

## TV Show 63

Chapter 63: Annie and Susie\*\*

A week later.

\*\*Hotel.\*\*

Adam and Nora returned from a Chinese restaurant after having Kung Pao Chicken.

With a rosy complexion and a complicated expression, Nora said, "Adam, I'm leaving."

"Hm? When?"

Adam was slightly taken aback.

"Tonight, at 10 PM."

Nora murmured, "I was supposed to leave last week, but meeting you made me hesitate in this city I despise. Now, I have to go. If I don't leave now, I might never be able to."

Adam fell silent.

Seeing this, Nora sighed inwardly.

She had always claimed to be completely disillusioned with marriage, but human emotions are complicated. The heart can change at any moment—all it takes is a catalyst.

And Adam was undoubtedly the most intense kind of catalyst.

In just nine days, he had nearly shattered the emotional defenses she had built due to her ex-husband's bizarre behavior, rekindling a faint hope for love and marriage.

But Adam possessed a maturity beyond his years, and his principles remained steadfast. As someone who studied human behavior, Nora understood this all too well.

On top of that, their age difference made her decide it was wiser to leave immediately, allowing time and distance to dull these emotions.

"I'll take you to the airport."

Adam rationally suppressed the fleeting emotions that surfaced and responded with a smile.

In the world of American TV dramas, people couldn't be judged by conventional standards. Too many things challenged the worldview he had developed over twenty-plus years in his previous life—things he could never have anticipated, let alone avoided.

For example, could you accept your wife having intimate videos with her ex-boyfriend?

He vaguely remembered that Monica had recorded one with her ex, Richard. Richard had even labeled it with her name and stored it in a box under his TV.

Later, when Richard decided to sell his house, he entrusted it to a real estate agent. Chandler, as Monica's husband, went to view the property and immediately spotted the tape.

When Chandler brought it home in anger, accusing Richard of bragging about their past, Monica defended him, saying Richard had no one now and could only relive their memories through the tape—how pitiful.

Then they discovered that Richard had recorded over it with a new girlfriend, which enraged Monica. She felt insulted that she had been replaced.

The underlying values in this situation were something Adam couldn't accept.

Chandler, afraid of seeing something too explicit, was relieved when he realized the tape had been overwritten. But did he ever consider what the original content was? How many people had seen it?

Joey once commented, "If a woman is willing to record something like that for her boyfriend, then there's nothing she wouldn't do for him."

If an ordinary woman like Monica was like that, then what about someone like Nora—a cultural artist who studied these very things?

Kung Pao Chicken was Nora's favorite dish, and Adam had eaten it with her more than once.

A glimpse was enough—no need to dwell on it.

No matter how intoxicating emotions were, he couldn't afford to lose control.

Stay rational.

"There's no need."

Nora quickly composed herself, shaking her head with a smile. "Random House arranged a car to take me to the airport."

"That works too."

Adam nodded.

"By the way, your book has been released, but it doesn't seem to be doing well. Do you want me to help promote it?"

Nora thought of Adam's new book.

"No, please don't!"

Adam quickly refused, then joked, "My stomach is fine; I don't need a free meal. Your recommendation would indeed boost \*Lord of the Mysteries\*' sales quickly, but it's really not necessary."

"Are you sure?"

Nora asked with concern. "It's not a big deal. Even if you don't want me to do it personally, I could ask a friend to help promote it."

"There's really no need."

Adam chuckled. "I've already received the \$30,000 advance for the first print run of 10,000 copies. I'm not short on money for now. Poor sales are just temporary. I believe in \*Lord of the Mysteries\*' quality, and I prefer to see it succeed naturally—that's something I insist on."

The book had officially been released the day before. However, since Adam had firmly rejected Jack Surf's attempt to acquire the full rights, Jack, though reluctantly compromising due to Nora's influence, was clearly unhappy.

Otherwise, given his confidence in the book's potential, the first print run would have been at least 100,000 copies.

Now, the book had been quietly placed on Random House's New York distribution shelves without any media promotion—not even the usual bookstore recommendations.

A true zero-investment, zero-risk launch.

Under these conditions, it was no surprise that sales were abysmal. The first day's report showed only 96 copies sold. When Jack called, he subtly hinted, \*Now do you see what matters more—quality or distribution?\*

He even suggested that if Adam reconsidered and signed over the full rights, things would change dramatically.

Adam refused.

Such poor sales reminded him of the struggles he faced as an unknown writer in his previous life. It was a terrible feeling, but he firmly believed in \*Lord of the Mysteries\*' quality.

His first goal in copying the book was, of course, money, but not just that—he also wanted to see how \*Lord of the Mysteries\* would fare in this parallel universe's American market.

Would it, over time, with increased sales, adaptations into films and games, and the development of its 22 pathways and 220 sequence occupations, grow into a fantasy universe comparable to \*The Lord of the Rings\*, \*Harry Potter\*, \*Marvel\*, \*DC\*, or \*Star Wars\*?

Would Sheldon, Leonard, Howard, and Raj from \*The Big Bang Theory\* become obsessed with \*Lord of the Mysteries\*, even more so than with \*The Lord of the Rings\* and \*Marvel\*?

That prospect excited Adam far more than just making money.

Letting Nora help would take away from the satisfaction of proving Jack wrong.

"I'm suddenly a bit hungry again."

Nora was impressed by Adam's confidence and blurted out.

"Kung Pao Chicken again?"

Adam smiled. "Do we have time?"

"There's a Chinese restaurant on the way to the airport."

Nora's eyes sparkled.

"Then I'll take you there."

They got into the luxury car Random House had arranged for Nora, told the driver to stop by the restaurant, and lowered the privacy screen, heading toward the airport.

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**\*\*A week later.\*\***

**\*\*New Jersey.\*\***

"Daddy, Mommy, I want Susie!"

A ten-year-old girl, delicate and adorable, ran to her parents and pleaded.

"Annie, who's Susie?"

Her mother was puzzled.

"Susie is a golden-haired dog! She's the pet of Miss Justice, Audrey, and she can even talk!"

Annie tilted her head and said, "Even though she's always wary of me, I really, really like her. Daddy, Mommy, can you get me a Susie, please?"

"Annie, have you been reading books in my study?"

Her father suddenly understood.

He was a lawyer who loved fantasy novels. A few days ago, he had stumbled upon a book called \*Lord of the Mysteries\* in a bookstore and was instantly captivated. He had stayed up all night reading it, enthralled by its mysterious and eerie world, and had kept the book on his desk ever since.

He hadn't expected his daughter to see it—and even fall in love with 'Miss Justice' Audrey's golden retriever, Susie. Of course! Audrey's personal maid was also named Annie.

"Alright, but you have to take good care of her."

"Yay! Thank you, Daddy!"

Annie clapped her hands and laughed. "This time, I'll definitely become Susie's real friend!"

Her father chuckled indulgently.

To him, his precious daughter wasn't just any maid named Annie—she was like Miss Justice Audrey herself: sunny, optimistic, brave, kind, and the embodiment of everything good.