

TV Show 531

Chapter 531: Snow-White Peggy Steps Into the Mortal World

The buzz from Rachel's baby girl faded out, and next up was Peggy's mom's wedding. Adam felt like he'd zipped back to his past life—year-end vibes, holidays packed with friends and family tying the knot left and right.

Back then, single folks like him got bombarded with "red envelopes"—wedding invites that hit like grenades. Brutal stuff! You'd burn through a month or two's pay in a flash. And the "dog food"? Shoved down your throat 'til you were sick of it. 😞 Crashing multiple weddings in a day? Normal. He'd even had a wild stretch—drunk 'til he puked at noon, then still woozy that night and the next day, same hotel, same dishes, same crew, two more rounds. Total appetite killer.

Tables piled with food, barely touched—awkward as heck. Everyone just dropped their cash-stuffed envelopes, stared at each other, and silently mourned their wallets. The two classmates who wed right after? Zero shame. "One more drink, pals—no old friends west of Yangguan Pass! Cheers, bros!" they'd say.

Emmm. They worked out of town, so coming back to wed was a trek. They'd already done it back home, but before heading out, they had to treat their dear old crew. Manners, right? Time was tight, and since the first wedding was a blast, they figured, why not book the same hotel for two more? Everyone's here—perfect!

Except... year-end weddings were so crammed, the hotel just churned out the same dishes for convenience. Wild twist? Adam's gang showed up for one wedding, only to get roped into two more—random classmates they barely knew, ones you'd normally skip. But mid-first-party, faces flushed and drinks flowing, those two dropped the bomb: they'd already married back home, and since everyone was here for the class prez's big day, they'd piggyback their own. Efficient! Fun! Drunk? Crash here—rooms are booked. Sleep it off, then keep going.

These classmates? No chill! 😞 Worse, by the year Adam crossed over, single-dog him still hadn't recouped the year-plus of cash he'd shelled out. Those two ninja classmates? Vanished—no trace. Even if he'd married before crossing over, no chance of clawing that money back. Heartache city.

He seriously wondered if some single-dog deity pitied him, tossing him a 穿越 (transmigration) and a system to make up for it with a dazzling new life. This time around, he wasn't just free of single-dog

status—he was rolling to weddings with a goddess adored by millions of fans. If this weren't Peggy's mom's big day, he could've flipped through his deck of lady friends to pick a plus-one.

Man, the contrast? Like waking from a dream.

Peggy's mom's wedding was set for Saturday, in a small town near Washington, D.C. Friday night, Adam clocked out, hit New Jersey to meet Peggy, and planned to drive over that night. Rachel's baby drama had already eaten up time, but tomorrow was his day off—no need to beg for leave. Wedding done, back to NYC.

D.C.'s just 300-ish kilometers from New York—40 minutes by plane. But Adam's cautious streak kicked in: no planes if he could help it. So, road trip with Peggy it was. Four hours tops for most drivers.

Peggy's apartment.

"Boss, how's Peggy looking in this bridesmaid dress?"

When Adam rolled in, assistant Lisa was there, helping Peggy try on her gown.

"Lisa, got a big job for you," Adam said, all serious. "Hit up the dress shop now. Get ten backup dresses in Peggy's size."

"Ten backups?" Lisa's jaw dropped.

"Yup!" Adam doubled down. "I know these aren't mass-produced—no exact matches. Different styles are fine. Grab ten for Peggy's mom's bride dress and Erica's bridesmaid gown too, matching sizes. Best quality only. This is Peggy's mom's day—we're doing it right, no slip-ups. Got it?"

"Uh... got it!" Lisa blinked, dazed by Adam's intensity. Even half-lost, she nodded and bolted. As she shut the door, she caught a glimpse of Adam's next move, snapped back to reality, blushed, and muttered, "Pfft!"

Pfft or not, boss's orders were law. Grumbling inwardly, she called the dress shop for ten top-tier backup sets—bride and bridesmaid. She could already picture the shop owner's shock melting into a giddy grin.

Back at Peggy's place.

"Ten backups? What's that about..." Peggy, mid-mirror check, turned to Adam, puzzled.

"Keep going!" Adam channeled Leonard spotting Penny—pants already on the floor as Lisa left, now peeling off his shirt, nodding for Peggy to ignore him and carry on.

"..." Peggy, faced with Adam's antics, was speechless.

And yeah, Adam nailed it. Ten backups? Not overkill at all.

In East Asia, weddings rock red and shun white—custom thing. The West? Different deal. They're all about baring their hearts. Like the saying goes: "Look sharp in mourning white!" They've mastered it, turning that vibe into wedding magic—brides shining at their peak for life's ultimate day.

Peggy's beauty, draped in luxe white? A snow princess stepping into the mortal realm. Mortal Adam's take: You're here, don't leave! So, the plan to drive overnight? Tossed out the window.

Next day.

Knock knock knock!

Knock knock knock!

"Boss, we're seriously late!" Lisa, getting no response, texted, called—phone's off—then banged on the bedroom door.

"Chill," Adam's voice floated out. "We've got time."

"Boss, you're not ready yet?" Lisa eyed the snowy chaos in the living room, facepalming.

What a waste! That gorgeous bridesmaid dress—\$5,000, gone! No duplicates available, so Lisa, dead-set on Adam's orders, scrambled overnight for ten different styles. Erica's bridesmaid dress and Peggy's mom's gown had to switch too. Bride's dress? Pricier—\$10,000. Three pieces total: \$20,000.

Even if the extras could be returned, Adam's night of fun still torched \$70,000. Hiss! Shameless rich guy!

Chapter 532: Speed King

The sun was already high in the sky.

Lisa stared at Adam with a mix of disbelief and exasperation as he finally strolled out of the bedroom, looking refreshed.

"Get ready, we're heading out," he said.

"Boss, you sure we've still got time for this?" Lisa quipped. "It's already 9 a.m. The wedding's at noon, and I didn't book any plane tickets." ☹️

"No worries, we're driving," Adam replied casually, pulling out his phone. It instantly exploded with missed calls and texts—Ted, Erica, the whole crew.

"Ted, hey, something came up earlier, plans shifted a bit. We're leaving now—don't stress, we'll make it. Tell everyone not to worry. Catch you soon!"

He hung up, and while Lisa's mouth twitched, he and Peggy ducked into the bathroom for a quick shower.

Thirty minutes later, they were downstairs by the car.

"Lisa, you don't have a heart condition, right?" Adam double-checked.

"Nope," she said, shaking her head—then a bad feeling hit her. "Wait, why are you asking, boss?"

"The ride might get a little fast. Don't worry, it'll be fine," he said with a grin, hopping into the driver's seat.

"Boss, I think I've got a congenital heart defect after all..." Lisa muttered, clutching three wedding dresses, suddenly convinced she was doomed.

"You'll be okay," Adam reassured her. "Did you forget I'm the best cardiothoracic surgeon around? Hop in—we're on a tight schedule."

Peggy slid into the passenger seat without a word. She'd been in faster cars with Adam before—no sweat.

"..."

Lisa's face crumpled as she climbed into the back, snapping her seatbelt on tight.

"Good safety instincts," Adam nodded approvingly. "I was gonna remind you to buckle up anyway."

"Boss, it's just a wedding—and not even yours!" Lisa pleaded. "If we're late, we're late. Please don't risk an accident over this."

She glanced at Peggy, hoping for backup. "Peggy's in the car too, y'know!" Please care about her safety if not mine!

"Exactly," Adam said, adjusting the rearview mirror and flashing Lisa a smile. "Peggy's here. If you don't trust me, don't you at least trust her?"

"..."

Lisa froze. She had no comeback.

Normally, she'd trust Peggy with her life. But when Peggy was around Adam? All bets were off. Her mom's wedding was hours away, and here Peggy was, still chilling with Adam like it was no big deal—zero signs of panic despite the ticking clock. How could Lisa trust that?

"Alright, no more objections?" Adam grinned, firing up his recently bought Porsche 911.

Back when his IQ shot past 180, turning him into a super-genius with bullet-time reflexes, he'd splurged on this beauty.

A sports car blows an SUV out of the water, speed-wise. And since he was constantly zipping between New York and New Jersey, saving time made sense.

"Here we go!"

The engine roared, and the car shot forward like an arrow.

Even with her mental prep, Lisa jolted at the insane acceleration pinning her to the seat.

Then the real terror kicked in.

They were in the city—traffic everywhere.

Yet Adam kept speeding up, weaving past car after car.

Watching vehicles blur by, Lisa peeked at the speedometer: 142 km/h and climbing. She was trembling.

She wanted to scream, "Boss, slow down! Slow down! Not so fast!" But her last shred of sense stopped her.

For one, Adam wouldn't listen.

More importantly, at this speed, distracting the driver could bury them both.

As they slipped through the traffic like a fish through water and hit the open suburban highway, Lisa almost relaxed—until she saw the speed hit 246 km/h.

And it was still climbing!

"Slow down, slow down!"

She couldn't hold it in anymore, squeezing her eyes shut and shrieking. 🙄

Sure, there were no cars to crash into out here, but at this speed on a highway? A blind rabbit, a rogue kangaroo, or a stray rock could end them in a fiery wreck.

"Relax," Adam said, glancing at her in the mirror with a calm smile. "This car tops out at 280 km/h. I won't push it past that, and we've got plenty of time."

Lisa cracked an eye open—269 km/h. Okay, he wasn't speeding up anymore.

Now it clicked why he was so confident.

It was over 300 kilometers total. At this pace, they'd be there in just over an hour. Leaving at 9:30, arriving by 10? For a trip that'd normally take her four hours, it was unreal.

Still shaken, she grumbled, "Boss, you're not scared of dying?"

"Of course I am," Adam laughed. "Why do you think I hardly ever fly?"

"I'm pretty sure flying's safer than your driving," Lisa shot back. "No, like, a million times safer!"

"That's just your imagination," Adam said with a sly smile.

Flying meant packing a parachute. Over an ocean? Even with one, it's dicey—you never know how long you'd drift.

Sure, with his endurance and strength, Adam could survive at sea just fine. Swim it out, maybe even tame a shark and ride it around like Aquaman.

Driving like a speed king looked way riskier than flying. But with bullet-time reflexes and razor-sharp reaction skills, it was safer for him than a plane ever could be.

In city traffic, a car swerving without signaling could spell disaster. But in Adam's world—bullet time plus lightning reflexes—it was no sweat.

10 a.m.

A classic Mid-century single-family home.

Ted was practically wearing out his eyes waiting when a sleek Porsche 911 screeched in with a perfect drift, parking right at the door.

"You actually drove here?" Ted asked, incredulous, checking his watch. Then he stopped doubting.

The back door popped open, and Lisa stumbled out, bolted to a trash can, and started heaving. ☹

Adam grabbed the three packaged wedding dresses from the back and grinned at a stunned Ted. "Where's the bride and bridesmaids? They need to change."

"Change? Why?" Ted blinked, confused.

"Because these dresses are way prettier," Adam said with a smile. "Trust me, they'll love 'em."

Chapter 533: The Early Noble Daughter

The Bride's Makeup Room

"Switch the wedding dress at the last minute?"

When Adam brought up this idea, Peggy's mom and sister weren't happy at all. 😞

This was the dress they'd spent ages picking out—how could he just suggest swapping it like that?

But then...

Adam revealed the new wedding dress.

Since they couldn't find the same style, Lisa had followed Adam's advice and picked the most expensive one they could get right away.

You get what you pay for, right?

The priciest one was, of course, the best.

It was the kind of treasure the bridal shop wouldn't even show you unless you begged—their crown jewel.

Someone who dealt with wedding shops a lot once said: "The salespeople can size up your real budget just by glancing at your underwear style."

When Erica and her mom had gone shopping, they'd picked carefully, but the options they got to see were nowhere near this level.

Peggy's bridesmaid dress had been bought separately.

Same style, but the quality? Way higher.

"Oh my gosh!"

As soon as the new dress was unveiled, Erica and her mom's eyes lit up. All their grumbling and reluctance vanished in a flash, and they happily started trying it on.

Adam stepped out and headed over to the groom's side.

"David, congrats, man!"

Adam offered his best wishes.

"Thanks!"

David, decked out in his groom suit, was beaming from ear to ear.

Hmmm...

Adam had taken a quick look earlier—Peggy's mom showed no signs of pregnancy. So, this wasn't some rushed shotgun wedding.

Seeing how happy they all were, it had to be true love.

The ceremony kicked off soon after.

Ted and Erica walked out first, arm in arm.

A handsome guy and a stunning girl in wedding attire—guests couldn't stop nodding in approval.

Let's be real: most people are pretty average-looking.

Ted and Erica? They were the kind of pair you'd only see on TV, especially for the small-town crowd.

But then...

When Adam walked out with Peggy right behind them, the place exploded.

Everyone was floored. 🤔

"T-This... this..."

David's sister Angela, sitting in the front row, stared wide-eyed, muttering under her breath: "No way. David has to have a kid with Linda—a daughter, preferably!"

Before this, Angela hadn't cared much. Linda already had two daughters and didn't want more, and David, being the sweet husband he was, was fine with that. Angela had even quietly supported it.

She'd thought David and Linda were moving too fast—things might fall apart later.

If that happened, David would end up a single dad, which wouldn't be easy for him while he was trying to build his business.

Better to hold off on kids and see how things played out.

If their marriage stayed solid and David's career took off, then they could talk about it.

But now?

Seeing Linda's daughters—especially Peggy—looking like this?

All those "wait and see" thoughts could shove it!

They needed to have a kid! ASAP!

Even if things went south later and David ended up a single dad, so what?

She'd help her brother out—she could totally babysit!

This gorgeous, perfect girl had completely awakened Angela's maternal instincts, despite being an old singleton herself.

"I need a daughter like that now!"

Angela's eyes were practically burning. 🔥

The music swelled.

Linda, the bride, walked down the aisle for the second time on her father's arm.

In the States, dads have it rough—always getting dragged out to walk their daughters down the aisle. Twice isn't even that much; some get roped in a dozen times!

When David stepped up to take Linda's hand from her father and they walked to the altar, standing face-to-face with sweet smiles, the priest flanked them.

Ted and Erica stood just behind them on either side.

Adam and Peggy were behind Ted and Erica.

Three pairs in fancy dresses and suits—it almost looked like three couples tying the knot!

Adam and Peggy caught each other's eyes, feeling a weird little vibe.

The ceremony rolled on.

Adam and Peggy were mostly there as backup.

Ted and Erica, the best man and maid of honor, were the stars of the support crew—handing over the vows and rings right on cue.

This wasn't some cheesy drama.

No sudden door-kicking from Peggy's dad trying to win Linda back.

No random woman bursting in, screaming that David was hers.

The wedding went off without a hitch. 🌸

Next up: wedding photos!

There were all kinds of group shots.

After the newlyweds got their pics, the six of them—bride, groom, best man, maid of honor, Adam, and Peggy—posed for a few together.

Those shots would get printed and tucked into the wedding album.

Or, like Adam's sister Teddy, turned into framed photos to plaster all over the house, showing off those happy moments.

"Peggy, I'm your Aunt Angela—let's take a pic together!"

David's sister Angela swooped in after the main photos were done, all warm and friendly.

"Sure."

Peggy glanced at her and nodded.

Angela was over the moon, dragging Peggy into a ton of shots—so many that even David couldn't take it anymore.

"Alright, that's enough," he said, stepping in.

"Fine..."

Angela reluctantly backed off, then pulled David aside and whispered: "Look, Linda's not getting any younger. You guys need to hurry up and have a kid. The Grossman family can't just die out, you know!"

This total 180 threw David off.

But after Angela explained why—pointing out Peggy, the icy little beauty not far off—he started picturing a daughter with Linda who looked like her. Suddenly, he was sold.

Middle age hits different—it's not like when you're young and all about "one love forever."

"I'll talk to Linda," David said, softening.

"Awesome!"

Angela was thrilled. "Don't wait too long. Tell Linda—sure, Erica and Peggy are great, but they're not your kids with her. They'll call you Uncle David, not Dad."

"Yeah..."

David nodded.

"I've even got a name picked out! You love Jane Austen's Emma, right? Call her Emma—Emma Grossman!"

Angela was on a roll, hyping him up.

"Emma Grossman?"

David repeated it, a big grin spreading across his face. He was hooked.

"I love it!"

Still, Angela wasn't done. She quietly urged him to "go all out tonight" and skip the precautions—super private sisterly advice.

David cut her off, saying he got it, then went off to find Linda.

No matter how excited he was, he had to talk it over with his wife first—respect comes first.

In the Garden

"Boss, look over here!"

"Peggy, put your hand on his neck—yep, like that!"

"Boss, your hand! Don't be so casual—tighten up a bit!"

Lisa was in her side-hustle mode now, setting up a tripod for the video camera while snapping portrait shots of Adam and Peggy with the camera around her neck.

Chapter 534: Wedding Shenanigans

Next up was the wedding reception.

After the newlyweds kicked things off with their first dance, everyone started pairing up to join in. Naturally, Adam was with Peggy.

Under the slow rhythm of the music, the crowd swayed and danced. Adam, with his sharp ears, caught the newlyweds, David and Linda, whispering to each other while embracing, even as he danced with Peggy.

"David's talking to Linda about having kids," Adam whispered into Peggy's ear, syncing her in on the gossip.

"Having kids?" Peggy couldn't help but glance over, noticing her mom Linda's hesitant expression.

"Yup," Adam chuckled. "David wants a little bundle of love with Linda—hoping for someone as pretty and cute as you. But Linda's unsure. She said she wants to ask for your opinion first."

"Hmph," Peggy replied coolly. "I don't mind, but I just hope this time she doesn't let the new kid steal all her attention again. If she ends up neglecting David and their relationship falls apart, I'm worried the kid might not handle it well psychologically."

"Actually, you don't need to worry too much about that," Adam said, lowering his head to rest his forehead against Peggy's, meeting her eyes with a smile. "You learn from your mistakes, right? Your mom will balance her attention between the kid and her husband this time. Plus, David doesn't seem like the type to get jealous of his own child. So, your future half-sibling probably won't end up carrying the same baggage you did."

"Heh," Peggy laughed, her cool demeanor melting as she teased, "You're right! Even if Mom hasn't learned her lesson and David does get jealous, and my future half-sibling ends up taking the blame, at least they'll have you—the expert—to comfort them."

You've come a long way, you know. Your persuasion skills have leveled up so much—no trace of the awkwardness you had when you tried to talk me down back then. I'm sure you'll nail it if it comes to that!"

"Awkward?" Adam raised an eyebrow. "You sure you're talking about me? I seem to remember a certain someone being moved to tears by my words back then."

"Hmph!" Peggy shot him a side-eye. "If it weren't for Sheldon being there, ready to hand me a hot drink because we were so alike, and seeing you rambling on, looking all anxious, I might've been slightly touched. But you really think you made me cry? I just felt like crying on my own, that's all."

"Whatever, you still cried," Adam said, shrugging with a smug "doesn't matter how tough you are, you still got hit by the monkey with the golden staff" kind of look.

"Speaking of that," Peggy said, ignoring Adam's endless victory loop, her smile teasing. "I remember you grinning like a creep back then. Was it really like they said—you already had your eye on me? I was only ten, you know!"

"No way," Adam quickly dropped the smile, rushing to explain. "I was just happy to see you turn things around, not wasting your genius intellect anymore. I thought, 'Hey, maybe humanity's future will take a huge leap forward because of you,' and I contributed to that! I couldn't help but grin.

You were ten, for crying out loud—cute at best. And 'cute' is for kids, okay?

How could I have had my eye on you? Who's spreading these lies? That's too much!

Think about it—if I really had ulterior motives, you were living next door to me for six or seven years after college. Why wouldn't I have reached out?"

He was absolutely not taking the blame for this.

He wasn't some creep!

"Maybe it was all part of a long game?" Peggy teased, playing along. "You did send me your book, didn't you? Wasn't that to make me think highly of you? Maybe even turn me into one of your fans. And you really expect me to believe you were grinning like that for the sake of humanity's future?"

"..." Adam's mouth twitched, speechless.

He couldn't exactly say, "Well, it's because you acknowledged our friendship, and the system rewarded me with 6 wisdom points, so I was over the moon."

With Peggy's smarts, pulling the "for humanity's future" card again would be pointless.

But he couldn't tell the truth.

Sigh.

Looks like he'd have to take the fall for this one.

"Heh," Peggy laughed even harder, clearly enjoying Adam's defeated expression.

The wedding reception eventually reached its final highlight: the bride's bouquet toss, a moment everyone loved.

Linda, the bride, held her bouquet, glancing at the group of single women gathered for the toss. She subtly noted where her daughters, Peggy and Erica, were standing, memorizing their positions.

Then, she turned around, raised the bouquet over her head, and tossed it—deliberately away from Peggy and Erica.

In Western tradition, whoever catches the bride's bouquet is said to be the next lucky bride.

Clearly, Linda wasn't hoping for either of her daughters to catch it and become the next bride—especially Peggy, who had only just come of age.

A girl caught the bouquet and immediately started jumping with joy, clutching it tightly.

"What about us?" some playful young guys started to heckle, demanding to join in on the fun.

If tossing the bouquet was a blessing for single women, then surely there had to be a blessing for single men, right?

When Adam finally understood what kind of "blessing" they were talking about, his mouth twitched, and he silently vowed to himself: No way am I joining this. Not in a million years.

You've got to be kidding.

The groom taking off the bride's stockings and tossing them to single guys?

Eugh.

That's way too much!

Especially with his and Peggy's relationship in the mix.

If it ended up in his hands...

Talk about awkward!

Thankfully, this borderline inappropriate activity was just something a few rowdy guys came up with—a regional thing, not widely accepted.

At least, Adam had been to several weddings and had never seen this "tradition" before.

David, being a decent guy, flat-out refused to entertain such nonsense, especially since it reminded Adam of some of the gross wedding pranks he'd seen in his past life.

The wedding wrapped up.

Originally, David and Linda were supposed to head straight off for their honeymoon, flying somewhere far away.

But since they'd known each other for a while and had already traveled the world together—basically their honeymoon—David, who was in the middle of starting a business, didn't have time for another trip.

So, after everyone else left, it was just Adam, Peggy, and the other best man and maid of honor, along with the newlyweds.

They gathered together and had a good chat.

During the conversation, Peggy brought up that she didn't mind if Linda had more kids in the future, telling her mom not to worry.

Erica, on the other hand, was blunt. "Have kids or don't, I don't care. I barely existed to you back then anyway. What's a few more siblings to me now?"

Linda felt both guilty and relieved.

At this stage in her life, experiencing such intense love again—she was head over heels for David.

When David expressed his desire to have a beautiful, cute love child with her, just like Peggy, how could she refuse?

But, well, having a second child meant she had to check with her "eldest," Peggy.

After all, for the first eighteen years of her life, Linda's entire focus had been on Peggy.

Eugh.

In that moment, Linda completely forgot about her actual eldest daughter, Erica...

Chapter 535: The Daily Life of a Tool Person

The wedding's over.

After Peggy and Erica generously said they didn't care if their mom Linda got pregnant again, the chit-chat got way more chill.

And then... it got shorter and weirder.

Adam and the others, being total pros at reading the room, noticed the newlyweds dropping all their mental baggage. The couple started inching closer despite everyone still being there, so the gang took the hint and peaced out with some serious tact.

The newlyweds didn't even pretend to stop them—they were thrilled. A quick goodbye, and they bolted.

That's how straightforward it was.

"Adam, can I hitch a ride back with you guys?"

Ted rubbed his hands together. "I've been swamped for days, and the project team's blowing up my phone. I need to get back ASAP. Planes take too long with all the waiting and security checks."

"Uh, probably not the best idea," Adam said, trying to talk him down. "Your mom's got a weak heart, your dad... well, your family's got a history of heart issues. You're at risk too, man. No need to rush—just take the plane."

He remembered how Ted's mom had been heartbroken over Neighbor Wang's sudden death. Ted's mom might not know whose kid Ted really is, but Adam had done the genetic math and figured it out.

Emmm.

Ted's odds of keeling over out of nowhere? Way higher than average.

"Come on!" Ted waved it off. "That's so dramatic. I'm in a hurry, plus I'm dying to know how you drove from New York to here in just an hour and a half!"

"You don't wanna know," Lisa piped up, unable to hold back. "I'm never getting in that car again—swear I'd rather die. I booked a flight back, boss. Cool with you?"

"Sure," Adam nodded. "But hurry up. I've been to two weddings in a row, and my med career's taking a hit. I'm heading straight to the hospital after this, so get back soon to keep Peggy company."

"On it!" Lisa's heart skipped a beat, and she quickly promised.

She knew her boss's baller vibes too well. If she slacked, he'd hire another assistant in a heartbeat to keep Peggy covered. Sure, it'd lighten her load, but it'd also cut into her perks, bonuses, and job security.

Peggy spends most of her time geeking out on science, super low-key. Lisa's gig? Easy as pie and pays insanely well—she'd never spill how much, though. If word got out, a million better candidates would swoop in.

No way was she risking that!

"Boss, you know what? Forget the plane. I'll ride with you guys," Lisa said, all serious. "Driving fast freaked me out the first time, but I'll get used to it. Like you always say, the human body's crazy adaptable, right? I can handle it."

"Don't push yourself," Adam warned.

"Nah, I'm good," Lisa said, puffing out her chest with confidence.

But to Adam, she looked like she was marching to her doom.

"Alright, fine," he said, picking up on her little game and not stopping her.

Tool people gotta have some hustle to keep serving the boss, right? Worst case, she'd puke again when they got back. Puke enough, and you get used to it. ☹️

"What about me, Adam?" Ted chimed in.

"Come along then," Adam said, seeing Ted's eager vibe. He knew Ted was secretly a thrill-seeker like Barney, so he didn't bother holding him back. If Ted's heart gave out, well, it'd save Adam a trip to the hospital for a case study.

An hour and a half later...

New Jersey.

Under the staff apartments at Preston University.

"Blegh!"

The second Adam parked, Ted flung the door open, stumbled out, and hugged a tree on the lawn, puking his guts out.

Lisa, who'd been feeling smug about toughing it out for a few seconds, saw him and bolted too, hurling right alongside.

"You guys are way too fragile," Adam teased. "Hit the gym or something, or I'm not taking you next time. Oh, and get someone to clean that up."

Noticing Peggy's frown, he grabbed her hand and headed upstairs.

Lisa and Ted straightened up, locked eyes, and instantly bent over to puke again.

If GIFs existed here, this'd be a legendary "instant regret" moment.

It took them a while to stop barfing.

Lisa called someone to deal with the mess—she's a top-tier tool person, no way she's touching that.

"Where you going?" she snapped as Ted wiped his mouth and started toward the building.

"To find Adam," Ted said, confused. "We're heading back to New York together, right?"

"Nope, you're on your own," Lisa said, waving him off. "Boss isn't leaving anytime soon."

"Huh?" Ted blinked. "Didn't he say he was rushing back to the hospital?"

"Are you clueless or just pretending?" Lisa smirked. "Young couple, alone—one's a scientist, one's a doctor. Their time's precious. Don't waste it. You're in New Jersey now—just grab a cab back to New York."

"Sorry," Ted mumbled, blushing hard.

The romance king just got schooled in his own game.

He hesitated, pointed upstairs, and gave Lisa an awkward grin. "Alright, I'm off then. Tell Adam and them for me?"

"No need," Lisa said, shaking her head. "They're not picking up calls or texts right now—I wouldn't dare interrupt. And trust me, the boss knows you're gone."

"..." Ted's mouth twitched.

Why did this feel so familiar?

Oh, right! Earlier, when Linda found out her daughter didn't mind her making a "love crystal" with David, she'd flaunted her PDA too, smashing third wheels left and right.

Schooled again, Ted slunk off to grab a cab outside campus.

Lisa went upstairs, chatted with the on-duty female bodyguards for a bit, then pressed her ear to Peggy's apartment door. Her face lit up with a smug "yep, all according to plan" look.

She checked the time, headed to her own place across the hall, and set an alarm for three hours.

Tossing off her clothes, she strolled to the bathroom, filling the tub with hot water and a fancy bath bomb. Then she grabbed a bottle of high-end red wine from the cabinet, poured half a glass, and snagged some snacks.

She dipped into the tub, tested the water, and sank in with a blissful sigh.

This is the "tragic" life of a tool person, huh?

Three hours later...

She stepped out just as Adam was leaving.

"Boss, your buddy Ted took a cab back," she mentioned.

"Oh," Adam said with a nod, barely registering it.

His brain was all about grinding to make up for lost med school time—like that last-minute panic before summer homework was due in a past life.

Ted who? He couldn't care less.

Chapter 536: Juno's Call

At the medical center.

Emergency room.

"Dr. Duncan, you're back!"

As soon as Adam walked in, the sharpest nurse greeted him with a smile. "How was the wedding? Attending two weddings in a row must've been exhausting. Why didn't you take some time to rest?"

"I'm fine," Adam said with a grin. "I'm not tired. Any interesting cases today?"

"Nope," the nurse replied, still smiling. "Dr. Yang assisted Dr. Burke with a congenital heart surgery, Dr. Stevenson delivered a baby, and everyone else is just doing the usual. Nothing special..."

Adam nodded as he listened.

He'd been away for a day, so he needed to catch up on what was happening at the medical center.

And this nurse clearly knew him well—she was organized and focused on exactly what he wanted to hear.

"Dr. Duncan!"

Just then, the emergency room doors burst open. The paramedics spotted Adam and called out to him immediately.

"What's the situation?"

Adam rushed over.

The nurse, quick on her feet, grabbed a surgical gown and followed, expertly helping him put it on.

"Michael Kenny, 17 years old. He suddenly collapsed at school. Vital signs are stable. He's a wrestler."

The paramedic explained.

"This sounds like an internal medicine case. Call for an internal medicine doctor," Adam said, a bit disappointed, but he still pushed the patient into the treatment room.

"Call the school and get his medical records. Start an IV, check his blood sugar, complete blood count, electrolytes, and add a toxicology screen."

When a teenager suddenly collapses, the odds of it being drug-related or self-inflicted are pretty high.

☒☒☐

"Blood pressure's low, 70/60, and it's still dropping," the nurse checking his vitals warned. "Blood sugar's normal."

"Ventricular contraction," Adam said after examining the patient, his tone serious. "Looks like a heart issue."

"Doctor, premature beats," the nurse pointed out. "Blood pressure's dropping fast, 60/45."

"Arrhythmia," Adam said. "Prepare for a central venous catheter."

The nurse quickly brought over the equipment.

Adam started inserting the catheter—a critical step to stabilize blood pressure during emergencies.

"The blood test results are in. No drugs, but his electrolyte levels are a mess," the nurse said, walking in with the report after Adam finished stabilizing the patient's blood pressure.

"What's his potassium level?" Adam asked.

"2.0," the nurse replied.

"Start a piggyback IV with 20 milliequivalents," Adam instructed.

Beep. Beep.

The monitor started alarming.

"Tachycardia, heart rate 240, and it's climbing fast," the nurse warned.

"Push 6 milligrams of adenosine IV, stat," Adam said, checking the patient's pupils. "No response, no dilation. Get the defibrillator ready, sync it—we need to bring his heart rate down now, or he's done."



The nurse grabbed the defibrillator, prepped it, and handed it to Adam.

"100 joules, clear!" Adam shouted, pressing the paddles to the patient's chest.

"Pulse is weak," the nurse reported.

"Up to 200, clear!" Adam increased the energy.

"Still no pulse. He's not gonna make it," the nurse warned.

"Get me a pacemaker. I need to speed up pacing," Adam ordered.

"Doctor, there's no screen here. Are you going to do this by feel?" the nurse hesitated.

"I'd love to use a screen, but he doesn't have time," Adam said firmly. "Pacemaker!"

"Yes, Doctor."

The nurse quickly handed him the pacemaker.

Adam carefully inserted it through the catheter into the heart. "Set it to 300. Okay, now, lower it slowly... slower."

"Sinus rhythm normal," the nurse monitoring the screen said, looking at Adam with admiration.

Ding! +0.01!

The system notification chimed in.

"It's sudden coronary heart disease!" Adam said, his mood lifting. "Keep an eye on him, and let me know when he wakes up."

"A 17-year-old with heart disease? That's rare," the nurse remarked. "Thanks to Dr. Duncan, or he'd be dead."

The heart is like the battery of an electric scooter—when it's new, it usually works fine unless it's defective from the start (like with congenital heart disease).

But over time, as it gets used, it starts to wear out.

And if you don't take care of it, the process speeds up.

Adam smiled and left the room.

Coronary heart disease, as long as it's not too severe, just needs proper care—no surgery required.

Besides, the lifespan points were already in the bag.

Adam wasn't too disappointed.

Half an hour later, the nurse called him back. The patient was awake.

As the doctor who saved him, Adam needed to assess his condition and decide if he could be discharged.

"What are you doing?"

When Adam walked in, Michael—the patient who'd nearly died—was doing high-knee exercises.

"I feel much better. I need to do some training," Michael said.

"No, you can't do that. You just had sudden coronary heart disease and almost died," Adam warned.

"Literally almost died." 🙄

"I'm fine," Michael said, pausing and lowering his head. "When can I get discharged?"

"We need to wait for your parents," Adam said. "You have anorexia, don't you?"

"No, I don't!" Michael denied immediately.

"You're a wrestler. Weight class control is strict," Adam continued, ignoring the denial. "If you don't meet the weight, you can't compete, so dieting is common. But over time, it can lead to anorexia."

"I'm fine..." Michael tried to argue, but when he met Adam's gaze, he couldn't lie anymore. He looked at Adam pleadingly. "I need to get discharged. I have a match next week that could determine my future. I have to compete."

"Sorry," Adam said, shaking his head. "With your condition and extreme dieting, if you compete in a high-intensity match, you could die on the spot. You're not an adult yet—this decision is up to your parents."

Michael was clearly an athletic scholarship hopeful, trying to get into college through wrestling.

Adam understood his desperation to compete, even at the risk of his life.

But this wasn't a decision Michael or Adam could make.

From what Adam knew, being a wrestler wasn't easy.

Professional wrestlers usually live and train together, following strict rules.

No smoking, no drinking.

Not even... well, you know.

Nope, not in any way. 😊

And they have to diet—usually just vegetables, fruits, and dairy.

Plus, they get thrown around all the time.

Unless you have no other options or truly love it, it's hard to stick with it.

Michael's talk about his future made it clear—he wasn't doing this out of passion. He had no other choice.

Wrestling was his only talent.

When Michael's parents arrived, Adam explained the situation and told them to discuss and decide carefully.

He stepped out with his phone.

It was Juno calling.

Adam was a bit surprised.

Not because Juno was calling him—they talked almost every night, sharing what happened during the day, discussing cases, and exchanging medical insights.

But usually, they were both busy and night owls, so calls happened before bed, around midnight.

It was a bit early for that now.

And usually, he called her.

It was more convenient that way.

After all, Adam's schedule was far less predictable than Juno's.

If she called him randomly, she might catch him at awkward moments.

Though Juno kept saying she didn't mind if Adam was working out while talking to her.

But Adam minded!

Yeah, nice try.

Chapter 537: I Treated You Like a Brother

The phone connects.

"Juno."

"Adam, is the wedding over?"

On the other end, Juno asks with a cheerful grin, "Back in New York yet?"

"Yeah, it's done."

Adam chuckles, "I've been back for a while. Just saved a life at the hospital, actually."

"Congrats!"

Juno knows how crazy Adam is about saving lives and immediately celebrates with him.

"Heh."

Adam's in a good mood. "So why're you calling now?"

"Well, next Thursday's Thanksgiving, right?"

Juno laughs, "Only four days away, and it's just a one-day holiday. I figured you're not heading back to Texas, huh?"

"Nope, not going back."

Adam shakes his head. "A one-day break isn't worth the hassle of traveling."

"Knew it."

Juno giggles, "So here's an idea: on Thanksgiving, Karen and I come over. You invite Peggy, maybe call a few friends, and we all celebrate together. How's that sound?"

"Sounds great!"

Adam nods without hesitation. "I'll have to check with Chandler and Monica, though. Most others will probably head back to their families. Lily's going to Matthew's hometown for the first time this year—it's a big deal for them. But if Chandler and Monica are in, Phoebe might tag along too. You know she doesn't have family..."

"I know."

Juno cuts in, "I already asked for you. Monica and Chandler are on board. Phoebe's still up in the air—her call. We'll leave the Thanksgiving feast and setup to Monica and Karen. You just sort things out with Peggy, and we're good."

"Uh..."

Adam freezes.

Wait, you've already happily planned this out and still asked if I'm going back to Texas...?

"What's up? Wanna spend Thanksgiving alone with Peggy?"

Juno teases over the phone, "Getting all clingy already? Really?"

"Oh, come on!"

Adam quickly fires back, "No way."

"Good to know."

Juno smirks, "Otherwise, it'd be like you've got a new girl and forgot the old ones~"

"..."

Adam's lip twitches.

Why does Juno feel... off today? She's throwing shade left and right.

"What? Don't like that?"

Juno chuckles lightly, dragging her words, "You didn't even ask what Heather's up to."

"Ahem."

Adam coughs, feeling a twinge of guilt. "So, uh... what's Heather's plan?"

"I was gonna invite her along originally."

Juno sighs, "But she's too sweet on someone and thought it'd be awkward. Ugh, girls like her—so big-hearted, always quietly giving—end up losing out the most."

"Heh."

Adam forces a laugh. "I'll call her later and invite her to join us for Thanksgiving."

"Is that okay?"

Juno smirks, "What about Peggy? How're you gonna introduce them?"

"..."

Adam's lip twitches again. Okay, Juno's definitely messing with him now.

The thought of Peggy meeting Heather? Yeah, that's a headache waiting to happen.

"Hehe."

On the other end, Juno seems to picture his face and giggles like crazy.

"Juno!"

Adam snaps, exasperated.

Her love for stirring the pot deserves a serious eye-roll. 😊

"Feeling the pressure now, huh?"

Juno keeps laughing, "We all know you're into Peggy. At our get-togethers, even Heather chats about her all the time. She's cool with it, but the rest of us? We're just sticking up for her."

"You guys talk about Peggy together?"

Adam gives a wry smile, "What do you even say?"

"Everything."

Juno smirks playfully, "Mostly wondering what magic Peggy's got to turn a player like Adam Duncan into a lovesick puppy. Tsk tsk!"

"Quit exaggerating."

Adam pushes back, "Who's a lovesick puppy? You ever seen a guy with this many female friends acting like that?"

They're best buddies, after all.

Constant late-night chats.

Juno's always asking about Adam's day-to-day.

Whether it's Kate showing up begging him to sort out a case overnight,

or that Halloween night when Marvel's SHIELD deputy director faced off with DC's Aquaman's mom,

or even when Lily sent him to Robin's place to patch up Robin's guilty conscience—

Juno knows it all.

She's dying to dig into the juicy details, but Adam never bites.

Bro talk is bro talk—bragging's fine.

But spilling deep, personal stuff? That's a line he won't cross.

He's not a creep!

"Peggy's different, though, isn't she?"

Juno cuts to the chase, "She's got something Heather and the others can't touch, right?"

"You're blowing this way out of proportion..."

Adam groans.

"Isn't it true?"

Juno drawls, "You and Heather were so tight back then. That time at the cabin? We could hear how much you adored her from the next room."

"That's... different."

Adam's face flushes.

Juno laughs, "You saying Peggy's got a better figure than Heather?"

"Of course not."

Adam shakes his head.

Heather's the real deal—top-tier.

Her looks are killer, and that insane figure? She's still number one among Adam's female friends, hands down.

Peggy's got that pure, icy beauty vibe going for her—beats Heather on face alone.

But overall?

Eh, Peggy's the innocent type.

No comparison...

"There's your problem."

Juno grins, "If it's not looks, it's gotta be something inside. Otherwise, why'd you drop everything for Peggy—buying her a house, hiring six bodyguards, a personal assistant, even walking the red carpet as her wedding date? Tsk tsk!

Name one other friend you've done any of that for.

Trust me, Heather's way better to you than Peggy ever was.

So why does Heather—gorgeous, sweet, and there first—still lose out to Peggy in your heart?

They're all your 'female friends,' so why's the gap so huge?"

"It's not like that!"

Adam protests, "I offered you bodyguards too, and you said no!"

Silence on the other end.

"What? Speechless now?"

Adam smirks triumphantly.

Juno finally speaks, slow and deliberate, "Am I one of your good friends too?"

"..."

Adam's lip twitches again.

He can practically see Juno's face screaming, "I treated you like a brother, and you wanna hit on me?!"

"It was just an example!"

Adam laughs awkwardly, "And I'm not wrong—you are my best friend, right?"

"Heh."

Juno just chuckles, dodging the question. "Don't worry. Even if you invite Heather, she won't come.

She's usually stuck at the estate—no time to hang out, especially not on a family holiday like this.

If she showed up at your place, her adoptive mom would lose it.

So, it's just me and Karen—Peggy's old pals.

No headaches for you."

Chapter 538: Thanksgiving

Hearing Juno say that, Adam let out a sigh of relief. 😊

Even though deep down he had a feeling Peggy probably wouldn't mind Heather's presence, he still tried his best to avoid ending up in a messy love triangle.

The last guy who was this confident—let's call him "Honest Bro"—ended up sailing straight to the afterlife.

"Alright, then it's settled," Juno said with a smile.

"Sounds good," Adam nodded. "I'll give the keys to Monica. You guys handle the big meal. I still want to work during the day and save a few more people."

"Got it," Juno agreed without hesitation.

After hanging up, Adam shook his head.

"Drunk on wine, I once whipped a famous horse; fearing too much love would burden a beauty."

Before, that line was just something he said to sound cool. Now, it felt like every word mirrored his true feelings.

Sigh.

Without the carefree, player mindset of guys like Barney or Ted, this was just too hard for him.

Three days flew by in a blink.

November 25th, noon, at the cafeteria.

"Adam, got any plans for tomorrow? If not, come spend Thanksgiving with us!" Liz invited. "It's just Meredith, George, Christina, and a few others. I'm making a big meal—join us!"

"Sorry," Adam shook his head. "I already made plans with some friends. They've started prepping and everything."

"I told you," Christina said, munching on her food and casually throwing shade. "Adam's girlfriends are all getting together. His Thanksgiving's gonna be lively enough. Does he really need to hang out with us?"

Besides, we're interns. What Thanksgiving?

Wouldn't it be better to spend that time doing more surgeries?

I hear every Thanksgiving, there are always some unlucky folks..."

"Christina!" Liz glared at her. "You promised you'd come! It's already a small group—you can't bail!"

"I said I'd see how it goes," Christina shrugged. "What if there's a huge accident tomorrow, and we all have to come in for overtime?"

"Meredith!" Liz turned to her roommate for help.

"Alright, Christina," Meredith said, not too fussed either way. "Just join us tomorrow. We're interns, always busy, barely in touch with family or friends. On a day like this, if we don't hang out with our coworkers, we'll really turn into robots."

"That's you guys!" Christina laughed. "Look at Adam. He spends just as much time at the hospital as you, right? But he's still super close with his friends."

"I've lost touch with my family too," Adam waved it off. "My friends are nearby, sure, but I don't see them as much as before. If they weren't organizing something, I'd probably be like you guys this year—no one to celebrate with except coworkers."

And it's not just Thanksgiving. Christmas, New Year's—it's all the same.

This will probably go on for years, until I get my attending license. Then maybe it'll get better."

"See!" Christina exclaimed, impressed. "Now that's what a driven doctor should be doing! These are the years to learn and grow fast. Who cares about holidays?"

If I could be a surgical robot, I'd probably die laughing!"

"..." Liz and the others were speechless.

They knew Christina wasn't joking—she really meant it.

"It's not about the number of people," Adam said with a smile. "You three, as roommates, are actually perfect for celebrating together. Thanksgiving isn't even that great of a holiday anyway. Christmas and New Year's are way more exciting."

"What do you mean?" Liz blinked, confused.

"How did Thanksgiving start?" Adam asked. "It's about giving thanks for a good harvest and for the help of Native Americans. But do you know how they helped Americans, so much so that Americans made a holiday to be thankful?"

"Uh, well..." Liz faltered.

She was educated, after all, and knew that history.

Back then, these things were unspoken scandals, swept under the rug.

Everyone just used it as an excuse for a holiday.

Now that Adam brought it up, it felt awkward.

"Looks like everyone knows," Adam said with a cold smile. "Thanksgiving, huh? Thanking Native Americans for offering their scalps, nearly being wiped out? I don't know if the person who created this holiday was some twisted anti-human freak! Shouldn't it be called Atonement Day instead?"

The room fell silent.

Liz lost all enthusiasm for inviting others to celebrate.

A lot of things seem nice on the surface, but peel it back, and it's all bloody truths.

Still, holidays are holidays.

Not for some nonsense gratitude, but just an excuse to hang out with loved ones.

Can't help it—everyone's off work that day.

The next morning, Chandler and Monica showed up.

"Thanks for helping out," Adam handed them the keys. "Juno and Karen will come by later. They'll help too."

"Don't worry," Monica took the keys confidently. "A Thanksgiving meal? I've got this."

"Karen's a great cook too. You guys can swap tips," Adam smiled. "Oh, is Phoebe coming tonight?"

"She is," Monica said with a grin. "Ross and Rachel wanted to come too, but Dr. Green dragged them away."

"Well, Emma's name is Emma Geller-Green, after all!" Adam teased. "Ross is the son-in-law. Of course he's gotta spend the holiday at his in-laws'."

After a few laughs, Adam left.

This busyness now was for a better life later.

First, a small goal:

Before turning 30 in five years, extend his lifespan to 50 years.

After that, with a 20-year buffer, as long as he could offset the yearly drain—saving someone every three or four days—it'd be no pressure for a well-known attending.

By then, Adam wouldn't have to worry about dying young. He could finally enjoy life freely.

At the medical center, since it was Thanksgiving, there were almost no scheduled patients.

Unless someone was so sick they couldn't wait a day, everyone was celebrating.

The hospital, aside from a few essential staff, was mostly empty, everyone off to reunite with family.

It felt a bit desolate.

Adam did a round in surgery, then headed straight to the ER.

Today's lifespan gains depended entirely on the ER.

But to his disappointment, the ER was practically empty too.

"Damn it," Adam muttered under his breath.

The staff on duty were gathered together, decorating the hospital for some holiday vibe or just messing around.

Someone was belting out songs at the nurse's station, switching between rap and group singing.

There were even nurses roller-skating down the halls, a few "accidentally" crashing into Adam.

After the third time he steadied a blushing nurse, Adam was thinking maybe he should just go back and hang out with Juno and Peggy when the ER doors swung open.

An elderly cop walked in, escorting a woman with blood all over her head.

Adam's eyes lit up at first, but then he recognized her, his heart tightening as he hurried over.

Chapter 539: This Woman Is a Beast

At the medical center, in the emergency room:

"What's going on here?" Adam asked as he hurried over.

"Doc, clean this woman up quick so I can take her to give a statement. It's Thanksgiving today, and I'd love to get home early to celebrate," grumbled an older cop. "Ugh, she got blood all over my patrol car!"

"Adam..." The woman, her head covered in blood, looked at him with a pitiful expression.

"Phoebe," Adam sighed helplessly. "How'd you end up like this again?"

"You know her, Doctor?" the older cop asked, surprised.

"She's my friend," Adam replied, turning to the cop. "What'd she do this time?"

"She got pecked by a turkey," the cop said, barely holding back a laugh.

"Pecked by a turkey?" Adam's lip twitched.

"You shouldn't be shocked," the cop teased. "Your friend's a total nutcase about animal rights!"

"I'm an activist for all living things—animals, plants, you name it," Phoebe shot back. "Not a nutcase!"

"Officer, she just has a heart that overflows with love," Adam said, trying to defend her, though his tone wavered. "She's not crazy..."

He trailed off, clearly not fully convinced himself.

"Whatever," the cop shrugged. "Some mall set up a Thanksgiving display—dry corn, straw, people dressed like pilgrims, and a big, live turkey!"

"They were exploiting and abusing that poor turkey!" Phoebe yelled. "Those capitalist jerks are just cruel!"

"Calm down," Adam said, wiping her wounds while signaling a nurse to grab some stitching supplies.

"So your friend here decided to steal the turkey," the cop said with a grin.

"I was saving it!" Phoebe corrected him. "If you were trapped there, gawked at by everyone, how would you feel?"

"Then why don't you go liberate the zoo animals?" the cop mocked. "Try setting some tigers and lions free—see if you're still alive to preach about 'saving'!"

"It's not the same," Phoebe argued. "Zoo animals have protection groups looking out for them. But this turkey? All alone, exploited, abused, stuck in a tiny cage without even a sip of water! It'd be dead from mistreatment before any group could save it."

"So you grabbed the turkey, tossed it into a car, and tried to bolt," the cop said with a smirk. "That's theft!"

"And then what?" Adam cut in. "How'd she get pecked?"

"While she was running, the turkey fought back—clawing and pecking her," the cop chuckled. "And here's the funniest part—guess what your friend did next?"

He couldn't hold it in anymore and burst out laughing. "Hahaha! The girl who wanted to 'save' the turkey snapped its neck! Hahaha!"

"..." Adam's lip twitched again as he shot Phoebe a speechless glance.

Classic Phoebe! 😊

Just then, the older cop's partner—a younger officer—walked in, holding a huge white turkey upside down by its legs.

"Look at this! Guess your Thanksgiving dinner's sorted now!" the older cop said, pointing at the turkey and cracking up.

"Oh, God..." Phoebe hung her head in shame, unable to look at it.

"Officer, maybe take that outside?" Adam suggested.

Phoebe might be a total weirdo, but she was still his friend, and he'd help where he could.

"Huh, is that a Narragansett turkey? It's huge!" a passing doctor chimed in, strolling over. "Perfect for a little extra meal for us staff stuck here."

"The cafeteria won't prep it this late," a nurse pointed out.

"No worries," the doctor said, taking the turkey with a grin. "I used to pluck chickens as a kid. Now that I'm a doctor, my feather-pulling skills are top-notch. Leave it to me—this turkey's a beauty!"

With that, he walked off, turkey in hand.

"Officers," Adam said, stitching Phoebe up while addressing the two cops waiting nearby, "it's Thanksgiving. Why don't you head home early? The statement can wait until tomorrow. It's not a big deal—don't let this ruin everyone's holiday vibe."

"No can do," the older cop shook his head. "Duty's duty. Your friend stole in public—that's pretty bad!"

"Al," the younger cop said, glancing at Phoebe and tugging at his partner's sleeve. "Maybe we can do it tomorrow? No rush."

The older cop eyed his rookie partner, catching the hint of a crush in his tone. It wasn't a huge deal anyway, so he decided to play nice.

"Fine. Leave a number, and we'll do the statement tomorrow after the holiday," he said, nodding at the younger cop to get it.

The young cop blushed a little, pulling a pen and paper from his pocket and handing them to Phoebe. "I'm Gene, by the way."

"Phoebe," she replied with a knowing smile. She'd been around the block enough to spot a spark. Gene looked kinda cute in his uniform—shy, but charming. She scribbled her number with a grin.

"Make sure you remind me, Officer, or I might forget! Ouch—Adam, easy!" she yelped.

"Stop moving!" Adam snapped. "I'm stitching your face here. You keep grinning like that, it's gonna hurt more."

"We're outta here," the older cop said, waving his lovesick partner along as they left.

"Gene's pretty nice, huh?" Phoebe said, beaming as she watched him go.

"What's this?" Adam teased. "Already forgot about your turkey?"

"..." Phoebe clammed up.

"Look, you should find a boyfriend," Adam sighed. "Fall in love, get married, have kids—pour all that extra love into them. Stop pulling stunts like this. Remember a few Christmases back when you tried to save those wilted old trees from being trashed? All you did was get Joey fired from his tree-selling gig. What's the point of these random crusades?"

"I'm done," Phoebe muttered, sounding defeated. "I can't keep doing this."

"Why not?" Adam asked, genuinely surprised.

He hadn't expected her to give up so easily. This wasn't like her—maybe she'd finally hit her limit.

"Okay, real talk," Phoebe said, lifting her head with a conflicted look. "When that turkey was pecking me, my fight-or-flight kicked in hard. I couldn't control it—I turned into a total beast. And when I grabbed its neck and heard that crack..."

She lowered her head, ashamed. "I kinda... enjoyed it."

"Hey, don't sweat it. That's a normal reaction—no shame in that," Adam said, fighting a grin. "You did so much to save it, and it turned on you, pecking you to bits. If it scars your face, that turkey's the real villain here. Feeling good after getting even? Totally human."

"Wait—scars?!" Phoebe shrieked. "That damn turkey! I'll skin it alive!"

Adam: "..."

Chapter 540: A Thousand Ways to Get Yourself Killed

Medical Center.

"Stop yelling already."

Adam cut off Phoebe, who had instantly turned into a wild beast. "I'll stitch you up, and it won't leave a scar."

"Really?"

Phoebe's eyes lit up with surprise.

"Yep."

Adam nodded.

"Fine then."

Just like that, Phoebe returned to her normal self.

Hmmm.

Such a classic American mindset.

When all their material needs are met, they're still willing to 'gentlemanly' focus on spiritual stuff.

Like last year's Christmas tree—it withered this year and had to be sent to the shredder.

Phoebe was all hung up on that 'poor' old Christmas tree.

She thought it was just too cruel compared to the lush green new Christmas tree beside it.

As if the new one, already chopped down and sold, was somehow still alive or something.

Or take this turkey, for example.

Eating turkey on Thanksgiving night is an American tradition.

Millions of turkeys get gobbled up every year on this one evening.

But Phoebe? She's only worried about this particular one.

Talk about spiritual pursuits—so deep and mysterious.

But the second their own interests are at stake, they flip like a switch, no surprise there.

"After I stitch you up, don't go running off. Head to my place and help Monica prep for the Thanksgiving feast, okay?"

Adam tried to reason with her.

"Isn't that turkey supposed to be an extra meal for the hospital staff?"

Phoebe didn't agree right away. "Can I stay and have some?"

Adam was speechless. "Seriously? You're that hung up on it?"

"Absolutely!"

Phoebe insisted. "You said it yourself—this is revenge!"

"Alright, fine."

Adam sighed, giving in. "But you don't need to stick around here. Go on ahead, and I'll bring you some turkey meat when I head back tonight."

"Bring a lot!"

Phoebe reminded him. "Tonight, I'm only eating its meat!"

"..."

Adam's lips twitched.

This girl used to be a perfectly good vegetarian. But ever since she got a taste of the deer meat Adam hunted years ago, look at her now.

Always itching to eat meat to vent her frustrations!

Tsk!

After sending the not-so-normal Phoebe on her way, Adam told the nurses to pack up some extra turkey meat for him to take home later—gotta let Phoebe have her revenge, right?

Then, amid the nurses' cheers, he called to order a full Thanksgiving meal set to be delivered to the hospital later, as a treat for the staff staying overnight.

Sure, Adam could've just taken a bit more of that free turkey meat without anyone caring.

But with his status, he wasn't about to take advantage like that.

It also kept the gossip at bay.

Because human nature's complicated.

No matter how high your reputation is or how well you handle relationships, in a hospital this big, there's always a few people who don't like you—or even downright hate you.

For Adam, it was just a quick phone call to shut down any potential drama from the little nurses' fanbase or nosy critics. Why not, right?

Tonight, the Friends' Bar was also rolling out some deals for hospital colleagues who didn't have time to go home and could only drink alone after work—50% off all drinks, plus other promos.

And trust me, the drinks at Friends' Bar are already way cheaper than most other places.

With this setup, it'd definitely warm the hearts of those lonely colleagues on this chilly night. They'd come to love the bar and feel Adam's kindness in one go.

Because these discounts? They were only for medical staff.

No comparison, no hurt feelings.

But without comparison, you can't feel superior either!

"Dr. Duncan!"

After a bit of waiting, the ER finally got a new patient.

"What's the situation?"

Adam dashed over, quick as a flash.

"Mark Vogel, 32 years old. Abdominal pain, fever, headache, nausea, sweating, spasms—suspected acute appendicitis."

The paramedic rattled off.

"It's not appendicitis."

Adam pushed the stretcher toward the exam room while checking the patient's condition. He quickly ruled out appendicitis and looked at the sweating man lying there. "Did something bite you?"

"Poisoning?"

One of the nurses caught on right away. "Should we run a toxicology test?"

"Yeah."

Adam nodded.

What frustrated him was that the patient, upon hearing Adam's question, only gave a mysterious little smile and didn't answer.

The nurse swiftly drew blood and dashed off to the toxicology lab for testing.

"Blood pressure 180/120."

Another nurse alerted him.

"IV push of sodium nitroprusside, 50 milligrams."

Adam ordered.

"Argh!"

The patient let out a scream, his body convulsing.

"Sedative injection."

Adam instructed.

From there, a slew of symptoms popped up one after another, forcing Adam to treat each one as it came.

When the toxicology results finally came back, it was no surprise—the patient had indeed been poisoned.

"Administer antivenom immediately."

Adam directed.

After a flurry of activity, when Adam heard the faint ding of "System +0.01," he let out a sigh of relief, a wave of joy washing over him.

Coming in today wasn't a waste of time after all.

"Careful!"

Just as the nurse was turning the patient over, Adam's eyes narrowed. Bullet time kicked in instinctively—he grabbed a syringe nearby and, lightning-fast, stabbed a spider that had crawled out of the patient's clothes and onto the nurse's hand.

"Ahh!"

The nurse jumped back, freaked out.

"No!!!"

Mark, the patient who had just woken up, saw the scene unfold. When he spotted Adam holding the syringe with the spider dangling in the air, he let out a pained cry: "Elvira!"

"Damn it!"

Adam took one look at the situation and knew right away—this guy was probably one of those weirdos who kept strange pets.

"You killed her! You killed her!"

Mark struggled to get up, his face twisted with rage as he lunged at Adam.

"Calm down, Mr. Vogel—this is a black widow!"

Adam held the patient down with one hand, signaling the nurse to grab restraints to secure his hands and feet. Trying to soothe him, he said, "It's highly venomous. I'm guessing it bit you, right? It was about to bite the nurse—I had no choice."

"You killed my Elvira! I'll kill you!"

Mark struggled even harder.

"Sedative injection."

Adam frowned.

"Yes, Doctor."

The nurse moved quickly, and under the drug's effect, Mark calmed down instantly.

"Thanks, Dr. Duncan."

The nurse who'd nearly been bitten thanked him, still shaken.

"No problem."

Adam placed the dead black widow into a small box, then personally checked Mark's body to make sure no other venomous critters were hiding on him.

And that's when he saw it—Mark's body was covered in bite marks, most of them looking like snakebites.

"Hiss!"

The nurses nearby gasped in unison.

When Mark woke up again and saw the nurses cautiously keeping their distance, ready to jab him with another sedative at any moment, he finally cooled off.

"Give me my Elvira."

The nurse handed him the box with the black widow inside.

Mark took it and stared at the motionless spider inside, crying his heart out.

While he was sobbing, the nurses pieced together the whole story from his choked-up words and ran to fill Adam in.

"..."

Adam listened and didn't know what to say.

Mark Vogel was a rare pet dealer who kept exotic snakes, lizards, and insects at home, selling them on the black market for a living.

These dangerous creatures were his beloved lifelong companions.

His favorite was the smallest of them all—a black widow spider he'd named Elvira.

Today was Thanksgiving.

Being all alone, he naturally wanted to celebrate the holiday with his 'family.'

So, he decided to get even closer to his little mistress on this special day.

People who play with snakes often get bitten and build up some immunity to snake venom over time.

Mark figured the same logic applied to the black widow.

If he could survive a bite from her, he'd grow even closer to his little lady afterward.

Hmmm.

Adam didn't even know where to begin with that logic.

How much closer did this guy want to get after risking his life like that?

Adam couldn't imagine it—and didn't dare to.

So, Mark stuck his hand right into the black widow's nest and let her bite him hard.

At first, he planned to tough it out.

But as time went on and the excruciating pain in his body grew worse, he started to suspect he might not make it. So he stumbled out the door and headed to the hospital.

Even then, his plan was just to have Adam give him some pain relief so he could endure it, let his body build immunity to the black widow's venom, and then go on to have a nice, cozy future with his Elvira.

Hmmm.

What a wild country with wild people.

Adam was done.