

TV Show 51

Chapter 51: Fellow Travelers

Outside the Duncan Household.

"Drive safely."

"Call us when you get there."

"Goodbye, Adam~"

"I will. Don't worry. Goodbye, Charlie~"

Amidst his parents' reluctance, Teddy's enthusiastic waving while holding Charlie, and Gabe's lazy gaze, Adam got into the passenger seat, waved goodbye, and officially set off for Columbia University in New York.

Crossing States and Counties

This time, since the three of them took turns driving and they'd already traveled this route once before, there wasn't much to admire along the way. They drove almost non-stop, taking barely any breaks.

"Adam, *Lord of the Mysteries* has the magic of *The Lord of the Rings*, the suspense of *Sherlock Holmes*, and a touch of Eastern mysticism. It would make a great TV series," Juno said as she drove. "If you want to do it justice, HBO would be the best choice. When publishing, it's better to sell only the book's reproduction rights and keep the film and merchandise rights. That could be a goldmine."

Adam nodded in agreement. "I was thinking the same thing."

Film and merchandise rights can generate far more income than just book sales—especially since **Lord of the Mysteries** would be perfect as an American TV series.

Adam even suspected that when Cuttlefish first wrote **Lord of the Mysteries**, he was crafting it like a TV show script. The pacing and scene design had a distinct American series vibe.

Of course, given its darker tone, it wouldn't fit Disney's family-friendly brand. To truly capture the essence of the story, HBO—known for its mature content—would be the ideal platform.

HBO, a cable television network owned by Warner Bros. (the same parent company as DC Comics), doesn't rely on advertising but on subscription fees.

****Want to watch? Pay up!****

With so many free shows available, how can HBO dare to charge? Don't they know that "free" is the way to go?

****Nope!****

HBO knows this very well. Despite the wave of free content, they chose to pursue premium subscription-based programming. They invested heavily in high-quality shows to attract viewers tired of mindless soap operas.

The result? Over the past two decades, HBO's subscriber base has steadily grown. In the future, nine out of ten paying households would choose HBO, totaling 35 million subscribers.

With hits like **The Sopranos**, **Sex and the City**, and **True Blood**, HBO earned the reputation: ****"If it's from HBO, it's top-notch."****

In 2011, **Game of Thrones** shattered the line between television and cinema.

Before that, TV shows were seen as "cheaply made," while movies were grand, meticulously crafted productions. But every season and episode of *Game of Thrones* was produced with the budget and process of a film.

From then on, high-quality American TV shows could be considered cinematic universes.

****No one pays for nothing!****

****Free content is the most expensive!****

This truth is universal, throughout history and across cultures.

If *Lord of the Mysteries* were to become a TV series, Adam's first choice would be HBO. Even if they offered less money, he'd still consider it.

Money is just a number at a certain point. He would never sacrifice the integrity of *Lord of the Mysteries* for a bigger paycheck from a low-quality production company.

"By the way, when's the second volume of *Lord of the Mysteries* coming out?"

"..."

Adam suddenly didn't feel like talking.

The Perils of the Open Road

In the vast, sparsely populated stretches of America, highways cut through endless deserts, where hours can pass without seeing another car. If something were to go wrong, no one would know.

That's why so many American horror movies are set in desolate places like this.

Adam and his friends found themselves in a similar situation.

On the long, straight road, there were no cars ahead or behind for miles.

After rotating drivers several times, it was Adam's turn. Karen refused to sit up front, choosing to stay in the back with Juno, who was using her as a pillow.

Adam occasionally caught Karen's gaze in the rearview mirror. Her eyes sparkled with curiosity, and the car was filled with a heavy silence.

They'd been driving for a while when suddenly, a car appeared behind them.

Adam's heart skipped a beat as he checked the rearview mirror. It was an old Ford with a luggage box strapped to the roof. He relaxed slightly but stayed cautious.

This was America, after all—on an empty highway in the middle of nowhere. Anything could happen.

The car behind them honked twice before speeding up to drive alongside them.

The Strange Encounter

"Hey, man! Got a question for you," shouted the driver, a short guy, through his open window. In the passenger seat sat a curly-haired woman who gave Adam an awkward smile—the kind of dimpled smile Adam found irresistible.

The short guy continued, "Do you think men and women can be just friends?"

Judging by the backseat filled with luggage, they were probably on a road trip just like Adam and his friends. Adam grinned, "It depends on the situation."

"See?" The curly-haired woman rolled her eyes at the short guy. "Your theory is nonsense. Not all men think like you."

"Oh, come on. Be honest, man," the short guy pressed, "When you first saw her, did you really just want to be friends?"

"Harry!"

The curly-haired woman blushed and shot an annoyed look at the short guy before sneaking a glance at Adam, whose average looks seemed to reassure her.

"What?" Harry shrugged. "You're beautiful. Unless he's not into women, his first thought would've been about you in an... indescribable way. That's just biology. Can't fight evolution."

"That's not always true," Adam replied. "If neither finds the other attractive, then friendship is possible."

The woman blushed even more, realizing Adam subtly agreed with Harry.

Harry laughed. "So, if they don't find each other attractive, then they don't see each other as potential partners. That's why they can be friends. But if there's even a spark of attraction, that so-called friendship is fragile. The slightest temptation would shatter it. That's just human nature."

As he spoke, Harry glanced at Juno and Karen in Adam's backseat, a look of admiration flashing in his eyes. His smile became more genuine as he teased, "Dude, you of all people must know what I mean..."

Adam's eye twitched. **Who the hell is your "dude"?**