

## TV Show 521

### Chapter 521: Too Wild!

At the medical center, in the X-ray room...

The "dutiful daughter" totally lost it. Her outburst was so over-the-top, it rivaled the eccentricity of Prince Ning from Flirting Scholar—nobody saw it coming!

"Of course, sweetheart," the bald guy lying there said, his face a mix of guilt and doting affection.

"Ha! Keep spoiling her, then!" the curvy woman snapped, shooting her ex-husband a look of disdain. Then she turned to the gleeful daughter. "You're old enough to get that your parents have needs too—and yeah, we mess up sometimes!"

"Mess up?" the daughter fired back, not letting her mom off the hook. "To me, this looks more like you being a total homewrecker!"

"Hey! I'm your mother! You can't talk to me like that!" the curvy woman barked, fuming.

If this were Sheldon's mom, Mary, that line would've had Sheldon bowing his head and muttering, "Yes, ma'am!" in a heartbeat. But nope—this was a real "dutiful daughter" in action.

"Some role model you are!" the daughter shot back, digging in for her new car, rent, and spending money. "Look at you, hooking up with your ex, cheating on your husband—OMG! I wonder if your husband would call this just a 'mistake' if he saw this?"

"..."

The curvy woman went silent. Not because she was out of words, but because she caught the hidden threat in her daughter's tone. Her ex was single, no baggage there. But she had a happy family—her beloved husband, Tom. Risking all that just to bicker with her daughter? Not a smart move.

She sold real estate for a living—flexible enough to bend unless she was up against a rival who knew her game and could outmaneuver her.

"And you, Dad!" The daughter, riding high from shutting down her powerhouse mom, turned her sights on her father. "What are you even doing? I thought you finally had a life! Last time you went out with what's-her-name, I didn't even bug you for that LV bag I wanted—just to support you! And this is how you repay me?"

"I'm sorry, honey," the bald guy said, practically shrinking with shame.

"'Sorry' doesn't cut it!" she pressed. "If I'd known you'd pull this, I wouldn't have skipped that LV bag..."

"I'll buy it for you," he said quickly. Hearing "LV bag" twice, he knew she'd upped the ante. Caught in this mess, all he could do was open his wallet.

Adam caught the sly smirk flickering across the daughter's face. Smooth move, he thought.

"Okay, folks, X-ray's done," Adam announced, holding up the fresh scan. He pointed at two entangled rings on the image. "Just as I suspected—your IUD slipped, snagged your husband's piercing, and got lodged in your vaginal wall."

"A piercing?" the daughter gasped, gaping at her fifty-something dad.

"It's complicated, sweetie," the bald guy mumbled, looking away, mortified.

"This is all your fault!" the daughter roared, rounding on her mom. "Dad wouldn't have risked something this crazy if he wasn't trying to impress you! Happy now?"

Adam and the team exchanged glances—they could all see how fake her outrage was.

"So, what do you want this time?" the curvy woman asked with a cold laugh.

"..."

The daughter faltered. This was what she hated most about her mom. Her dad? He'd play along willingly, even knowing her game. But her mom always fought back.

"It's not about what I want!" the daughter insisted, ignoring the weird looks from everyone. "You owe Dad some compensation! How about this—upgrade my new car with heated seats. It's getting cold, and when I drive Dad around, he'll be comfy."

"..."

Adam and the others silently marveled. This girl's shamelessness was next-level. Even Raj from *The Big Bang Theory*—the king of humblebrags—would tip his hat. His dad got him a BMW, sure, but heated seats? Pay for it yourself, kid! Stingy old man—push him hard enough, and Raj would've shelled out.

"Enough!" the curvy woman snapped, sitting up straight in a huff.

"Ow!" the bald guy yelped.

"Hold still!" Adam said, dropping the gossip to step in. He steadied the woman. "We're about to unhook you two—don't move, got it?"

Both nodded.

"Christina, watch the screen and help me adjust the angle," Adam directed. "Liz, Meredith—each of you hold one of Mr. Morse's legs. Wait for my signal."

"Ma'am, I'll lift and rotate you—stay calm, okay?" he added.

Christina moved to the computer, studying the tangled rings on the screen, mentally mapping them to real life, ready to guide Adam like he was backing out of a tight parking spot.

Liz and Meredith each grabbed a leg.

"Liz, lift his leg to 20 degrees," Adam said, running the simulation in his head.

"20 degrees? Does it have to be exact?" Liz asked, struggling with the bald guy's leg.

"Ow!"

"Ow!"

Both the man and woman cried out in pain.

"Just keep it steady—stop when I say," Adam instructed, calculating the angle precisely. "Good—stop! Hold it there."

He reached out, cradling the curvy woman's body, and began rotating her counterclockwise, slow and steady.

On the screen, Christina watched the rings start to separate. "Almost there," she said.

"I've got it," Adam replied—his mental 3D model was sharper than the computer's.

"OMG, Sonya!"

"OMG, Adam—no, not now!"

The big movements were too much for the couple to handle. The curvy woman, who'd been married to this guy for 19 years and secretly sparring with him for 5 more, snapped at him, terrified of an even worse scene unfolding in front of everyone.

Her daughter was right there, after all. Understanding was one thing—watching it live was a whole other nightmare.

But that outburst? It tipped Liz and the others over the edge—they cracked up.

"Pfft!"

"What are you doing?!" the daughter shouted, finally showing some real filial piety. "My parents are in pain, and you're laughing?"

"Sorry, sorry—we're not laughing at that!" Liz said, pointing at Adam, who was still rotating the woman. "It's just... we didn't expect Mr. Morse to be an 'Adam' too. And, uh, your parents aren't exactly in pain..."

"..."

Adam's mouth twitched. "Dr. Stevenson, hold still and zip it!"

"Yes, sir!" Liz chirped, snapping to attention.

Chapter 522: Convinced from the Heart

Medical Center. X-Ray Room.

A hilarious scene unfolded in front of everyone.

Adam was slowly turning a plump woman counterclockwise, fully aware of why Liz and the others were giggling.

And honestly, he felt a little offended.

The bald guy was also named Adam.

It reminded him of his own bald dad, Bob—talk about an insult!

The plump woman calling out that name in that tone at this moment? To Liz, who didn't know the full story, it definitely sounded ambiguous.

No surprise there—Liz and the crew immediately thought of that classic romantic movie famous for its "upside-down, all-around" position. When the "heroine" shouted a name they all knew, and the guy with that name was right there, holding her up and spinning her...

Yeah, that's the second offense! 😊

Good thing Adam was a pro.

He didn't let it get to him and kept his movements steady.

"Almost there!"

Christina, glued to the computer, chimed in, "3, 2, 1! Unhook!"

"Oh! Sanya!"

The bald guy let out a dazed grin.

Beep beep beep.

Beep beep beep.

Suddenly, the monitor blared with an alarm.

"Blue alert!"

"He's having a heart attack!"

"Aortic tear! Notify the OR now—we're heading there ASAP! He needs surgery pronto, or he's a goner!"

"Call Dr. Burke."

"Dr. Burke's already in surgery."

"Call Dr. Green."

While performing CPR on the bald guy, Adam took charge. "Liz, Meredith, you stay here. Take this lady to Dr. Montgomery to deal with her dislodged IUD."

"Christina, you're with me in the OR."

"Got it!"

Christina was pumped. Heart surgery? Her favorite! 🤩

"Let's roll, everyone."

Adam straddled the gurney, still doing CPR on the overexcited bald guy, and waved the team to rush toward the operating room.

OR 2.

"Dr. Green," Christina said, flashing Leonard a 讨好 smile.

"Dr. Yang," Leonard replied, glancing at Adam in the lead surgeon spot. He grinned, "I've got something else after this, so I can't stay for the whole thing. You take first assist this time."

"Thank you, Dr. Green!"

Christina was over the moon.

Leonard stepped into the second assist role with a smile.

He got it—he admired Adam's approach.

Every great doctor needs a solid team.

And every chief surgeon needs a few trusted, top-notch doctors under them.

Take Dr. Burke, Dr. Shepherd, and Dr. Montgomery with Chief of Surgery Richard, for example.

Christina's talent? Everyone knew she was a star.

If Adam weren't shining so bright, she'd probably be the top intern hands down.

A doctor that good? Train her right, and she's your right-hand woman.

Normally, though, someone like her wouldn't settle for playing second fiddle to a peer.

Even a legend like Alice Grey couldn't keep an exceptional guy like Richard fully in line.

It works better when there's a generational gap—like with Chief Richard and Dr. Burke—where one's been the mentor and the other the student.

That age difference makes it smoother. The junior has a shot at taking over once the senior steps down.

But with Adam? He's on another level. Crushing it as an intern and winning everyone over? Building a loyal team early? No problem at all.

The ceiling for a great doctor is heading a subspecialty under general surgery.

For an exceptional one, it's Chief of Surgery.

And Adam? He could totally aim for hospital dean someday.

What dean doesn't have a few trusted department heads in their corner?

Without them, you're toast—either clashing with your staff or getting steamrolled by the board.

Only with enough key allies can you keep the lower ranks in check, fend off the board's nonsense, and truly run the hospital with full control.

In Good Doctor, the dean didn't back Murphy—flawed as he was—against everyone's objections just to "give hope" or "set an example," like he claimed.

No, his people straight-up asked him, "Is this your guy?"

As long as Adam keeps growing fast and steady, even someone as talented as Christina has room to rise and become a loyal ally. No issue there.

Leonard was pleased with Adam's ambition and foresight—happy to see it play out.

"Scalpel 10," Adam said, reaching out to start the surgery, unfazed by the chatter.

The procedure went smoothly.

Then the small talk kicked in.

"Ex-husband and ex-wife stuck together, huh?"

Leonard, now clued in on the bizarre situation, didn't look thrilled. "They're divorced—why are they still hanging out every day? What, is that the only place with jobs?"

Clearly, he was thinking of his precious eldest daughter. First, she marries that jerk Ross out of nowhere, then divorces him just as randomly.

Now, because they still hang out all the time, she's pregnant with his kid—Leonard's first granddaughter—about to be born an illegitimate child!

"After this, they'll probably learn their lesson," Adam said with a chuckle. "Who knows, maybe they'll even remarry."

"Hmph!" Leonard scoffed. "Who'd want to remarry him?"

Adam just smiled, letting it slide.

"...What, has he hinted at that?"

Leonard's tough-guy act didn't last—he couldn't help himself.

"Nope," Adam said, grinning as he operated. "But I bet once I tell him about Mr. Morse's story, he'll feel totally different.

His second ex-wife, Emily, already proved with her own blood that he wouldn't leave his friend group—or Rachel—for his wife.

So even if he and Rachel both start new families, hanging out daily? They're bound to end up like Mr. Morse here.

And when that happens, it'll be Emma watching."

"He wouldn't dare!" Leonard exploded.

"He won't," Adam said with a laugh. "Plus, Rachel's about to need induction. Maybe tonight he'll propose—who knows?"

"After this surgery, you go tell that idiot this story," Leonard ordered. "There's still time. If he proposes before Emma's born and they marry right away—no illegitimate kid—I'll forgive him."

"Proposing's doable, but the wedding timeline's tight, no?" Adam hesitated.

"Tight how?" Leonard glared. "They already got hitched in Vegas once. This is a remarriage—just do a quick proposal, hit city hall, done. The big ceremony can wait. I don't care if it happens or not."

"Makes sense..." Adam chuckled. "I'll get city hall staff to come do an expedited house call for them."

"Good, good!" Leonard nodded, satisfied.

First assist Christina, watching it all: "... Totaly convinced.

Chapter 523: Does Fooling Someone for a Lifetime Count as Deception?

Medical Center, Operating Room 2

"Christina, ever done a continuous diagonal cardiac suture?" Adam asked with a playful grin, glancing at Christina. She was staring at him eagerly, her single-lidded eyes peeking over her mask, practically sparkling with longing. He couldn't help but chuckle inside.

"Nope!" Christina shook her head.

"Think you can handle giving it a shot?" Adam raised an eyebrow.

"Absolutely!" Her voice brimmed with confidence and excitement 😊.

"Dr. Green?" Adam turned to Leonard.

"You're the lead surgeon, your call," Leonard replied with a laugh.

"Christina, come on over," Adam gestured.

The critical moment of saving the bald guy's life had passed, and Adam had already secured the lifespan points he needed. This continuous diagonal cardiac suture? He'd done it tons of times. By now, it was just muscle memory—second nature. With his control over his body and mind, he'd mastered it after just a few tries, reaching peak proficiency.

Letting Christina take a stab at it was a smart move. Win her over, build some loyalty—it was a worthwhile trade.

"Thanks!" Christina beamed, practically bouncing as she stepped up from her assistant spot to Adam's side. Under his guidance, she took the suturing tools, took a deep breath, and got ready.

"Hold it steady, don't grip too hard—nice, just like that," Adam coached from the sidelines.

Christina didn't disappoint. She was Adam's top protégé for a reason. Sure, she wasn't at his cosmetic-stitch level of finesse, but her fundamentals were rock-solid. That's why he was cool with giving her this chance. If it were Liz, Meredith, or George? No way, not a chance 😊.

Up in the Observation Room

The place was buzzing like a beehive.

"Oh my God!"

"Christina's actually doing a continuous diagonal cardiac suture!"

"Did she sleep with Adam or something?"

"Ugh, she gets the perks and the happiness? So unfair!"

"No way! There's no chance Dr. Duncan's into her—I refuse to believe it!"

"Then explain why he handed her this opportunity. You think there's no deal involved?"

"They're friends! Maybe Dr. Duncan's just helping out a buddy."

"Oh, come on! Have you ever seen an intern hand over a surgery like this to another intern—their rival, no less?"

"...Dr. Duncan's not your average intern. Haven't you noticed he's basically leading surgeries now?"

"...Whatever, I still don't buy it. There's gotta be some shady deal between them!"

The gossip was flying, and most people were convinced Christina and Adam had some kind of sneaky "friends with benefits" arrangement. Adam, of course, had no clue—and even if he did, he wouldn't care. The truth always came out eventually, thanks to the sharpest little nurses who got him. They'd squash the rumors fast, and soon it'd be hospital gospel: "Dr. Duncan's such a stand-up guy. Man, I'd love to work under him."

And Christina? She'd started off just thrilled to get a free shot at this, but now she'd have to publicly acknowledge the huge favor. Do this a few more times, and that "just happy to freeload" vibe would crumble under the weight of public opinion and guilt.

Dr. Duncan's been so good to you—how could you turn against him or compete with him?

Adam's actually pretty great to me. He's climbing fast—maybe sticking with him isn't a bad idea.

As the old saying goes: Every problem's a mindset issue. Get your head straight, and the problem solves itself.

Once the suture was done, Christina was still buzzing with excitement, but Adam took back the reins. You don't hand out all the goodies at once—dole them out slowly, keep 'em hungry. Like eating good food: stuff yourself silly, and it's misery. Leave 'em wanting more, and that's the sweet spot 😊.

The surgery went off without a hitch.

Afterward

Adam and Christina went to meet the bald guy's ex-wife and daughter.

"How's my dad?" The daughter, still showing a shred of decency, rushed up anxiously.

"Surgery was a success. The next 24 to 48 hours are critical, but if nothing goes wrong, he'll be fine," Adam said calmly.

"Thank you, Dr. Duncan!" The daughter teared up, then lunged forward, wrapping her arms tight around Adam's waist in a grateful hug.

"Jenny!" The curvy ex-wife snapped after a moment, noticing her daughter wasn't letting go. The young, handsome doctor's face was starting to look a little helpless. Her tone turned sharp.

"What?" Jenny finally let go, glaring at her mom. "Can't I be happy Dad's surgery went well? Do you hate seeing us happy or something?"

"Enough! I'm your mother! You don't talk to me like that!" The ex-wife exploded.

"Or what?" Jenny shot back, smirking like she had the upper hand.

"Your rent, your car, your spending money—pay for it all yourself from now on. Don't expect a dime from us," the ex-wife said with a cold laugh.

"No way!" Jenny freaked out. "That's my mental health treatment fund—you have to pay it!"

"Or what?" The ex-wife echoed her daughter's earlier taunt.

"You—!" Jenny was fuming.

"You gonna threaten me?" The ex-wife smirked. "Let me tell you something—I'm going home and confessing everything to Tom."

"What?!" Jenny's jaw dropped. "No way!"

"Just watch," the ex-wife said icily. "The first time it happened, I felt so guilty. I wasn't going to tell Tom because I thought it'd never happen again. But it kept happening, over and over, until one day, I stopped feeling guilty altogether. Now, with this mess—and thanks to your little reminder—I'm wide awake. I can't keep doing this. The truth always comes out. I'd rather Tom hear it from me than someone else. Because I love him!"

"..." Adam and Christina exchanged a look, both stunned by this dramatic love declaration. Uh... wow. Didn't see that coming! 😬

Jenny was floored too. After a long pause, realizing her mom wasn't bluffing, she panicked. "No, Mom, wait—I'm sorry! I won't tell Uncle Tom! I don't need the heated seats, okay? Or the LV bag! Don't be mad—I'll drop the mental health fund too. Just help with rent and maybe a new car? We can talk it out! You don't have to pay, just don't stop Dad from pitching in. Still no? I'm your daughter, come on...!"

Adam shook his head. The older generation's still got the upper hand. Jenny thought she could leverage some dirt to blackmail her mom, but her fierce mom turned the tables and had her spinning. Maybe the ex-wife really meant to confess and break free from the threats earlier—but seeing how easy it was to control her daughter now, that urge faded. After all, slapping a "cheater" label on herself, even for true love, wasn't exactly a comfy fit. Why bother when she could keep it under wraps? As long as her beloved Tom stayed in the dark 'til he kicked the bucket, does fooling someone for a lifetime even count as deception? Hmm. She'd promised him a lifetime of happiness, hadn't she?

Chapter 524: Don't Stir Up Trouble

Medical Center

"Sanya!"

Just as Adam and Christina were watching the fierce mama bear tear into her timid daughter, catching a fleeting smirk in the mama bear's eyes, an anxious male voice cut through the air.

"Tom."

The fierce mama's face froze in an instant.

Adam turned toward the voice.

A lean man in his fifties, with an impressive head of hair, was hurrying toward the plump woman, worry etched all over his face. From the way he called her, it was obvious this was Tom—the guy the plump woman adored and the bald dude envied.

"Sanya, thank God, are you okay?"

Tom scanned his wife up and down.

"I'm fine."

The plump woman forced a smile. "Tom, what are you doing here?"

She distinctly remembered calling her husband earlier, using her multitasking superpower to smooth over his disappointment after she'd bailed on their plans.

"I tried calling you about something, but it rang forever. A nurse finally picked up and told me you were at the hospital."

Tom explained, "Why didn't you tell me? Are you feeling okay? Oh, Jenny, you're here too."

The plump woman cursed inwardly.

It must've been during her surgery.

"Hey, Uncle Tom!"

The timid daughter flashed a cheeky grin and waved.

Sure, she'd been intimidated by her mom earlier, but now it hit her—her mom was the one who should be panicking, not her!

The small talk and lovey-dovey vibes that followed? Adam tuned it all out.

But according to the nurses' gossip later—

At first, the plump woman dodged and weaved, keeping it cool and covering her tracks. But this wild, headline-worthy case was the talk of the night—impossible to escape.

When Tom stepped out to use the restroom, he overheard people chatting about it. It took him a minute, but he finally pieced it together: the star of the story was his beloved wife.

Even a good guy's got a breaking point.

The understanding and forgiveness she hoped for? Yeah, that was a pipe dream.

A slap flew across her face.

Classic American tough-guy mode: activated.

It turned into a full-on beatdown until security stepped in and dragged them out.

Meanwhile, Adam was there to find Ross.

Monica and the gang had already headed home, leaving only a fidgety Ross behind.

Outside the VIP ward—

"Mrs. Geller."

Adam walked up just as Ross's mom was chatting with him in the hallway.

"Oh, Adam!"

Mrs. Geller gave him a warm hug, exchanged a few pleasantries, shot Ross a knowing look, and then excused herself.

"Adam, you'll never guess what my mom gave me."

Ross's tone was pure disbelief.

"What?"

Adam grinned. "Don't tell me it's the family ring for a proposal?"

"How'd you know?!"

Ross was floored.

"Come on!"

Adam rolled his eyes. "It's not rocket science. No old-school parent wants their grandkids born out of wedlock—especially when you and Rachel are such a perfect match. This is your last shot, man..."

"OMG!"

Ross's eyes went wide. "You sound exactly like my mom!"

"So, what's your call?"

Adam chuckled.

"No way. Rachel and I agreed—we're not getting married just because of a baby."

Ross shook his head.

"Then why'd you go and make a baby?"

Adam snorted.

"Don't blame me!"

Ross flared up. "It's the condom company's fault! They didn't make the 'not 100% effective' warning big enough!"

"Follow me."

Seeing Ross was too stubborn to get it, Adam dragged him to witness the bald guy's dramatic retelling. After painting a vivid picture and pointing out that the bald guy was basically Ross's future self, Adam walked off.

His job was done. The rest was up to Ross's conscience.

Hmm.

Just conscience, though.

Because Adam didn't buy that Ross and Rachel still had any love left.

Late that night—

After finishing his daily tutoring session with Alice Grey, Adam was about to head home when Ross tracked him down.

"You're proposing?"

Adam asked calmly. "You sure?"

"I'm sure."

Ross nodded firmly. "I want to give Emma a real family."

"Nice."

Adam gave him an approving pat on the shoulder and grinned. "I'll round up the crew. A moment like this needs everyone there."

Not for Rachel, but for Emma.

Pretty real stuff.

"You think Rachel will say yes?"

Ross's nerves were kicking in.

"Relax, she'll say yes."

Adam smirked confidently. "Just don't waver. If you're halfway through and she throws a curveball, don't let her talk you out of it. She needs to feel you mean it."

"No way that'd happen..."

Ross started to protest, but Adam's "be real with me" stare shut him up.

He was a proud guy, after all.

Or maybe this proposal didn't carry the same fire as his years-long crush on Rachel.

Or deep down, Rachel's value in his eyes had plummeted.

If this proposal hit even a tiny snag, he'd probably lose it and bail.

Adam had to give him a heads-up, box him in with words, and yank the ladder out from under him. If Ross tried to back out after that, he'd crash and burn.

Monica and the crew got the word and rushed over.

So—

Rachel, who'd been frantically looking for Ross to help her induce labor, saw the setup and had a hunch.

When Ross dropped to one knee and popped the question—

It was like an ancient emperor passing the throne. The next in line always pretends to refuse a few times for show, right?

At first, Rachel said no.

Obviously.

She wasn't dumb.

She could tell how much of this was Ross's heart talking—and as a woman with sharp instincts, who knew this guy inside out, how could she not?

Under Adam and the gang's glares, a frustrated and slightly ticked-off Ross swallowed his rising temper and kept asking.

Finally—

Rachel said yes.

Why?

A newborn party had already exposed how clueless she was about parenting.

When her mom offered to help raise the kid—

At first, she hated the idea.

Young people don't wanna live with their parents, duh.

But after mistaking a breast pump for a baby beer tap, using the dirty diaper bin for clean ones, and learning babies need ten diaper changes a day—each one a trip to the outside trash that'd drive anyone nuts—plus realizing you can't just leave a baby alone...

After all these basic parenting fails, she hugged her mom tight and begged, "Mom, please don't ever leave me!"

Her single-mom bravado? Gone in a flash.

Everything's easier said than done.

And this was just the start—being a single mom is no joke!

In that state, how could Rachel not want to get back with Ross, the baby's dad?

If she didn't—

She wouldn't have been so eager to have Ross help her induce labor.

Back when she'd truly dumped him, she wouldn't even let him fantasize about her.

Now, after a few "no's" for the sake of pride, she'd played her part.

Seeing Ross was one push away from giving up, she couldn't keep stalling.

"Woah!"

"Congrats!"

"Finally tying the knot!"

The friends went wild with applause and cheers.

Ross and Rachel, sticking to classic sitcom vibes, started a full-on French kiss in front of everyone.

Monica (his little sis) and the gang watched with wide eyes, totally unfazed.

"Ahem."

Adam cut in. "Alright, alright, proposal's a success, but the paperwork's gotta wait 'til tomorrow when City Hall's open. So, Ross, don't stir up any trouble —head home. We don't need you here tonight."

Ross: "..."

What the heck?

He hadn't wanted this before, but now that he'd nailed the proposal and was pumped to play birth coach, they didn't need him?!

Chapter 525: Outlaw Adam

Medical Center. VIP Maternity Ward.

"Register?"

Rachel blinked, a bit confused. "Tomorrow?"

"Of course!"

Adam grinned. "This is your last shot. If we don't register, Emma's gonna pop out as an illegitimate kid. And trust me, Leonard will not be happy to have that chat with you. 😊"

"Register it is!"

Rachel didn't hesitate this time.

"But is there enough time?"

Monica frowned, worried. "The fastest place to get it done is Vegas—you can do it on the spot—but Rachel can't exactly travel right now."

"Oh, it's not just the West Coast with Vegas," Joey piped up, excited. "We've got Atlantic City right here on the East Coast in Jersey! People love getting hitched there too!"

It's 1998, by the way. Atlantic City, neck-and-neck with Vegas as one of America's top gambling hubs, was still riding high, just shy of its peak. With gorgeous beaches, cozy resorts, and New York's rich crowd nearby, it's no wonder it's a hot spot for East Coast weddings.

"Nah, that won't work," Monica shook her head. "New York State law says it takes at least three days, and Atlantic City's no exception."

"What if we grab a boat, sail out to international waters, and let the captain marry them?" Chandler suggested with a smirk.

America runs on maritime law, after all. Out at sea, the captain's word is gold—he can totally officiate a wedding whenever he wants.

"I've got a boat! I'm a captain!" Joey jumped in, waving his hand like a kid. "I'll marry you guys!"

"New York's right by the ocean. Sailing out's easy. That could actually work," Monica nodded thoughtfully.

"Hold up, guys, you're overthinking this," Adam cut in, chuckling. "It's not that complicated. Did you forget who I am? 😊"

"No way!" Joey whined. "The captain thing's cool! Let's do that!"

"Oh, really?" Adam shot back, sharp as ever. "Your little boat—how many people can it even hold? What, we all huddle up for the ceremony?"

"..."

Joey went quiet, totally stumped.

That boat of his? Yeah, it's the one he snagged at an auction with Rachel back when he was broke. He'd raised his hand like it was a game, not realizing bids were legally binding. Ended up stuck with a tiny sailboat he had to pay off in installments. It's not exactly spacious—cramming everyone on board would be a tight squeeze.

"It'd be cozier that way, more fun!" Joey mumbled, not ready to give up.

"Even if it worked, Rachel's in no shape to leave the hospital," Adam said, brushing Joey off.

"So, no Vegas, no sea wedding," Monica said, puzzled. "Rachel could go into labor any minute. What's left?"

"A judge!" Adam announced with a sly grin.

"A judge?"

Everyone stared at him, totally lost.

"Normally, New York State's process takes at least three days," Adam explained, breaking it down. "But in America, there's always a loophole. Convince a judge, and we can skip the wait entirely."

"Wait, that's a thing?"

They're just regular folks, so this blew their minds.

"You bet," Adam laughed. "The law's flexible when it makes sense. Even guilt or innocence gets decided by a jury, right? For something small like this, a judge can greenlight it no problem. Think about soldiers shipping out overseas—do they have to wait 'til they're back to tie the knot?"

"Ohhh!" Everyone got it now.

"But I'm not a soldier heading off to war," Ross said, scratching his head.

"It's just an example, dude," Adam said, rolling his eyes. "Point is, if the judge buys your reason, you're golden. Don't worry, you don't even need to cook up some fancy excuse—I'll handle it."

"How?" Ross asked, still not catching up.

Everyone else groaned and shot him a look.

"Come on, Ross!" Monica snapped. "Adam's so smooth-talking, what judge wouldn't give him the okay?"

"Heh, rich people and their big-shot privileges," Phoebe muttered, smirking.

"Don't be jealous," Adam teased. "Work hard and make some cash! This is nothing. With enough money, you can skip a few days' wait for a marriage license like it's a breeze. Heck, even if you're a psycho serial killer, there's a dozen ways to walk free in America."

"No way!" Ross shouted. "That's impossible!"

"Oh, it's not," Adam said, eyeing him. "Simplest trick in the book: get a presidential pardon. Done."

"..."

Ross's jaw dropped.

And yeah, it's legit. In America, the president can pardon anyone they want.

"But—but the president wouldn't do that!" Ross stammered, refusing to believe it.

"Oh, you sure about that?" Adam teased. "Did you know every president pardons a ton of people? Like, a lot."

He rattled off some stats. Even the future record for the least pardons—200 by a certain minority president who cared about his image—wasn't a thing yet. Right now, the numbers were in the high hundreds, sometimes over a thousand. And these aren't saints we're talking about—they're people with records, criminals by any definition. Besides a few buddies, how do you think those long lists get made? Connections and cash, obviously.

Say Adam committed a crime someday. Nothing small—think big, like a federal felony across state lines. He'd jet off to a country with no extradition, lay low. Juno and the crew would toss a few million into a presidential campaign. Years later, when that president's term ends, why let power go to waste? Adam's name would conveniently pop up on the pardon list. Announcement drops, and that night, he's flying back on a private jet. No matter how bad the crime, poof—all sins wiped clean. Fresh start.

That's the magic of it. The art of the deal, Western style! 🤖

Rich folks swear by it.

Take that guy from Infernal Affairs, Liu Jianming, whining about wanting to be good but never making it happen. To Adam, it's just pointless moaning. If Liu was half as clever as he thought, he could've worked harder, snagged a royal pardon from the Queen, and been a "good guy" no problem.

Well... okay, maybe not. By then, the Queen's clout was pretty much kaput. For a crook like Liu to dodge jail, keep everything, and go legit under "fair and just" sunlight? Yeah, no shot. That famous line of his hit hard because it spoke for every criminal who missed the old days—when you could kill and not pay, or owe debts forever. Those wild West good times? Long gone.

"No way!" everyone shouted at once.

In America, the privilege pecking order runs deep. Even a British accent makes them feel fancy and superior—it's baked into their subconscious. They knew this stuff happened, took it for granted, but never really thought about it. Hearing how many got off scot-free, even monsters like serial killers, shattered their worldview. They were shook.

This was too wild! Too harsh and unfair for the little guy!

"Ahem," Adam coughed, dialing it back after spooking them. "Let's drop that for now. We're here for Ross and Rachel's wedding. Chill, I've got this. Tomorrow, the minute City Hall opens, I'll have someone come straight to the hospital to fast-track it for you."

They all nodded, still dazed.

Adam sighed inwardly, a mix of regret and amusement. This was nothing—barely scratching the surface—and they were already freaking out?

Ross, fine, he's a college prof living in his ivory tower, clueless about the real world. But Phoebe? She's been scraping by at the bottom forever—how was she acting like this was some earth-shattering revelation?

Oh well.

Chapter 526: Just a Lump of Fat

Medical Center.

Late at night.

The proposal ceremony wrapped up in a weird vibe. Everyone scattered their own way. Ross got chased off by Adam—yep, kicked out! Compared to the others moping around, stuck in their school-museum-university ivory towers, Ross snapped out of it quick with a little mental trick.

Fake!

Fake!

All fake!

Once he shook it off, Ross, the groom-to-be, started getting some bold ideas. Engagement night. Bachelor night. Come on, no action? That's just lame! He and Rachel didn't care if Emma was "illegitimate" or what the old folks thought. But as the teary-eyed bride-and-groom-to-be stared into each other's eyes, Adam swooped in like a buzzkill, shooping Ross out.

"No lip-syncing excuses. I'll have someone watching tonight," Adam cut through their dreamy nonsense.

"Damn it!" Ross and Rachel cursed in unison.

"Get some rest, you two. You're getting married first thing tomorrow. Don't you want to be at your best for the big moment?" Adam warned. "Ross being the ugliest groom is one thing, but Rachel, you aiming for the ugliest bride crown too?"

"No way!" Rachel shut down her wild ideas fast. Why risk eternal beauty for a fleeting thrill? Tomorrow's a huge deal—photos, videos, the works! 😊

"Adam, I haven't prepped anything though!" Rachel patted herself down, worried. "I'm getting married in this?"

"Small stuff, don't sweat it," Adam waved it off. "Just rest up, recharge, and I'll handle the rest."

Everyone's got a mental ledger. Owing favors? Total burden for most. Hmm... Leonard's debt just shrank a bit. Adam flashed a mental "yes" gesture. 🙌☐

"Thanks!" Rachel beamed, practically glowing with excitement.

After kicking Ross out, Adam called his assistant, Ada, laying out his demands—get moving, pronto!

"You've got photos, right? From Chandler and Monica's wedding—we all took group shots. Grab Rachel's pic and pick a wedding dress tonight. High-end, got it?"

"The groom? Nah, he's fine. He's been married a bunch—plenty of suits lying around!"

"Help the bride. She's pregnant, so her measurements are..."

"What're you thinking? No, it's not mine!"

"Why so precise? First day on the job or what? Do I need to grope someone to nail exact sizes? Your measurements are..."

"Off? That's on you then. When you grab the dress, have them measure you. See who's right. If I'm wrong, you get an extra month's bonus."

"I'm doomed? It's all fake? You're rocking a push-up miracle? Haha, wanna bet? Three months' salary on the line?"

"You're in? Raising the stakes? Nope, I'm good!"

"Not 'cause I'm scared to lose, but I don't want you broke and distracted at work."

"Why so sure? Haven't you noticed you've gained a little?"

Beep beep.

Beep beep.

Ada muttered a quick "Got it, I'm on it" and hung up. Clearly, she's another Penny—weight tied tight to self-worth. Adam saying she's fat? Oh, she's offended.

Next morning. Early.

Adam rolled up to the VIP maternity ward. Ada was already there, bossing people around to get Rachel into a custom maternity wedding dress. You get what you pay for, and this? Top-tier.

"Wow!"

"Gorgeous!"

Monica and the gang showed up. Once Rachel was ready, they chimed in with the praise she craved.

"Thanks, Adam!" Rachel twirled in front of the full-length mirror, over the moon. A pregnant bride looking this good? She's thrilled! 😊

"No problem," Adam grinned. "Ada, wedding setup done?"

"Yep," Ada grumbled, face dark. "Hotel next to the hospital—rushed it, but it's ready."

"Groom's side?" Adam glanced at Monica.

"Chandler and Joey are on it. Should be set," she replied.

"Adam, what about our bridesmaid dresses?" Phoebe whined.

"No bridesmaids today," Adam chuckled. "Rachel's the star. Regular clothes are fine for you guys."

Monica tugged Phoebe's arm, eyes flicking to Rachel's baby bump. One lead at this wedding: the bride. Groom's just a sidekick. Bridesmaids outshining her? What, trying to steal the show?

Think of those celeb weddings—rows of stunning bridesmaids stealing the spotlight. Who even remembers the bride? All because the bridesmaids outclassed her, ganging up like a beauty squad. Bet the bride's secretly dreaming of going full Gatling Buddha on them—and the groom too, with his wandering eyes.

Rachel almost spoke up but caught herself. A glance at her belly and that stunning dress, and she swallowed her words. Sudden wedding, simple vibes—bridesmaids? Meh, who cares.

"Monica, Phoebe, look after Rachel," Adam said, heading out.

Ada trailed him. "It's a wedding, cheer up! It's just three months' pay," Adam teased.

"How'd you know?" Ada was baffled. She and Adam? Strictly business.

"Good eyes, solid math," Adam smirked. "Oh, and experience helps."

"That's it?" Ada still couldn't believe it.

"Not enough?" Adam paused. "Forgot where we are?"

"Hospital?" Ada blinked.

"And who am I?" Adam hinted. "Doctor. Surgeon, actually. Fat tissue? Seen it all. Tons of folks roll in with push-up tricks, but pre-surgery, it's all off—real self revealed. After a while, with a little talent, you see through the façade. Normal, right?"

"..." Ada's face darkened further. This hit harder than the fat comment—total offense!

"Adam!" Leonard waved him over.

Adam paused the chat, flashed Ada a grin, and headed over.

"I got us time off from the director," Leonard said, all concern. "City hall registration—how's that going?"

"Smooth," Adam smiled. "Judge approved, staff's ready on-site. Soon as they open, it's official. Congrats—your first granddaughter's legit!"

"Awesome!" Leonard sighed, relieved. "Adam, this is all you—thanks!"

"No biggie," Adam grinned. "Let's head over."

"Cool." Leonard nodded.

They strolled toward the wedding spot outside the hospital. Today's gig? Super last-minute, kept simple—close friends and fam only. Lucky the Gellers and Greens live in NYC and made it in time. Venue? Flowers, band, all set in hours, thanks to cash magic.

Chapter 527: Chirp, Dun Dun Dun Dun

The wedding venue.

"Hasn't it started yet?"

Leonard kept glancing at his watch. "Adam, can you hurry things up? Rachel could go into labor any minute."

"Alright, I'll check on it. Don't worry, even if Rachel's water breaks, it's still a while before the baby comes. As long as we get the registration done before Emma's born, she won't be illegitimate," Adam reassured.

Leonard sighed. "Why can't we just register first and then have the wedding?"

Work hours had already started. The city hall staff were in place, ready to process the registration quickly. But the wedding ceremony was about to begin, and according to Western tradition, the bride and groom couldn't see each other beforehand—bad luck, apparently. So, the city hall staff had to wait until the ceremony was over to complete the registration.

Given Rachel's condition, this long wait could very well lead to a "double celebration" at any moment.

When Leonard first learned Rachel was pregnant, he'd gone all out—yelling at his daughter, storming over to confront Ross, pushing for them to get married right away. But neither his daughter nor her fiancé listened at the time, dragging things out to this nerve-wracking moment.

If it weren't for the fact that today was a joyous occasion and he was out of options with his daughter and son-in-law, Leonard's temper would've erupted already. This was a man who could make a waiter cry, after all!

With Adam's persistent urging, the wedding preparations sped up.

Ross stood at the altar. Without formal attire, the best man and bridesmaids skipped the traditional walk down the aisle. Chandler and Joey stood directly behind Ross, while Monica and Phoebe stood across from them. The Geller and Green families, along with city hall staff and people like Ada, sat in rows of chairs below the altar as guests.

Ross's parents and Rachel's mom beamed with pride. Rachel's second sister, Amy, wore a dismissive smirk, rolling her eyes now and then. Her youngest sister, Jill, on the other hand, smiled warmly. Compared to Amy—who constantly stole Rachel's boyfriends, jewelry, and caused trouble—Jill was Rachel's favorite sister. With only two sisters, second-to-last was as good as it got. Their relationship was decent, and Jill was genuinely happy for her big sister.

The music started.

All eyes turned to the end of the red carpet.

At the entrance, Rachel, in a pristine white wedding dress, walked slowly arm-in-arm with her father, Leonard.

Normally, a bride walks slowly to savor the moment of being the center of attention. But Rachel had no choice—she couldn't move any faster.

When Leonard, with a stern look, handed his precious daughter's hand to an awkward Ross, the bride and groom stepped up to the altar. At Adam's signal, the priest began the proceedings—the classic "do you, I do, let's grow old together" routine.

Throughout it all, Leonard was the most nervous. He stared at his daughter's belly and face, terrified his granddaughter Emma might decide to make her entrance to the tune of the band's "Chirp, Dun Dun Dun Dun!" Thankfully, Emma behaved, giving her grandpa some peace and showing no signs of arriving early.

"...I now pronounce you husband and wife. You may kiss the bride!" the priest declared.

Ross, holding Rachel, was transported back to years ago when his lace-loving ex-wife left him. He'd complained to Monica and the others that he didn't want another divorce—he just wanted to get married. And then, like a dream, Rachel, his high school crush, walked into the coffee shop in a white wedding dress.

In that moment, he felt moved by his own choices, convinced he and Rachel were meant to be.

His gaze shifted, reigniting a long-lost passion.

Rachel, as the bride, locked eyes with her reluctant groom and soon felt the change in him. Her heart raced.

This is what love feels like.

As they leaned closer, lost in the moment, Rachel's lips veered off course. She turned her head and blurted, "Oh!"

It wasn't just Rachel feeling the spark.

Emma, in Rachel's belly, sensed her mom's emotions and got excited too, eager to make her presence known at this big moment. She gave her mom a solid kick.

"What's wrong?" Ross asked, startled.

"Idiot! Kiss her quick and wrap this up!" Adam rushed forward, warning, "Rachel's water just broke."

"Oh, oh!" Ross, flustered, leaned in and gave Rachel a quick kiss.

"We need to get to the hospital!" Leonard, spry as ever, darted over.

"Don't worry, everything's ready," Adam said, scooping Rachel up in a princess carry and placing her on a stretcher that was already prepared. He waved everyone toward the nearby hospital.

"Call Dr. Montgomery!"

"Registration!" Leonard shouted, still fixated.

"Ada!" Adam called.

"On it!" Ada replied, fetching the waiting city hall staff.

On the way, jogging alongside the stretcher, the staff went through the process, declared Ross and Rachel legally married, and handed over the prepared marriage certificate. Leonard took it, flipped through it, and sighed with relief. He pulled out his wallet and stuffed all his cash into the staff's hands, muttering, "Thanks."

For a man who made big money but was so stingy with tips that even his kids were embarrassed and waiters spat in his coffee, this was a wildly generous move. It showed just how thrilled Leonard was.

"No problem," the staff said, delighted.

Running to process a marriage certificate wasn't ideal, but Adam had paid well, and this extra cash made it worth it.

At the medical center's VIP delivery room, Dr. Montgomery and Liz were already waiting, thanks to Adam and Leonard's influence.

After a quick check, Dr. Montgomery smiled. "Her water's broken, but the cervix is only two centimeters dilated. It needs to reach ten before delivery, so we'll have to wait a bit."

"Two centimeters is close enough, right?" Rachel said, holding up three fingers.

The wedding was done, the certificate was in hand, and if nothing else, she'd love to "celebrate" with Ross, her newly passionate husband. But her water had broken, and now she just hoped Emma would arrive soon.

"Centimeters, not inches!" Adam clarified, holding up one finger.

"Damn metric system!" Rachel cursed.

"You should be cursing the imperial system!" Adam laughed.

The imperial system wasn't even strictly used anymore—its measurements relied on metric tools for calibration. Sticking with imperial units when metric was standard globally was pointless. Even the UK, where imperial units originated, had switched to metric. The U.S. could easily adopt it too, but Americans were too stubborn. They used imperial in daily life and metric in professional settings, leading to mix-ups like this.

Chapter 528: He's Really Not a Pervert

Medical Center.

VIP Maternity Ward.

"So, how much longer is this gonna take?"

Rachel wasn't happy. 😞

"No one can say for sure. Just hang in there, okay?"

Dr. Montgomery finished up, gave a few instructions, and headed out.

"Adam."

Ross tugged at Adam's sleeve.

"What's up?"

Adam raised an eyebrow, curious.

"That trick you mentioned before... does it still work now?"

Ross whispered sneakily.

"..."

Adam's mouth twitched. He shot Ross a look like he was some kind of weirdo. 😞

"I'm just asking!"

Ross stammered awkwardly. "You know Rachel wants this baby out ASAP, and I'm only trying to help her... Can you not look at me like that?"

"You're a freaking university professor!"

Adam scoffed. "I only suggested that method back when her due date came and nothing was happening. It was a last resort to kick things off.

But now? Dude, her water's broken, her cervix is at 2 centimeters, and your daughter Emma's coming soon. You're officially useless at this point. That old trick? Out of the question.

Otherwise, it'd be like you're poking Emma with a needle.

Emmm... not that you could even reach her in your state.

But seriously, you shouldn't even think about stuff like that.

That's straight-up twisted.

If anyone finds out you had this idea, they'll 100% think you're a total creep!"

"..."

Ross stood there, fuming, as everyone stared at him like he was a pervert.

"C'mon, keep it down!" Ross muttered, mortified. "You don't have to yell it!"

"They're first-time parents, just married, and a little too lovey-dovey," Adam explained to Liz, the only outsider in the room, with a straight face. "He's really not a pervert."

"Totally get it," Liz said, her lips twitching like she was holding back a laugh.

"Oh my God, Ross!"

His little sister Monica couldn't help but chime in. "No wonder Mom could barely talk about your dates with those bar girls last time. What the heck have you been up to these past few years since you and Rachel split? What's going on in that head of yours?"

Chandler, Phoebe, and Joey all turned to Ross, shaking their heads in unison.

"I didn't do anything!"

Ross was beyond exasperated, ready to slap himself silly.

Why the hell did I even ask that?! 🤔

"Maybe lay off the Discovery Channel for a bit," Phoebe said with a knowing grin. "Sure, animals get wild, but we're still human, y'know."

Ross loved the Discovery Channel—nature, biology, all that jazz. Like that time he tried cheering up a stressed-out Rachel, past her due date with no action, by mentioning how male seahorses carry the babies. Super clever, right?

"Yeah, Ross," Joey piped up, suddenly the wise guy. "Good guys know how to be gentle."

"..."

Ross was done talking.

"Alright, let's head out and wait," Adam said with a chuckle. "Ross, you stay with Rachel. Keep an eye on her—if anything feels off, call the nurses right away."

"Fine," Ross grumbled, throwing Adam a glare.

"Oh, and just watch her—no funny ideas..."

Adam added with a smirk, dodging as Ross lunged at him, laughing as he bolted.

An hour later, Rachel's cervix was only at 3 centimeters—still a long way from the 10 needed for delivery. No surprise there. This was gonna be a marathon.

Noon. Cafeteria.

"Hey, where's Chandler and Monica?" Phoebe asked, curious.

Adam sat down with his tray and grinned. "Think about it. Right now, in this setting—what do you reckon Monica and Chandler are dying to do?"

"Oh!"

Phoebe paused, then burst out laughing. "You mean... make a baby?" 😊

Adam nodded, still grinning.

"Here? Wow!"

Phoebe's eyes sparkled. "That's so thrilling!"

"The beds here are all sanitized," Adam said. "Perfect for Monica and her germaphobe vibes. Plus, we're already in a hospital. With Rachel giving birth as inspiration, Monica's probably going extra wild today."

She can wear Chandler out completely—no worries, they're already at the hospital if anything goes wrong!"

"Hahaha!"

Phoebe cracked up, laughing nonstop.

"What about Joey?" Adam glanced around.

Phoebe mimicked his tone. "That young doctor in charge of Rachel? Pretty, great figure... What do you think?" 😊

"Joey never learns," Adam said, shaking his head. "How about you? How've you been?"

"Eh, same old," Phoebe shrugged. "Not great, not terrible... Oh, whoa!"

Her eyes lit up as she spotted someone, jumping up and dashing off with a quick, "See ya!"

Adam followed her gaze and saw a hot guy in a cast being wheeled by a nurse.

Emmm. Phoebe's still got that young-at-heart vibe.

After lunch, Adam headed to the ER. Rachel's delivery could take forever—he wasn't about to waste time just sitting around. He stayed busy until evening.

By then, Rachel's cervix had only reached 5 centimeters.

"Looks like we're waiting 'til morning," Adam told the gang. "You guys wanna head home and rest, or should I find you some beds here?"

"Home!"

"Here!"

Chandler's weak legs and Monica's hyped-up energy gave totally opposite answers.

"We're staying," Monica declared, shutting down Chandler's lazy escape plan.

"We've already taken time off," Joey and Phoebe added. "Might as well stick around."

But their sneaky glances gave away their real motives.

Adam didn't push it and got them rooms.

The night passed quietly.

Next Morning. Early Shift.

With a sharp cry from Rachel, after 21 grueling hours, her cervix finally hit 10 centimeters. Showtime!

In the original timeline, Rachel's baby was breech—Emma's butt down, making natural birth a nightmare. Leonard, maybe out of spite or whatever, didn't step up much, and Rachel's delivery turned dangerous.

But this time? Adam bridged the gap between Rachel and her dad, Leonard. Their relationship was way better than before, and they kept in touch. Rachel got all her prenatal checkups at the medical center. When Emma hit eight months and settled breech, Adam and Leonard jumped on it, using every trick in the book to flip her into position.

So, this time around, Rachel was still in screaming agony, but it didn't drag on forever. After nearly yanking Ross over for a beatdown during labor, she finally delivered Emma smoothly.

Afterward, everyone agreed Ross had it coming.

"Your wife's over there screaming her lungs out, accidentally bumps your head, and you've got the nerve to rub your forehead and say, 'Ow, nothing hurts worse than this!'"

Lucky for him, Rachel was stuck in the bed and too nice to do much. Anyone feistier would've paused mid-labor, dragged him over, and wailed, "Hurts, huh? How's this for pain?!" while smacking him silly.

Pain's graded scientifically: 0-4. Level 4 is severe, constant agony with blood pressure and pulse spikes. Childbirth? Peak Level 4.

Folk tales rank pain 1-12—mosquito bites at 1, childbirth at 12. That nonsense about a laboring mom getting bit by a mosquito for a "1+12=13" pain level? Total garbage. In the face of delivery pain, a mosquito bite doesn't add up—it's just drowned out. You don't even feel it.

Chapter 529: Godfather

Medical Center.

VIP Maternity Ward.

"OMG! She's gorgeous!"

Rachel, all dolled up and glowing, cradled Emma with a sweet smile while Ross filmed her blissfully with the camera Adam had gifted. The door swung open, and everyone piled in, gasping in unison.

"I'm so glad you two hooked up after a few drinks!"

Aunt Monica scooped up little Emma, hugging her tight and gushing over her like she couldn't get enough. Her voice cracked with emotion—she was totally smitten! Sure, this wasn't her first rodeo as an aunt. Ross's son Ben was already eight. But Ben? No match for Emma.

I mean, one's a sneaky kid from a scheming ex who tricked Ross into footing the bill, barely showing up. The other? A lovechild from a drunken night with her big bro, carried by her bestie, always around. Totally different vibes!

"My turn, Aunt Phoebe!"

Phoebe reached out, snagging Emma from Monica. She hugged her close, cooing, "Oh, sweetie, you're just too cute—I could squish your little head!" Then, catching herself, she glanced at everyone and added, "But, uh, I won't!"

"Alright, Aunt Phoebe's done—Uncle Joey's up!"

Joey clapped his hands, taking Emma next. "Whoa, she looks so real! Oh, wait—not Uncle Joey, Godfather Joey! I'm gonna be Emma's godfather!"

"Uh..."

Rachel and Ross swapped a hesitant look.

"What's up?" Joey caught their vibe and peeked over.

"Sorry, Joey," Ross said. "No offense, but we were thinking Adam should be Emma's godfather."

"Yeah," Rachel chimed in. "Adam's done so much for her..."

"What?!" Joey balked, practically shouting. "This was my idea! And come on, godfather's an Italian gig—I'm perfect for it!" To prove it, he launched into a classic Godfather line: "Do you spend time with your family? Of course I do—good! A man who doesn't care for his family isn't a man!" Then he grinned, "See? I'd be an awesome godfather!"

"Joey..." Rachel and Ross squirmed.

Not every kid needs a godfather, sure. But now that they were parents, they couldn't help thinking about Emma's future. A big-shot godfather from day one? She'd be set for life! Joey's just a so-so TV actor—limited pull, and they weren't keen on Emma diving into the messy entertainment world anyway. Among the crew, Adam was the real heavyweight.

They weren't usually this calculating with friends. But for their daughter? Yeah, they got a little practical.

"What's going on?"

Adam strolled in right then.

"Adam, hands off—you're not stealing this from me!" Joey spilled the tea, clutching Emma like a guard dog.

"Haha," Adam laughed. "Let Joey do it. I'm not big on the godfather thing."

Kidding aside, if he said yes once, how many godkids would he end up with? Chandler and Monica? At least two, maybe more. Matthew and Lily, so in love—two kids minimum in his memory. Then there's Sheldon and Amy's "15" kids, Howard and Bernadette's son and daughter, Leonard and Penny's little one. These were his inner circle. If they asked, he'd have a hard time saying no.

That's already ten-plus right there! If he didn't draw the line early, second-tier pals would start lining up too. Next thing you know, he's at dozens. Being a godfather's an honor, sure, but it's also a load of responsibility. Imagining a swarm of bratty godkids buzzing around him? Yikes, scalp-tingling stuff.

Plus, with his health and lifespan ticking up, aging might slow—or stop. Fifty's old if you live to seventy. But for someone hitting two hundred? Barely past pimply teen years! If he ends up looking as young as his goddaughters, dripping with charm and status, who knows what those free-spirited American girls might pull? Awkward city. Better to dodge it now. Joey wants it? Let him have it!

"Adam!" Rachel pouted. "You've done so much for Emma—you should be her godfather! Without you, she'd be illegitimate. And if it weren't for you, her breech position would've meant a C-section. She'd be weaker from the start—you told me that yourself!"

"Uh..." Adam winced, sensing Rachel's mom-mode kicking in hard. This was tough to dodge. Joey's puppy-dog eyes said it all—being asked to be a godfather's a huge nod. With casual friends, he could brush it off. But Rachel and Ross, this close, pushing again and again? Hard to say no without looking like a jerk.

"Adam, just be Emma's godfather," Monica jumped in, reading the room. "You and Joey can do it! No rule says there's only one!"

"Yeah!" Joey lit up, clapping. "In showbiz, child stars snag tons of bigwigs as godparents—racking up resources left and right. If they can, why can't Emma have two?!"

"Wait, that's an option?" Rachel's eyes sparkled.

She'd thought it was some solemn, one-and-done deal—special and respectful—so she'd picked Adam over Joey. But multiple? Why choose? Kids deserve it all!

"I'm not exactly an expert on this..." Adam gave a wry smile. "But if you're set on it, I'll be Emma's godfather. Fair warning—I might never have kids myself, so I've got no clue how to do this!"

"No worries!" Rachel's eyes gleamed brighter. "Just spoil her a little—that's plenty!"

Emmm. Spoil her like she's his only kid? Boom—princess status! The thought wiped away labor pains and postpartum blues, filling her with dreams of Emma's royal future.

Emmm. Adam's clueless at this? No problem—she'd coach Emma. As her mom, Rachel was a pro at buttering up dads for favors. Her sisters Amy and Jill still used her old tricks! She'd make sure Emma and her godfather bonded perfectly through some expert-level charm.

"Godfather Joey, you've hugged her enough—Godfather Adam's turn!" Monica nudged Joey to pass Emma over. "Come on, Adam, hold your goddaughter!"

"Alright, fine," Adam sighed, giving in. He took Emma, peering down at her.

"Hey, she's smiling—Emma's smiling!"

"No way! She really is! Guess she likes the godfather her mom picked!"

"Let me see! Ugh, rude—I'm a godfather too! I held you forever and got nothing!"

Seeing Emma grin up at him, Adam couldn't help but soften. Logically, he knew it wasn't about him—newborn smiles just mean they're comfy and content. He just happened to be there. But still... it's pretty darn heartwarming, right?

Chapter 530: I've Got a Bold Idea

Medical Center.

After Emma was born, visitors started pouring in nonstop.

When Leonard found out Rachel picked Adam to be Emma's godfather—her first granddaughter—he practically redefined "beaming with pride."

"You guys always say I favor your big sister Rachel," Leonard said to his daughters, full of energy. "But look at what she's done—can you really blame me for playing favorites?"

"What's the big deal?"

Second daughter Amy rolled her eyes. "It's just a godfather, not like it's some huge thing..."

A godfather compared to a real dad? Pfft. Her kid's dad was gonna be a billionaire someday! She just didn't feel like bragging about it.

Emmm... Okay, fine.

She was also a little scared that if she did, her dad might literally slap her face for it. So she kept quiet.

"Rachel can do it, so can I!"

Little sister Jill, being the simple soul she was, blurted out her plan to copy her big sis. "When I have a kid, I'll make Adam the godfather too!"

"Dream on!"

Amy shot her down. "You think just anyone can snag Adam as a godfather? Rachel's got the advantage—she's his good friend, and Dad's his mentor. You? Don't even think about it."

"I'm Dad's daughter too!" Jill huffed, not backing down. "I could totally be his good friend!"

"Heh."

Amy smirked. "You're so naive, you might as well just ask Adam to adopt you as his goddaughter instead."

"Hey, that could work!"

Jill's eyes lit up.

"Enough!"

Leonard's mouth twitched—he couldn't handle his two troublemakers saying anything else that might give him a heart attack. "Let Rachel rest. We're leaving."

He said a few words to Rachel, then dragged his daughters out.

By evening, Rachel—proving Western women are built tough—barely seemed fazed by labor. She scooped up Emma, headed back to the apartment, and threw a celebration party for all her friends and family to meet the baby.

Bed rest? Postpartum recovery? Nah, not her style.

Adam, as the heavyweight godfather, had no choice but to clear his schedule and show up. This party wasn't just a welcome bash—it doubled as the godparent ceremony.

He couldn't help but feel a little helpless inside. This is basically me accidentally becoming a dad.

Helpless or not, Rachel shoved Emma into his arms, and with Joey eyeing him jealously, Adam worked the room, showing off the baby.

Luckily, even among friends and family, people had their cliques. After the initial excitement, everyone split into little groups to chat, leaving Adam with just his usual crew—Chandler, Joey, and Phoebe.

"Hey, the baby's over here!"

Amy strutted over, all fired up.

"Listen, I just had an amazing idea!"

"Stop!"

Rachel threw up a hand. "We don't need amazing ideas."

She knew her sister too well—Amy was a loose cannon. The more "amazing" her ideas, the less you should listen.

"Ugh!"

Amy pouted. "I'm Emma's aunt—don't I get a say?"

"Go ahead," Adam said, desperate for a mental break.

Being swarmed by people cooing over Emma in his arms was starting to make him feel like he was the dad. He needed something—anything—else to focus on.

"Alright, hear me out!"

Amy clapped her hands, eyes gleaming. "I was thinking—if you guys died right now, I could take the baby. It'd be like a movie plot!

At first, I'd be totally clueless.

Then, at just the right moment, I'd turn it all around.

I'd get married, settle down, and live happily ever after!"

"Great movie!"

Joey nodded, smirking. "Maybe you'd raise her with Emma's godfather—me, Joey. We'd clash a ton at first, but then sparks would fly..."

"Stop!"

Amy cut him off. "This isn't Days of Our Lives, and you're not wearing that much makeup, so zip it. Now, if it was Godfather Adam... maybe a slim chance. But still just a slim one."

She ignored Joey's darkening expression and turned to Rachel and Ross. "Anyway, back to the point—if you're dead, you can't stop me. I'd start by changing her name. I'm not a fan of 'Emma.'"

"Enough!"

Rachel frowned. "If something happens to me and Ross..."

She and Ross both knocked on the table at the same time.

In the West, that's a good-luck gesture—canceling out bad vibes after saying something grim.

"...you're not getting the baby," Rachel finished with a smile.

"What?! Then who would?"

Amy couldn't handle it.

"Uh, we haven't officially talked it out," Rachel said, exchanging a look with Ross. "But we'd want it to be Monica and Chandler."

"Really?"

Chandler and Monica lit up, honored.

"Of course it's real," Adam chimed in. "Who's better than you two? You've got a solid relationship, Monica'd be an amazing mom, and Chandler, once you ditch that baggage, you'd be a great dad too.

If it were me?

Say I had a kid someday and—God forbid—I didn't make it..."

Knock knock!

Adam tapped the table too.

It's a Western superstition, sure, but when in Rome, right? Plus, with all the weirdness of (time-travel) and systems in his life, a little caution couldn't hurt.

"I'd want Chandler and Monica to raise them," he said. "Or maybe Matthew and Lily."

The obvious first pick would've been the grandparents—Dad Bob and Mom Amy. But by then, they'd be old. Raising kids is exhausting, and while they'd shower the grandkids with love, Bob's parenting skills were... questionable, to say the least.

Adam wasn't about to bet on an aging Bob still diving to catch a kid he'd tossed in the air like back in the day.

Emmm... Yeah, he didn't catch me that time.

Among his siblings, only Teddy, the second oldest, was semi-reliable. But compared to Chandler and Monica or Matthew and Lily, Teddy was still a kid himself back then.

Sure, Adam had considered his best friend Juno too. He trusted she'd pour her heart into raising a kid. With her dual mastery of psychology—theory and practice—she'd be the perfect mom and buddy, guiding them to success.

But Juno and Karen's vibe? Not exactly kid-friendly. Even if they tried to hide it, a child raised there might pick up some... quirky traits. What if they ended up in a Little Red Riding Hood outfit at the drop of a hat? Without Juno's knack or Adam's system, that'd be a mess.

So Juno was out first.

As for Peggy and the rest? Forget it. Leonard's cautionary tale was still fresh.

In the end, it boiled down to Chandler and Monica or Matthew and Lily.

Stable relationships? Check.

Solid values? Check.

Maternal instincts? Check.

Patience? Check.

Family vibes? Check.

They had everything it takes to build and sustain a happy family—hands down the best choice for giving a kid a great life.