

## TV Show 50

Chapter 50: Turning Against?

After the summer vacation.

As autumn arrives.

It's finally the day to set off.

"Mr. Duncan, Mrs. Duncan."

"Juno, Karen, welcome, welcome! Come in for some tea, won't you? Bob, go get Adam."

"Thank you, Mrs. Duncan."

"No, it's us who should thank you. Thank you for taking Adam to New York."

"You're welcome. That's what friends are for."

"Yes, exactly. Young people should make more friends."

When Juno and Karen drove over, they were warmly received by Adam's mom, Amy.

Compared to the former Amy, who used to be a headache-inducing control freak, Juno and Karen were like a breath of fresh air. Not only were they much more attractive, but their behavior (as displayed in their cooperative learning and band-playing in front of Amy) seemed impeccable. No signs of a control complex—and there were two of them!

Four times the joy, right?

Amy and Bob had been high school classmates, then sweethearts, and were now happily married with four children. She deeply believed in and cherished childhood friendships blossoming into love.

If her son could carry on this romantic tradition, build a happy family, and live a joyful life, it would undoubtedly be her greatest wish.

But... which one should he choose?

Juno was smart, witty, and generous.

Karen was gentle, quiet, and incredibly sweet.

Both were lovely girls. What a delightful dilemma!

As Amy welcomed Juno and Karen with enthusiasm while secretly evaluating this "childish" predicament, Bob descended to the basement, brimming with energy, and found Adam packing.

"Son, are you ready? Juno and Karen are here."

"Almost done."

Adam carefully packed his manuscript and photocopies but hesitated. Finally, he removed the original manuscript and solemnly handed it to Bob.

"Dad, this is my novel manuscript. You have to take good care of it. Whether it makes us rich or not—or ends up in some disaster... Well, in any case, this could be our family's golden ticket. Don't let anyone steal it or let Gaby mess it up."

"Rich? Adam, you're hilarious. Your mom has been working for four years now. We're already middle class. There's no poverty here," Bob said nonchalantly, taking the manuscript. Seeing Adam's serious expression, he shrugged. "Alright, alright, I get it. It's your first novel manuscript. I'll keep it safe and won't let Gaby ruin it."

Clearly, Bob thought the chances of someone stealing it were far less likely than his youngest son, Gaby, wreaking havoc.

Adam completely agreed.

Living in a small-town community of single-family homes surrounded by familiar faces made theft unlikely. But in a city like New York—a blend of paradise and hell—anything could happen.

Robbery and burglary were everyday occurrences.

Take "Friends," for example. Joey and Chandler's apartment got robbed—though Joey's foolishness was partly to blame.

In "The Big Bang Theory," Sheldon and Leonard's apartment was broken into for real. The lock was picked, and everything from alien notebooks to personal items was gone. The only consolation for Sheldon was that his mountain of comic books remained untouched.

But even so, Sheldon became paranoid about home invasions.

He couldn't sleep, demanded Howard install a high-tech security system, and, after getting caught in it himself and shocked into incontinence, decided to leave Pasadena altogether.

After eliminating countless locations, he finally chose one.

Only to have his luggage brazenly stolen as soon as he got off the train. Defeated, Sheldon promptly bought a return ticket to Pasadena.

Later, Sheldon, frustrated with Caltech's arrangements and overwhelmed by his friends' life changes, decided to flee again.

This time, not only was his luggage stolen, but even his pants were taken...

Though comedic, these stories reflected the grim reality Adam couldn't laugh at as someone living in this country.

His book hadn't been published yet. If the manuscript were stolen, it would be game over.

To be safe, Adam decided to only carry photocopies. Even if they were lost, the original manuscript would serve as proof of his authorship.

And who knows? The manuscript might fetch a hefty price in the future.

"Middle class?"

Seeing that Bob took his concerns seriously, Adam relaxed and joked, "There's no such thing. The term was made up by the wealthy."

"What?"

Bob looked puzzled.

Though America's education system was advanced, it catered primarily to the elite. The general public's worldview often lagged behind, sometimes shockingly so.

For the most part, whatever the elites said was accepted as truth, even during the early days of the Internet. Let alone in the less-connected '90s.

"Middle class is a total myth," Adam explained. "The terms 'bourgeoisie' and 'proletariat' refer to ownership of the means of production—assets. The so-called 'middle class' misrepresents this, equating 'assets' with 'wealth.' But owning wealth doesn't mean you control assets. The middle class is just proletariat with a bit more wealth."

"Wait, really?"

Bob gaped.

"Of course."

Adam shrugged. "What's the difference between you and those you consider 'working class'? A slightly bigger house, a nicer car, fancier clothes, and better food. But you're still working for someone else."

Bob's lips twitched. He couldn't argue with that logic.

For a moment, he felt deflated. Who wouldn't be, realizing the dream they'd worked their entire life for—a spot in the "middle class"—was an illusion?

His American Dream...

"I'm ready."

Adam's voice cut through Bob's spiraling thoughts.

"Oh."

Bob shook off the gloom, mustered a smile, and asked teasingly, "Son, between Juno and Karen, who are you going to pick?"

"Pick for what?"

Adam sighed. "Neither. They're just friends."

"Come on, don't lie to your dad."

Bob's smile turned mischievous. "You're so handsome, and they're so pretty. You're together all the time—especially Juno. Just friends?"

"..."

Adam held back a groan.

Yes, they spent a lot of time together. But had he ever once initiated contact with Juno?

Not even once!

From the beginning, it was always Juno seeking him out. He had nowhere to hide.

These days, he had grown used to her presence. Unless she deliberately dressed like Little Red Riding Hood, he almost forgot how dangerous she could be.

As for turning against her?

Not only was Juno a constant source of wisdom points, but for over four years, she had been nothing but friendly and genuine.

Adam wasn't one to antagonize others for no reason. Doing so would only spell disaster—Juno was far too composed and steady.

Besides, even if he leveled up his physical stats to Wolverine's level, what good would it do?

If she buried him in cement and tossed him into the ocean, he'd still be helpless.

Sometimes, living smart was the only way.