a fraud became the unspoken goal for most.

They bombarded him with every possible question they could think of.

If Adam failed to answer even one, it would prove their point—and they'd finally feel validated.

But to their astonishment, no matter what they asked, Adam answered each question swiftly and accurately.

This didn't seem pre-planned at all.

After all, even they didn't know what questions would come next, and some queries even veered off-topic entirely.

"Could it be?"

"Could it be?"

"Could it be?"

That classic exclamation echoed in everyone's mind.

Even if they were reluctant to admit it, the only explanation was that Adam truly was a genius beyond belief.

An intern's theoretical knowledge was unbelievably vast—almost to an absurd extent.

Could a true top-tier genius really be this advanced?

"Earlier, Dr. Gray said that Adam's theoretical knowledge rivals anyone's, and his technical skills are on par with a newly promoted attending—I have no doubt about that."

George, seated in the front row, murmured, "Now I see, Dr. Gray truly is one of a kind. Her insight is unmatched—I'm convinced."

This rapid-fire Q&A session was the ultimate test of one's true theoretical prowess.

When senior doctors lead rounds with interns, why do they exude so much authority?

It's because the interns must study hard just to be able to answer, while the seniors effortlessly field questions off the cuff.

Sometimes, even when the interns know they're right, they hesitate to challenge the seniors publicly.

They're afraid that a senior might ask a question they hadn't even considered, exposing their ignorance.

After all, medicine is profoundly intricate.

For the same condition, there are countless interpretations.

Oncologists see tumor symptoms.

Immunologists see immune responses.

Neurologists see neurological issues.

Until a definitive diagnosis is made and treatment proves effective, no one can be absolutely sure.

Until then, whoever can best explain the condition and exude the most confidence—convincing patients and peers alike—becomes the authority, gaining the upper hand.

That's how technical authority is established, along with the rules that come with it!

"Excellent! Excellent!"

The photographer with directorial dreams kept filming, shouting excitedly, "Who else? Come on, more! Don't stop!"

But after that round of rapid-fire questioning, everyone was completely stumped by Adam.

Their minds went blank—they couldn't think of another question, left only in sheer disbelief.

Chapter 432: The Queen's Gambit

Medical Center. Classroom.

After Adam stunned everyone with his show-stopping performance, his very first public lecture was deemed an outright success.

Afterward, aside from Christina—who kept herself notably active—the atmosphere quickly reverted to that initial back-and-forth between Adam and Dr. Gray. Adam wasn't looking to stir up more trouble. Showing off a bit when the moment calls for it is one thing, but when someone who's already overwhelmed insists on flaunting their brilliance, that's a whole other matter. Too much can be as bad as too little. Besides, he hadn't forgotten his original goal: to learn.

So, he stuck around with Alice Gray to watch the entire surgery recording from start to finish. The procedure lasted several hours—and with Adam continuously branching off into hypothetical variants—the session didn't wrap up until 2 AM, lasting a full eight hours. Except for the one person called away by the pager, not a single attendee left early—not even for a restroom break. Their envy of the fact that Adam was "just an intern" was set aside, and everyone treated the lecture as a riveting exchange between two titans of medicine. It was chock-full of substance with not a single dull moment. As the novels back in the East would say: this is the ultimate manual of unmatched skills!

After years of grueling residency—pleasing superiors on one end and dealing with idiotic interns on the other—the only way to truly learn was to absorb every bit of experience. Routine cases and standard procedures, although repetitive, only earned you so many "experience points." If you were lucky enough to encounter a classic, challenging case—one that could seriously boost your résumé—you'd have to scramble for a chance to learn from the attending's masterful performance. That's why surgical residencies can last five, six, seven, or even eight years.

What Adam and Alice Gray accomplished in this public lecture was extraordinary: they took one classic surgery and, like a branching network, covered virtually every possible variant and twist. These were the hard-won, practical lessons of legendary medical experts. Learn them well—and after you've performed a few cases yourself—then you'll rarely find any real difficulty when a similar case comes along. If that isn't the ultimate secret manual, what is?

Did you notice how Dr. Burke, Dr. Sheppard, and even Chief of Surgery Richard sat in the back, completely absorbed, not taking their eyes off the proceedings?

After the session ended, a photographer excitedly approached Adam.

"Dr. Duncan, may I speak with you for a minute..." he began, confessing his dream of breaking into show business and asking Adam for permission to film a movie.

"Sorry," Adam replied with a shake of his head. "Setting aside any issues regarding the doctors' rights to their likenesses, I'm a physician. I hold these lectures to give my colleagues a chance to learn together. Making a movie isn't on my radar right now."

"Dr. Duncan, this could really boost your fame..." the photographer pressed.

"I don't care about fame," Adam said firmly. "I'm a professional, and I care about how the medical community sees me. Turning a serious, professional exchange like this into a movie might make me more popular with the public, but it would undermine my credibility among professionals. So let's not even go there."

Half of what he said was true—he really didn't want a movie made at this point. After all, he was still just an intern who hadn't even passed the residency exam, let alone earned his license as an attending. For

the foreseeable future, his fate would depend on the respect he earned from the medical community. Sure, boosting one's profile can influence opinions, but that influence is a double-edged sword. The benefits are obvious, yet the risk is that a movie—with its inherent embellishments and touches of inauthenticity—could strip away the aura of a true medical genius. Even if a film were based on real events, it would always contain an element of fiction. Adam's performance was already larger-than-life; making a movie out of it would render it fake. It just wouldn't be worth it.

Once he'd firmly established his reputation in the field—earning undeniable acclaim as a genius doctor, becoming an attending, opening his own practice, and running his own show—then making a movie would truly maximize his benefits. And even then, he wouldn't let a photographer use him as a practice subject for directing. Professional work calls for professionals—and he wasn't short on money.

The photographer was full of pipe dreams. He even tried to lure Adam with promises of big money, but remembering Adam's flash and flair when he first approached them, his words were ultimately left unsaid.

Brimming with energy, Adam followed the photographer's directions to a post-production studio. "The latest web novel—first published exclusively on 69Book!" he might as well have announced. With money on his side, even though it was already well past 2 AM, Adam managed to edit two versions of a thrilling, roughly ten-minute video—complete with a catchy background track. He worked until after 9 AM before finally finishing. Satisfied, he mailed one copy of the edited version and one uncut copy to Juno, then stored the original and numerous duplicates safely back at his apartment. Finally, he took the edited copy and drove off to New Jersey for his weekly "Creative Inspiration" session.

At 2 PM, at Peggy's apartment, Adam and Peggy were enjoying a delicious meal prepared by their assistant Lisa, recharging their batteries.

"Let me show you something," Adam said as he played the edited video.

"Huh..." Peggy remarked after watching, her refined features reflecting a trace of surprise as she scrutinized him.

"Did you really memorize tens of thousands of surgical cases?" she asked.

"Of course," he replied.

Adam was clearly pleased with the effect. "I'm a genius now—you'll see," he added with a confident grin.

"Do you know how to play chess?" Peggy teased with a playful smile.

"Uh..." Adam hesitated for a moment, then managed a slight smile. "I do."

"Great, let's play a game."

Peggy got up to fetch the chess set, but then furrowed her brows and, raising her delicate chin, said, "You go get it."

Adam chuckled and went to retrieve the set.

"Now, recite those tens of thousands of surgical cases to me," she challenged.

Peggy set up the board and naturally took the black pieces. (In chess, white moves first—but true experts often prefer black.)

"Let's decide who goes first by guessing," she suggested.

Adam's expression darkened. Who did she think she was talking down to? Even if we lose, we never lose our fighting spirit!

"Fine," he agreed.

Smiling, Peggy picked up one black and one white piece, held them behind her back, shuffled them around, and then brought her hands forward for Adam to guess. Adam smirked and pointed to the left. Peggy opened her fist to reveal a black piece.

"You go first," she said.

Adam boomed, "Are you sure you want to hear about those tens of thousands of surgical cases?"

"Why not?" Peggy replied as she took the white pieces. She moved the pawn in front of her queen two spaces forward and said, "If you can truly recall those surgical cases while playing chess, it won't slow us down one bit, right?"

"You really do have faith in me," Adam said, glancing at Peggy. He'd once studied chess—having watched Peggy and Sheldon play—in an effort to win her friendship.

Peggy's opening was clearly the Queen's Gambit—a counterattacking defensive setup, sometimes even called the Sicilian Defense or the Queen's Opening. Sacrifice is sometimes necessary to gain, reminiscent of those desperate, last-ditch moves in Go where you turn the tables when all seems lost. It's a tactic reserved for dealing with true experts.

Chapter 433: Adam's About to Be a Dad

New Jersey. Peggy's Apartment.

Adam was playing chess with Peggy while simultaneously reciting tens of thousands of heart surgery data points.

Both of them were super geniuses—multitasking was just par for the course.

Adam was taking his sweet time with the chess moves. If he didn't, Peggy's skill would've checkmated him ages ago. Back in the day, he only had a basic grasp of the game. Even now, with his brain upgraded to a super CPU, he still had to spend a ton of time analyzing every possible outcome of Peggy's moves.

In his mind, a chessboard unfolded—black and white pieces sliding forward and back, each potential clash playing out like a rehearsal in his head.

It looked pretty badass.

But Peggy? Her brain was a super CPU too—an Adam-plus edition. When it came to mathematical calculations, she left him in the dust. Add her mastery of chess strategies and her ability to stand on the shoulders of giants, and she was basically chilling outside the stratosphere, looking down at Earth.

Adam trying to pull off some last-minute genius move? Yeah, that was a pipe dream. Right now, he was just losing with style.

And honestly, it was working out great.

Peggy wasn't rushing him at all. In fact, her delicate face was lit up with a smile. Every now and then, Adam would glance up, catch her gaze, and feel like he could hear her thoughts: "I used to think you were just a decent tool—my inspiration generator. But turns out, you've got some real talent. Maybe my friend count will go from one-and-a-half to two. Keep it up!"

That just made his mental CPU kick into overdrive.

One chess game dragged on for five hours.

"Checkmate!" Peggy said with a grin, setting down her piece.

"I'm done for," Adam admitted, tipping over his king with a smirk.

"You've only recited 10,369 data points so far. Wanna go another round?" Peggy asked, resetting the board with a playful smile.

"You sure you want me to keep going?" Adam raised an eyebrow. "It's already 7 p.m. If I run through all of them, we'll be up till 3 a.m. Isn't 10,369 enough to prove something?"

"Spitting out 10,369 data points does prove your talent," Peggy said, eyeing him with curiosity. "I don't know why you never showed this side of yourself before, but talent's talent. If that's all it was, we could stop here. But from those 10,369 points, I spotted that pattern you mentioned in your video. So now I'm wondering—if you finish the whole set, will that pattern hold? Can we turn it into a full-on mathematical formula?"

"A mathematical formula?" Adam blinked, stunned. "Is that even possible?"

"Why not?" Peggy grinned. "Math's the tool we use to decode the universe's secrets—human bodies included. You said in your video that you used this data to figure out surgery stats for a middle-aged guy stepping into a little girl's procedure. How'd you pull that off?"

"I took stuff like gender, age, heart condition, all that, and turned them into axes," Adam explained. "Each surgery data point became a dot. Connect the dots, and you get a rough curve. Then I kinda fudged it to fit."

"So you've got a sloppy curve in your head," Peggy said with a laugh. "But what I'm seeing is a formula. What's wrong with that?"

"..." Adam's mouth twitched.

She wasn't wrong—mathematicians did boil down complex patterns into neat little formulas and theorems to help people understand the world. But this? This felt insane. With so many variables in surgery data, could it really be summed up in one formula? Then again, math could model the entire freaking universe—heart surgery data was peanuts in comparison.

His eyes lit up. "You really think we can turn this Duncan Curve into a formula?"

"..." Now it was Peggy's turn to go speechless.

Duncan Curve? Where'd that come from?

"Peggy, you're amazing!" Adam jumped up, wrapping her in a bear hug and planting a big kiss on her cheek. "If we pull this off, we're calling it the Duncan-Adler Formula. Like Sheldon said, 'Brain babies are the cutest!' This is our brain baby—no crying, no messy goo, just pure, beautiful perfection."

"Did Sheldon actually say that?" Peggy asked, wiping the slobber off her face.

"Think about it—does it sound like something he'd say?" Adam chuckled.

"He does hate kids," Peggy nodded. "And pretty much everyone else too. But he's obsessed with brainpower, so yeah, it tracks."

"See? Close enough," Adam said, waving it off. "Let's not sweat the small stuff. We've got the Duncan-Adler Formula to figure out!"

Peggy rolled her eyes, but he ignored it completely.

For her, a formula like this was no big deal. Over the years, she'd pumped out tons of cutting-edge math papers—how else could she be the youngest mathematician of her caliber? These days, she tackled the toughest, most mind-bending problems in the field. This? This was just a side gig.

But for Adam, it was a game-changer.

If they nailed this formula and published it as the Duncan-Adler Formula, it'd blow yesterday's public lecture out of the water. Sure, his performance then had been wild, but deep down, plenty of people probably whispered about some hidden trick—something they couldn't quite put their finger on.

And there'd be a lot of those skeptics. Humans hated the unknown. Psychologically, they weren't ready to buy into an Adam this over-the-top.

But a paper like this? Paired with his lecture? That'd be the nail in the coffin—undeniable proof of his genius.

A performance could be faked. You could script a whole speech, plant questions, rehearse answers, and stage every shocked gasp or smug smirk from the crowd. Adam was a billionaire—he had the cash to pull off a stunt that big. And with his ambition to make waves in medicine, he had the motive too. Means, motive, ability—all there. So yeah, people doubting him felt reasonable to them. Some might even convince themselves it had to be the truth.

Even if they'd asked questions themselves, they could brush it off. Maybe Adam got lucky, and their "gotcha" questions just happened to be ones he knew. Or maybe he had an earpiece with some medical bigshot feeding him lines.

Fake. All fake.

But math? Math didn't lie.

And when it tied directly to his work, that formula would be as real as it gets.

With that, Adam shoved the chessboard aside and threw all his energy into reciting the surgery data.

Both of them were geniuses—photographic memories, mental calculators on steroids. One spoke, the other recorded. Adam turned the data into a multidimensional web, countless rays intersecting at points, each point a surgery, each line a connection.

Peggy dug into the mathematical ties between those points, working to weave them into a single formula.

Their minds were like starry skies—data twinkling like constellations, glowing with brilliance.

Chapter 434: Exhausted Parents-to-Be

Monday.

3:00 AM.

Adam had just finished rattling off all 31,485 pieces of heart surgery data.

Peggy, on the other hand, dove right back into her calculations, sprawled across the desk. This was all rough draft material for their future paper. Adam stood behind her, watching for a solid hour, completely lost in the maze of complex, mind-bending math formulas.

Let's be real—when it came to math, he was totally out of his league.

That realization hit him hard, and he made up his mind right then and there to double his math study time going forward. Math wasn't just a way to bond with Peggy—it could seriously boost his career as a top-tier doctor. Once this heavyweight paper got published, it wouldn't just add a splash of color to his résumé; it'd be a dazzling, standout page!

But for now, all he could do was stand there, staring blankly, understanding zilch.

The Duncan-Adler formula? Honestly, calling it that felt a little shameless.

That thought didn't even linger for a second before Adam mentally chopped it down. Without him, would Peggy have ever zeroed in on this? It's like a woman carrying a baby for ten months—sure, she gets the lion's share of the credit, no question. But without a guy kicking things off in those first few minutes, even the most capable woman's out of luck, right?

And that's just your average guy.

Adam, though? He showed up at 9:00 AM, worked straight through to 2:00 PM, and then kept going for another 14 hours. He'd earned his stripes—both in contribution and pure grind. This "brain baby" of theirs taking his last name? Totally fair!

"Peggy, I've gotta head back to the hospital. I'll swing by again tonight," Adam said, glancing at his watch.

"Mhm."

Compared to her old habit of flat-out ignoring him, this time Peggy didn't look up but at least gave a little hum of acknowledgment.

"Make sure you rest, okay?" Adam added.

Peggy didn't bother responding this time.

Adam stepped out of the room and knocked on the door across the hall.

Knock, knock, knock.

"Lisa?"

Knock, knock, knock.

"Lisa?"

Knock, knock, knock.

"Lisa?"

"Boss."

Lisa cracked the door open, still in her pajamas, rubbing sleepy eyes. She checked the time and groaned, "It's 4:00 AM!"

"This month's bonus is doubled," Adam said casually.

That shut down her grumbling real quick.

"Boss, what's up?"

Lisa perked up, her eyes practically sparkling as she looked at Adam, ready to jump into action—whatever he needed, she'd tackle it, no hesitation.

Why? Simple. On top of her hefty monthly salary, Adam tossed in bonuses depending on the situation. The amounts were enough to make the average white-collar worker jealous—doubled? Forget about it!

Then, as if something clicked, Lisa bit her lip, turned her head slightly, and tugged at the neckline of her pajamas.

"..."

Adam's mouth twitched.

What's that supposed to mean? What kind of guy do you think I am?

"Peggy's gone full-on research mode again, totally zoned out. Keep an eye on her. I'll be back tonight—make sure there's an extra dinner ready," Adam instructed.

"Oh, got it."

Lisa nodded quickly. As Adam turned to leave, she blurted out, "Boss, that's it?"

"What else do you want?" Adam shot back, half-teasing.

"Uh..."

Lisa awkwardly tugged her pajama neckline back into place and shook her head. "Nothing."

After Adam left, Lisa grabbed the keys to Peggy's apartment and shuffled over in her pajamas, muttering to herself along the way. "Can you blame me? It's 4:00 AM, my hotshot boss is banging on my door, doubling my bonus, and he's got that whole charming vibe going on. What am I supposed to think? I didn't jump straight to some wild group scenario—that's me being nice."

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New York.

Medical Center.

Locker Room.

"Adam, where've you been? You didn't show up yesterday, and I couldn't even get you on the phone!" Christina complained as she changed. "Without you, Dr. Grey totally ignores us. Didn't you even skip a friends' dinner before? How'd you waste a whole day and night this time?"

"Relax," Adam said with a grin. He was about to be a "dad" to this project, and he couldn't wipe the smile off his face. "Dr. Grey's doing fine. Even if she doesn't fully recover, she's stable for now. We've got time."

"Sure, we've got time, but why risk it?" Christina pressed, her eyes blazing with that relentless thirst for knowledge.

"My bad," Adam admitted, his smile fading as he reflected.

She was right. He'd gotten a little too caught up in all the good stuff lately—maybe he'd been floating a bit. That wasn't okay.

Alice Grey had Alzheimer's. She might seem fine now, but no one could predict what'd happen next. He should've been pouring all his energy into soaking up her knowledge and experience while he still could.

"So, tonight?" Christina asked, her eyes lighting up when she saw him own up to it.

"Tonight's on," Adam said with a laugh.

"Sweet! I'll go spread the good news," Christina said, practically bouncing.

Adam's deal with their little crew was this: they'd have these nightly study sessions, just their tight-knit group, and then every week or two—depending on how things went—they'd open it up for a big lecture in the teaching room.

For Adam, it didn't matter either way. He wasn't worried about colleagues stealing some "top-secret technique." If they wanted to learn, go for it. No one could outpace his learning ability anyway—they weren't even in the same league. He was basically a TA, maybe even half a professor.

But for Christina and the others, it was a different story. If everything went wide open, it'd turn into a straight-up talent-and-effort showdown. Christina was confident she could keep up with Adam, but the pressure of others closing in would skyrocket.

For Meredith, Liz, and the rest? If they didn't buckle down and kept getting distracted by romance, they'd get left in the dust. People are selfish—it's human nature.

Christina whispered some bestie vibes to Meredith, and just like that, their little study group was back on. Adam didn't say no. Why would he? Meredith had guardianship over Dr. Grey. If she got upset and shipped Dr. Grey off to a nursing home, Adam would be the one losing out big time.

Plus, giving his friends a leg up felt natural. He wasn't some saint fighting for equal rights for random coworkers he barely knew.

After changing, Adam stepped out and called Lisa. "I'll probably get there around midnight. Yeah, just have some late-night snacks ready!"

He hung up, grinning to himself.

For most people, you couldn't have it all—work all day, study Dr. Grey's expertise all night, and keep tabs on Peggy "giving birth" to their project. Time and energy just didn't stretch that far.

But Adam? His stamina was off the charts—and still climbing. Skip a few days of sleep? No big deal. He'd still be buzzing with energy.

So, his plan was set: run the study session as usual, wrap up late, then zip over to Peggy's place in New Jersey to check on the "delivery" progress before hauling it back to New York without missing a beat.

When you're a parent-to-be, especially in crunch time, running yourself ragged is just part of the gig, right?

Chapter 435: So This Counts as True Love?

Medical Center – Nurse Station

"Dr. Duncan!"

A female nurse called out to Adam.

"Rosie, what's up?"

Adam stopped and smiled.

Remembering everyone's name in the hospital was a small challenge he set for himself.

For him, it was easy.

But to others, it was a sign of respect.

Details make all the difference.

"There's a case here that needs your attention."

The nurse, Rosie, beamed at him.

"A gunshot wound to the head?"

George, who was flipping through medical records, caught a glimpse of the patient file in her hand. His eyes widened. "That's not fair! I've been digging through these files for so long, and you just had this one hidden away?"

"They're all patients, and they all need doctors."

Rosie explained seriously, "Different cases require different doctors. This one happens to need a doctor as outstanding as Dr. Duncan."

"..."

George's chubby face was full of grievance.

Women these days...

"He survived a gunshot to the head?"

Adam walked over, took the file, and was genuinely surprised.

"Not only did he survive, but he also drove himself to the hospital to schedule surgery."

Rosie nodded toward the waiting area.

"A miracle."

Adam followed her gaze and saw a middle-aged man sitting there, flipping through a magazine. The bullet hole right in the middle of his forehead was glaringly obvious.

"Thanks, Rosie."

Adam sincerely appreciated it.

A case like this? Whoever gets it is lucky.

Sure, Rosie was looking out for him.

But it was also just his good fortune.

After all, if the patient had come too early or too late, she wouldn't have dared to do this. She probably saw Adam arrive and immediately pulled the file from the stack.

Meanwhile, poor George had to sift through them one by one, while the nurses registering patients had the full picture.

"You're welcome."

Rosie blushed slightly and hesitated before asking, "Dr. Duncan, can I get a copy of last night's lecture recording? I'd love to study it."

"Of course."

Adam was only briefly surprised before agreeing.

He had made multiple copies anyway, planning to distribute them and spread his reputation.

Nurses might be at the bottom of the hospital hierarchy, so they weren't the best for boosting his name.

But hey, why not?

Besides, maybe she really meant it.

There were nurses who worked hard, studied diligently, got into med school, and eventually became doctors.

"Thank you."

Rosie's smile grew even sweeter.

Of course, she wasn't actually planning to study it.

She wouldn't even understand most of it.

Nurses transitioning to doctors were rare. Becoming a doctor wasn't that simple.

She wanted it... as a movie.

At this point in time, the term "fangirling" didn't exist.

But her actions were a perfect example of it.

"You're welcome."

Adam nodded at her and walked toward the patient, file in hand.

"Mr. Linden? I'm Dr. Duncan. Mind if I do a quick examination?"

"Of course not."

Linden put down his magazine.

As Adam began his exam, Linden started explaining. "I was cleaning my gun when I accidentally pulled the trigger. I thought I had already removed the magazine. I never expected this to happen."

"Oh, really?"

Adam gave him a knowing smile.

Why not just say you're some kung fu master?

Pointing a loaded gun at his own forehead, pulling the trigger, failing to stop the bullet with his fingers— but miraculously surviving because of some invisible force?

Now that would be a great story.

"You don't believe me?"

Linden got anxious. "It was an accident! You don't think I tried to kill myself, do you?"

"Relax."

Adam reassured him. "I'm a doctor. My job is to remove the bullet from your head. The rest isn't my concern. But the police will want to ask you about it."

"The police? Why do they need to be involved?"

Linden became even more flustered.

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"Any gunshot wound must be reported to the police. It's the law."

Adam explained, "Even if it was accidental. The key is whether the police believe your story."

Linden fell silent for a moment, then muttered, "Everyone makes mistakes. I'm no exception. And now I'm paying the price for mine."

Adam glanced at him thoughtfully. "Mr. Linden, we need to do a CT scan first."

"Whatever."

Linden seemed disheartened.

When the CT scan came back, Adam was amazed.

The bullet had entered through his forehead but miraculously avoided all major brain structures and lodged itself inside.

"Oh my God! Doctor, how's my husband?"

When Adam returned to the hospital room after calling Dr. Sheppard, a middle-aged woman was already standing by the bed, panicking.

"He needs surgery, but the exact plan will be determined once Dr. Sheppard arrives."

Adam explained.

Dr. Sheppard arrived shortly after.

"Duncan, what's your take?"

"From the CT scan, we only need to clear out the necrotic tissue caused by the bullet's path. We don't have to take the risk of removing the bullet itself."

Adam said, "It's the safest approach. The downside is that he won't be able to undergo an MRI in the future, and airport security might be a hassle."

"Sounds good."

Dr. Sheppard nodded, then turned to the Lindens. "That's the plan. Removing the bullet is risky. Leaving it means some inconveniences. Your decision?"

"We'll leave it in."

The couple answered in unison.

"Alright."

Dr. Sheppard closed the file and instructed, "Duncan, schedule the OR and run pre-op tests. Let's get this done soon."

"Yes, doctor."

As Adam returned from scheduling the surgery, he heard a heated argument inside the room.

"I've loved you for 21 years! I forgave you!"

"You cheated! Don't act all magnanimous! You betrayed me!"

"I have a bullet in my brain!"

"That doesn't make us even!"

"You shot me!"

"Oh, please. When you cheated, you should've seen this coming! We've been together for 21 years—do you just now realize what I'm like?"

"..."

Adam stood outside, half amused, half speechless.

So there was more to the story.

It really was an accidental shooting.

But Linden accidentally shot himself first—then got shot for real by his wife.

She must be from Texas, just like Adam.

But Linden must really love his wife.

Without some insane luck, he'd be dead.

And his wife? She definitely meant to kill him—hence the direct headshot.

As Linden was being wheeled into surgery, the police arrived to question his wife.

Adam shook his head.

With her fiery temper, even if Linden covered for her, unless the police decided to look the other way—like Adam—it'd be impossible to keep it under wraps.

Chapter 436: Perfect Comprehension

Medical Center

Patient Room

"Mr. Linden, you're awake! How are you feeling?"

Adam asked.

"Where's my wife?"

Mr. Linden, with a white bandage wrapped around his forehead, opened his eyes and immediately looked around.

"She was taken away by the police."

Adam explained.

"What did you tell them?"

Unlike before the surgery, Mr. Linden was much calmer now. He half-opened his eyes and asked in a tired voice.

"We didn't say anything."

Adam shook his head. "It was Mrs. Linden. She told them everything."

The officer questioning her wasn't a rookie. With just a few words, they managed to provoke her fiery temper, and she spilled everything without holding back.

"I won't press charges against her."

Mr. Linden sighed with guilt. "This is my fault. I let her down. Getting shot by her... I had it coming."

Adam didn't respond to that. Instead, he asked again, "Mr. Linden, how are you feeling? Any discomfort? I mean physically."

"No."

Mr. Linden then asked, "What's going to happen to her?"

"The police will charge her with first-degree assault."

Adam closed the patient's file, signaling the end of the conversation. "Get some rest, Mr. Linden. If you need anything, let the nurses know."

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Noon – Cafeteria

"Adam, is it true? You got a patient who survived a gunshot to the head?"

Christina asked, clearly envious.

"It's not as impressive as you think."

Adam knew exactly what she was excited about and explained, "All we did was remove the necrotic tissue in his forehead caused by the bullet. The bullet itself is still lodged in his brain."

"Oh."

Christina's excitement faded immediately.

That kind of surgery wasn't challenging at all.

The appeal disappeared just as quickly as it had come.

"See? This is why you should never piss off a woman."

Meredith smirked.

"Heh."

Adam glanced at her and chuckled. "Dr. Shepherd said the same thing."

"What did he say?"

Meredith's eyes sharpened instantly.

"He said he understands Mrs. Linden. If he were in Mr. Linden's shoes, he wouldn't blame her either. Sometimes, if a bullet can bring back love, it's worth it."

Adam repeated Shepherd's words with a straight face.

During the surgery, Dr. Shepherd had randomly brought up the topic, making dramatic statements. Who was he talking to?

Anyone with half a brain could tell he wasn't saying it for Adam's benefit.

"He really thinks choosing between me and her is harder than taking a bullet to the head, huh?"

Meredith, being directly involved and, more importantly, a woman, immediately read between the lines.

"So even though she and his best friend betrayed him, he still loves her more than he loves me."

"..."

Adam twitched slightly.

Dr. Shepherd, it's not that I didn't pass your message along—it's just that Meredith's comprehension skills are off the charts!

But when you really think about it...

One love fueled by passion, the other by betrayal and obsession, yet somehow, he was stuck between the two, unable to decide, even willing to take a bullet instead of choosing.

Yeah... Meredith's interpretation might not be wrong after all.

"Adam, you better be careful."

Liz chimed in. "You never know when you might find yourself in a similar situation."

"Not happening."

Adam smiled confidently.

For one, he wasn't a liar.

And even if he somehow found himself in a love triangle, as long as it wasn't a full-blown battlefield, he could dodge a stray bullet or two thanks to his sharp reflexes.

Unlike Mr. Linden, he wouldn't have to rely on sheer dumb luck to survive.

Besides, he had Juno.

If he ever met an emotionally unstable "friend" struggling with their feelings, Juno could handle it.

When it came to emotional manipulation, no one was better than her.

pat-reon:belamy20

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"Liz, how's your patient doing?"

Christina changed the topic.

As much as she liked gossip, discussing medical cases was even more interesting to her.

"Still no clue."

Liz frowned. "We can't find anything wrong, but she keeps experiencing sudden cardiac arrest."

"Is this her medical file?"

Christina grabbed the file from Liz and started flipping through it.

"Intermittent syncope, irregular heartbeat, history of rheumatic heart disease, mitral valve stenosis... but her electrolytes are normal, no toxins in her urine, and her EKG looks fine..."

"Everything seems normal, but she just randomly passes out. It's terrifying."

Liz sighed. "She's a pharmacology PhD, so if there was a problem, she'd probably have figured it out herself."

"Let me see."

Adam took the file, reading through it while casually commenting, "This sounds like a complex case. Why hasn't she gone to see Dr. House?"

"She never said."

Liz replied, "Dr. Burke wants to do a cardiac ultrasound first, but she's pushing for a heart rate recovery test or even surgery. She's even considering a pacemaker or an internal defibrillator."

"She wants major surgery without even knowing the cause?"

Christina raised an eyebrow. "What kind of pharmacology PhD is she?"

"Her problem might not be physical—it could be psychological."

Adam mused.

"What do you mean?"

Liz looked at him curiously.

"She's been to four different hospitals this year."

Adam pointed out. "She's spent almost the entire year hospitalized, and her symptoms always appear around the time hospitals typically discharge patients."

"You think she's faking it to stay in the hospital?"

Christina caught on immediately.

"What?"

Liz was stunned. "Why would she do that?"

"Her background."

Adam explained, "Her parents are missionaries overseas, and she has no close family. Maybe she enjoys the attention and care from hospital staff."

"Münchausen syndrome."

Christina concluded. "She's pretending to be sick so she can play the role of a patient, imagining that we're her family taking care of her."

"But she doesn't seem like the kind of person who would lie. She's so genuine and cheerful. The nurses love listening to her travel stories."

Liz hesitated.

"How do you know she has a PhD in pharmacology?"

Adam asked.

"She told me..."

Liz suddenly froze.

"But there's no 'PhD' listed in her medical records."

Adam pointed at the file.

Doctors and PhDs, like aristocrats, usually make sure their titles are included in official documents to establish their status.

Even Dr. Shepherd's divorce papers were signed with "Derek Shepherd, M.D."

Liz was completely speechless.

"Everyone lies."

Adam smirked. "Check her purse. If she's carrying medication that can induce palpitations or fainting, you'll have your answer. If she refuses to let you check, well... that's an answer too."

Ring, ring.

Just then, Adam's phone rang.

Seeing the caller ID, he rolled his eyes before answering, "Ted, stop dreaming. I already told you—six months means six months... Fine, I'm on my way."

After hearing Ted's frantic voice, Adam immediately got up and rushed toward the ER.

Chapter 437: The King of Romance—His Last Name is \*\*\*

Medical Center.

Emergency Room.

"Adam!"

Ted stood by the hospital bed and waved as soon as he saw Adam approaching.

When Adam reached him, Ted quickly introduced, "This is my mom and dad. Today's my birthday, so they flew in to celebrate with me. But suddenly, my mom fainted, and I have no idea why."

"Hello, Mr. and Mrs. Mosby," Adam greeted with a warm smile.

"Hello, Adam," Ted's father nodded politely.

Lying on the hospital bed, Ted's mother smiled weakly. "Sorry to trouble you, Adam."

"No need to be so formal. Ted and I are good friends," Adam reassured her with a friendly smile while flipping through the medical records. "Has this ever happened before?"

"This is the first time," Ted's mother replied.

"But she does feel chest pain around this time every year," Ted's father added.

"What?" Ted exclaimed, looking shocked. "Why didn't you ever tell me?"

"It only started in recent years, and it was just a dull pain," his mother said with a forced smile. "It wasn't anything serious. It always went away on its own after a few days. The doctors said it was nothing, so I didn't want your father to worry you."

Adam sighed internally.

Ah, the selfless love of parents.

They always try to bear their pain alone, unwilling to burden their children unless absolutely necessary.

Adam had experienced this himself in his past life.

During his college years, every phone call home was the same—his parents always assured him everything was fine.

But when he returned for the holidays, he'd find evidence to the contrary—his father's hand showing scars from a firecracker accident, or his mother's foot bearing the mark of a centipede bite.

And when he asked, they would just smile and say, It healed a long time ago, nothing to worry about.

"Mrs. Mosby, let's start with an ECG and see what's going on," Adam said, bringing himself back to the present.

"Alright."

Ted's mother nodded with a gentle smile.

"How is it?"

Ted watched nervously as Adam conducted the ECG.

"There are some abnormalities," Adam admitted, then quickly added, "Let's run a blood test and do an echocardiogram to be sure."

"Okay," Ted's mother said calmly.

She noticed Ted throwing Adam desperate looks, clearly wanting a private conversation. But before he could say anything, she cut in with a smile, "There's no need to hide anything from me. Whatever it is, you can say it directly."

"That's right," Ted's father agreed. "We're not children. Whatever the situation, we can handle it."

Adam looked at Ted for confirmation.

"...Alright," Ted finally relented. "Go ahead, Adam."

"The ECG results suggest Mrs. Mosby might have a myocardial infarction," Adam said seriously. "In other words, a heart attack."

"Oh my God!" Ted's father shook his head.

"No!" Ted shouted, unwilling to accept it.

"It's not confirmed yet," Adam reassured him. "There's still a chance it's something else."

"It has to be something else!" Ted insisted.

Adam ordered a blood test, then personally took Mrs. Mosby for an echocardiogram.

"How is it?" Ted asked anxiously after the tests.

"The echocardiogram and blood test both came back normal," Adam reported. "It probably isn't a heart attack."

"That's great!" Ted cheered. But then he noticed that Adam's expression was still serious. His excitement faded. "Wait... That is good news, right?"

"Yes and no," Adam replied in a low voice. "While it doesn't seem to be a sudden heart attack, the ECG still shows some heart issues. We need to figure out exactly what's wrong before we can treat it properly and eliminate any risks."

The unknown is always the scariest part.

"So what do we do now?" Ted asked urgently.

"Mrs. Mosby needs a cardiac catheterization for further examination," Adam explained.

"Then let's do it," Ted's mother said, still smiling. "Ted, don't worry. I'll be fine."

Adam narrowed his eyes and studied her carefully.

He wasn't a mind-reader like Juno, but something about her attitude was off.

Was she just overly optimistic?

Or was she trying to comfort her son?

Or... did she already know something?

In the examination room, Adam made sure to leave Ted and his father outside.

"Mrs. Mosby, is there something you need to tell me?" Adam asked gently. "As your doctor, I am bound by doctor-patient confidentiality. Anything you don't want your family to know, I legally cannot share. So if there's something you're aware of, please tell me. Heart issues are not something to take lightly."

"...There's nothing," she said softly, avoiding his gaze. "I really don't know why this is happening."

"What happened seven years ago today?" Adam asked, his tone calm but firm.

"W-what?"

Ted's mother's eyes flickered with panic.

"Your medical records show that every year on this exact day, you experience these symptoms," Adam pointed out. "It always went away on its own, but this year, it got worse, and you fainted. Something must have triggered this. Seven years ago, today—what happened?"

"...Please don't tell Ted," she whispered, gripping Adam's hand with a desperate look.

Adam sighed.

"Alright." Then, after a pause, he raised an eyebrow. "Just Ted?"

She smiled bitterly. "His father and I... we've been emotionally distant for a long time."

Her voice trembled as she continued, "I just didn't want Ted to be hurt. I've kept up the act for his sake. But... my heart? I gave that away 29 years ago. And seven years ago, on this very day, it shattered completely when he passed away. He was my true soulmate. We truly loved each other."

Adam didn't even need to ask—he was their neighbor and good friend, also named Ted.

"So... just a soulmate?" Adam asked carefully. "Then Ted... who's his real father?"

Ted's mother wiped away a tear but didn't answer.

Adam understood the look in her eyes.

She might not even know for sure herself.

But deep down, she hoped Ted was his son.

What a mess.

"This is exactly why I'm against all these chaotic relationship entanglements!" Adam internally ranted.

"Mrs. Mosby, you're suffering from stress-induced cardiomyopathy," Adam explained. "Every year, around this time, your body reacts to the emotional distress. Your adrenaline spikes, your blood pressure rises, and your chest tightens. Your heart literally pauses for a brief moment—grieving for him."

"My heart... mourning for him?"

Ted's mother let out a bittersweet laugh, tears glistening in her eyes.

Adam remained silent.

A forbidden love that ran so deep... yet felt heartbreakingly sincere.

At least now, Adam finally knew—Ted's extreme romanticism?

Definitely inherited.

The King of Romance...

His last name was \*\*\*\*.

Chapter 438: Fellow friend, Please Stay

Medical Center.

Hospital Room.

"Adam, how's my mom?" Ted asked anxiously.

"Mrs. Mosby has stress-induced cardiomyopathy..." Adam explained the situation. "There's no real cure, just precautions. She needs to be careful, especially on this day each year. No extreme emotions—no big highs or lows. Someone should always be with her, or better yet, she should check into the hospital in advance to stay safe."

In the hospital, emergency intervention was always available.

A stopped heart? No big deal.

They could bring her back in minutes.

"I'm so sorry, Mom."

Ted immediately blamed himself. "Today's my birthday, but it's also your day of suffering. The pain and joy of that day still haunt you, and it's all my fault."

Adam glanced at him.

Tsk, tsk!

Hardcore logic, right there.

Though, technically, he wasn't wrong.

Damn it, Ted!

"No pain, only joy."

Ted's mom gave an awkward smile.

His dad, however, seemed to understand something. His faint smile was a bit cold, but he didn't seem to care.

So, they were just putting on a united front.

They must have been distant for a long time, only keeping up appearances for Ted's sake, avoiding unpleasant topics so he wouldn't be hurt.

Adam couldn't help but imagine 3D models of Ted and his dad, standing side by side. Zooming in, he studied their facial similarities carefully.

Hmm...

The neighbor, Old Wang, might have been wild, but Ted's dad? Clearly the superior competitor.

Adam's mind suddenly conjured up a classic mythological scene—

King Ted speeding away, while his father shouted behind him: "Fellow friend, please stay!"

And then...

"Better you than me."

Morally questionable?

Maybe.

But Adam found it hilarious, spacing out for a good while before snapping back to reality.

After giving Ted's parents a few more instructions, Adam left the room.

As expected, Ted followed him out.

"Adam, thanks a lot."

"Don't mention it." Adam smiled. "We're friends, after all."

"Speaking of which..."

Ted extended his arm, pretending to be casual. "Today's my birthday. Marshall and Lily are throwing me a party tonight. You should come!"

"Sorry."

Adam shook his head apologetically. "I really don't have time..."

Then he told him about Alice Grey.

A foolproof excuse.

No one could argue with that.

Not even Ted.

Of course, if it were Marshall and Lily, Adam would probably squeeze in the time.

After all, time is like a sponge—you can always squeeze out a little more.

But just like the core group in *Friends* revolved around Chandler and Monica, Adam had his own division for *How I Met Your Mother*. For him, the core was Marshall and Lily.

Leonard once said: "The top doctors come in two types: those who are completely detached, like Alice Grey and Gregory House, and those who are in the process of becoming that way, like Richard Webber and Preston Burke."

Doctors who care about every patient? Either they never improve their skills, or they eventually have an emotional breakdown. Reaching the top requires a certain level of detachment.

Adam had only been interning for three months, yet he'd already witnessed so much joy and sorrow.

And the road ahead? A never-ending cycle of it.

Meredith and George liked to visit the NICU to watch newborns—it helped them cope.

Even for someone as capable as Adam, if he wanted to reach the top, he needed to find a way to manage his growing emotional burden.

Would he rather spend his limited free time enjoying the warmth of Marshall and Lily's relationship, or indulging in Joey, Ted, and Barney's chaotic nonsense?

Before starting his medical career, he would have chosen the latter.

But now, that option was gone.

"I see..." Ted rubbed his hands, looking conflicted.

"Don't worry."

Adam knew exactly what he was thinking but wasn't about to give in. He smirked. "I may not be there, but you'll still get a gift. I've got something just for you."

"Is it what I think it is?!"

Ted looked excited.

"Nope."

Adam shook his head.

"Come on!"

Ted pleaded. "Adam, it's my birthday! Just give me her phone number!"

"Nope."

Adam chuckled. "This year's gift is something I just got today. It's perfect for you, and since it's your birthday, it's meant to be. If you want the number as a gift, I can give it to you next year."

"..."

Ted's face darkened.

Next year?!

That's a whole year away!

And the number? Only 5 months and 17 days left!

You think I'm an idiot?

In reality, Ted had never waited the full six months they originally agreed on. He'd started pestering Adam almost immediately, even dragging Marshall and Lily into it.

But Adam never budged.

At this stage, Ted wasn't the mature Ted Mosby yet—he was still just Ted the Player.

A great girl like Teresa? No way was Adam letting Ted ruin her.

"What kind of gift is so special?" Ted asked suspiciously.

"You want to see it now?"

Adam raised an eyebrow, then remembered that opening gifts immediately was common here, so he didn't mind.

In some cultures, no wrapping was even needed—you could tell what it was just by looking.

"Can I?"

Ted was still fixated on Teresa's number, hoping he could guilt-trip Adam into giving in.

"Sure."

Adam grinned. "Actually, it'll have even more impact if you see it here."

He led Ted to his birthday present.

"What... is this?!"

Ted was dumbfounded.

Adam flicked the CT scan, making a clicking sound.

"This is your gift—something unique. Something unforgettable."

That's right.

Adam had gifted Ted Mr. Linden's CT scan.

With an arm around Ted's stunned shoulders, he pointed at the bullet lodged in the scan and vividly recounted the story of Mr. and Mrs. Linden.

"Ted, any thoughts?"

"..."

Ted was speechless.

"No doubt about it—Mr. and Mrs. Linden were truly in love," Adam said with a grin. "But love and hate go hand in hand. He cheated, she shot him in the head. Do you think she was a sharpshooter? Maybe she didn't actually mean to kill him—just scare him a little?"

Ted swallowed hard, still speechless.

"You've met a lot of great women over the years," Adam teased. "You loved them, and they loved you. Only one of them ever studied Krav Maga."

He clapped Ted on the shoulder. "You're lucky."

Ted shuddered and blurted out, "I hate guns!"

"Heh."

Adam smirked.

Funny, considering Robin was a total gun enthusiast.

Maybe, deep down, Ted was afraid of becoming Mr. Linden.

Who knows?

But in the end, in their original timeline, he and Robin ended up together.

Hopefully, it was a happy ending.

Adam's mind drifted to an image of Robin in full S.H.I.E.L.D. gear, rifle in hand, looking fierce.

Wait, why did I say "again" ...?

Chapter 439 - Just One Question: Are You Scared?

Medical Center.

After receiving the carefully selected birthday gift from Adam, Ted firmly declined Adam's invitation to witness Mr. Linden's tragic state firsthand.

Watching Ted practically flee the scene, Adam couldn't help but chuckle.

Maybe one day, if Ted falls in love again or if love sweeps him away like a tornado, he'll ask beforehand:

"Do you play with guns?"

If not, then he can sincerely say, "I loved you once, but not anymore. I don't want to keep hurting you."

But if they do?

Well, then he'll get the same thrilling experience Adam had when he first crossed over—flanked by the magical Amy on one side and Little Red Riding Hood Juno in the distance.

Breaking up? Not an option.

The only way was to endure, cautiously and carefully, until the woman grew tired of him and ended things herself.

That's definitely not cowardice!

It's simply following one's heart while staying within the lines!

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### Emergency Room.

"What's going on?"

When Adam arrived, he saw two police officers chatting outside an examination room and turned to ask a nurse.

"A female college student..."

The nurse immediately leaned in, chattering excitedly as she recounted the incident in vivid detail.

"From Princeton University?"

Adam's expression shifted.

He knew it was unlikely to be Peggy—or Leonard and Dr. Elizabeth Princeton cosplaying, for that matter—but he still couldn't help but take a look.

The two officers glanced at Adam briefly before returning to their conversation, indifferent.

Through the window blinds, Adam saw a beautiful young woman sitting inside, looking utterly drained. A cigarette trembled between her fingers as she took a shaky drag. Tears had long since ruined her makeup.

Nurse Carol was beside her, gently comforting her and encouraging her to report the incident.

Adam shook his head and walked away.

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### Nightfall.

By then, the full story had spread throughout the hospital.

After hearing it, Adam immediately called his assistant, Lisa, asking her to keep an eye on Peggy. He even considered hiring two female bodyguards for her.

Then, he called Leonard, warning him to be careful as well.

In this era, Leonard was prime fresh meat—he needed to be extra cautious out there.

Finally, Adam called Juno to talk about what had happened.

"This Princeton student was originally at her apartment when her boyfriend's close friend drove up, saying her boyfriend had sent him to pick her up for a get-together.

She didn't think much of it and went along.

When she arrived, she realized her boyfriend wasn't there—only two other guys.

Her boyfriend's good friend claimed he'd be there soon and suggested they start drinking while they waited.

Then, after a few drinks... things got blurry. She never saw her boyfriend that night."

"She couldn't say no?"

Juno asked on the other end of the line.

But before Adam could reply, she already had the answer:

"Obviously, she did. Otherwise, it wouldn't have escalated to calling the police and seeking medical evidence."

"Yeah."

Adam could hear the shift in Juno's tone. He suddenly regretted bringing this up, considering her other identity, but all he could do now was show concern.

"You and Karen should also be careful. There are a lot of bad people in this world."

"Way more than you think."

Juno's voice dropped, tinged with cold anger.

"Adam, do you know how many sexual assault cases are reported across the U.S. every year? You wouldn't believe it—20% of all women report an incident to the police annually."

"What?!"

Adam sucked in a sharp breath, stunned.

"And that's just the reported cases," Juno continued, her voice icy. "Nearly 50% of them involve couples or happen within marriage. But even if we remove those, the percentage is still over 10%. If we account for unreported cases, the real numbers are terrifying. What you encountered today? It happens every single day. Colleges are especially bad."

The high rate among couples and marriages made sense.

In the U.S., dating often follows a three-date rule before intimacy, but marriage is a much bigger commitment—leading to an average dating period of 4.3 years.

During that time, if a woman suddenly feels uncomfortable, she can accuse her partner of assault.

And marriage is no exception.

At first glance, it seems like a strong protection for women.

But when the percentage gets this high, it overwhelms law enforcement—turning police and society numb to the issue.

Which, in turn, only worsens the problem.

Adam was speechless.

He'd always known this was a serious issue, but he had never imagined it was this widespread.

And knowing Juno's pragmatic nature, he didn't doubt her statistics for a second.

His mind drifted back to the two officers from earlier.

They hadn't cared in the slightest. They had repeatedly pressured the victim, their expressions practically saying, "Why are you wasting our time?"

Because in their eyes, half of these cases—those involving couples and marriages—ended with settlements or dropped charges.

To victims, that meant resolution and closure.

To police? It meant wasted time and resources.

So even officers who started their careers with righteous ideals eventually became jaded, just wanting to wrap things up quickly.

"Why don't I remember this being such a big deal when we were in college?"

Adam asked, puzzled.

"It depends on the place," Juno scoffed. "Female college students report the least because they have the most to lose. They have bright futures ahead of them. If they come forward, they'll face endless humiliation—not just from classmates, but from the entire legal process."

"You mean the trial?"

Adam caught on.

"Exactly."

Juno's tone darkened.

"As a victim, if you go to trial, you'll be forced to relive every single detail. And I mean every detail—more than most novelists could ever imagine.

99% of people break down under that kind of second-wave trauma and relentless humiliation.

Even if you manage to testify, the defense attorney will poke holes in your story from every angle.

Why were you dressed so provocatively?

Were you asking for it?

You were classmates, friends—how can you prove you weren't in a relationship?

More often than not, the victim ends up emotionally wrecked, the case collapses, and justice is never served.

Over time, these crimes continue, but barely make the news.

Because by now? Nobody's surprised anymore."

Adam inhaled sharply, unsettled.

"Should I hire bodyguards for you and Karen too?"

He asked, serious.

"No need," Juno replied with a chuckle, her previous coldness melting away. "It's horrifying, yes, but it's not lawless chaos. As long as we stay cautious and avoid risky situations, random home invasions are still rare."

Adam frowned. "Rare doesn't mean never."

"Relax," Juno reassured him. "Karen and I are always together. And don't forget—we handle scalpels for a living. If someone tries anything? Heh."

She let the implication hang in the air.

"But Peggy? You should definitely keep an eye on her. She's in college, she has no defense skills, and—let's be honest—she's your precious little gem. You can't be too careful."

"I'm hiring her six female bodyguards. Right now."

Adam said without hesitation.

For once, he didn't joke back.

He was dead serious.

Chapter 440: This Isn't St. Juliana Hospital!

After hanging up the call with Juno, Adam immediately dialed his assistant, Ada. He instructed her and Lisa, another assistant, to hire six female bodyguards for Peggy—ones who could carry firearms.

With his future-driven vision and billions in capital, his assets practically grew on their own.

A superyacht or a private jet? Maybe he couldn't buy those on a whim just yet.

But hiring a few extra bodyguards? That was easy.

In the Hallway

Nurse Carol paced back and forth, looking anxious.

"What's wrong?" Adam asked, already having a good guess.

"Jenny is gone," Carol blurted out, panicking.

"Did you check with security?" Adam reminded her.

Carol froze for a moment before realizing what he meant. She immediately pulled out her phone and called security.

"She left," she said after the call, sounding dejected. "How could she leave? She should've fought back! If no one resists, those bastards will only become bolder."

Adam sighed.

This was reality.

Once the initial surge of bravery fades, most people choose to retreat.

Self-preservation is human nature.

"Carol, this was her choice," an older nurse who had been standing nearby gently interjected. "After what happened, her boyfriend didn't believe her—thought she did it on purpose—and broke up with her. She's been through enough. You can't force her to face this."

"But she said no!" Carol argued, her voice shaking. "She fought back! And because her boyfriend didn't believe her, she should be even more determined to stand up and tell the truth..."

Adam couldn't listen anymore. He turned and walked away from the ER.

He felt bad for Jenny, but he was powerless to help.

What was emotional exhaustion?

This.

At least his brain worked differently.

He mentally packed up all that negativity, encrypted it, and shoved it into a mental folder labeled Do Not Open.

Feeling refreshed, he shifted his focus back to preparing for his private medical lesson with the legendary Dr. Grey later that night.

Learning made him happy.

In the Dead of Night

The private lesson ended.

Christina was still full of energy, eager to pull Adam aside for more questions, but he refused.

He still had to head to New Jersey for his usual rounds.

Despite his mental encryption, the events of the day still lingered.

As he walked past the nurses' station, an unexpected sound reached his ears.

A sound that... shouldn't be echoing through a hospital at this hour.

Adam froze mid-step, his expression one of pure disbelief.

A group of nurses huddled together, giggling.

"...I'm not imagining this, right?" Adam asked, torn between amusement and exasperation.

"Nope."

One of the blushing nurses nodded toward a nearby patient room. "New admission. Dr. Shepherd prescribed it... until his surgery tomorrow."

"Dr. Shepherd prescribed it?"

Adam's mouth twitched.

It was way too late for this kind of nonsense.

This was New York Medical Center.

Not some anime hospital like St. Juliana's!

Curious, Adam walked over.

Room 3

Inside, a middle-aged, overweight white man lay in bed, staring intently at the TV.

He didn't even acknowledge Adam's presence.

From the speakers, those sounds continued to play.

On the couch nearby, a woman—presumably his wife—sat knitting. She looked up at Adam and smiled, completely unfazed.

Adam picked up the patient's chart.

Henry Labette, 42 years old. Herniated spinal disc. Allergic to all pain medication.

Ah. That explained it.

"Henry's in a lot of pain," the woman explained, setting her knitting aside. "The doctor said watching... these kinds of movies helps release dopamine, which eases his pain and keeps it at a tolerable level."

"You scheduled a spinal implant with Dr. Shepherd tomorrow?" Adam asked, amused.

It was a great surgery. After his trip to New Jersey, he'd try to snag it for himself.

That is, if hospital drama didn't get in the way.

He sighed internally.

Shepherd and Meredith Grey's ridiculous love saga again...

Originally, when Dr. Montgomery—Shepherd's wife—showed up, Meredith had completely ignored him.

Then the truth came out—Shepherd had been cheated on. Hard. So, Meredith softened toward him.

Next, Shepherd got his divorce papers. He was this close to being free.

Cue more flirting.

Then came the plot twist—he hesitated. Didn't sign the papers.

Meredith, pissed, ghosted him again.

For the past week, Adam had taken on a ton of surgeries that would've normally gone to Meredith. She was too caught up in her emotional rollercoaster to care.

Which suited Adam just fine.

But just when he thought she was done with Shepherd...

Boom.

Some patient must have inspired her because she went full drama mode, marched up to Shepherd, and told him:

"Pick me. Choose me. Love me."

Adam nearly choked on air when he heard.

You're almost thirty. Have some dignity.

His dream of snagging more prime surgeries? Shattered.

Now that she'd made her move, the ball was in Shepherd's court.

Regardless of what he chose, one thing was certain:

If there was a surgery, he'd take Meredith with him.

Whether it was as a devoted boyfriend or a guilt-ridden ex, she'd be there.

Adam internally rolled his eyes.

"You two are so dramatic. Just drink some hot tea and calm down."

Back to Henry

"Yes," Henry's wife nodded. "Hopefully, after the surgery, we won't need to do this anymore."

"Dr. Shepherd is one of the best neurosurgeons," Adam said, putting the chart back. He glanced at the TV and added, "But even if he prescribed this, and even if it works, you should probably turn the volume down and keep the door closed. It's still a hospital."

"Of course, Doctor."

She got up and lowered the volume.

Adam nodded and closed the door on his way out.

He couldn't really blame himself for assuming the worst.

After all, the movie Henry was watching was called...

"Slutty Nurses."

And judging by the dialogue, it featured doctors, nurses, and patients.

Perfect.

Since he was allergic to all pain meds, watching that helped distract him from his pain.

Medically? Justifiable.

But of all the movies out there...

Why choose this one?

And worse—it was the fourth installment in the series.

Adam was starting to suspect that Henry might be... a bit of a perv.

Turning back to the nurses, he warned, "Don't be alone with him."

"We won't," they giggled, faces flushed.

One nurse, eyes gleaming with mischief, added, "Dr. Duncan, he does have a herniated disc. He can't exactly move."

Adam gave her a look, then bolted.

If he stuck around any longer, these nurses might actually drag him into their antics.

And turn him into a 2D anime character.