

## TV Show 721

Chapter 721

Duncan Apartments.

2:30 AM.

Juno pushed open the master bedroom door.

Adam was holding Sandra's wrist, checking her pulse. When he caught Juno's teasing glance, he gave an awkward little smile 😊.

Juno crossed her arms and stood there, smirking as she watched Adam feed some water to the deeply sleeping, totally out-of-it Sandra.

"Let's talk outside," Adam said with a quick look her way.

Even though he could "talk" to Juno with just his eyes for the usual stuff, this convo was gonna need some fancy new vocab—better to use actual words.

Juno nodded and stepped out of the master bedroom. Then, under Adam's startled gaze, she swung open the guest room door and said a few words to Karen, who was also still awake.

Karen, in her pajamas, shot Adam a glare 😡, got up, and marched into the master bedroom.

"With Karen keeping an eye on things, I feel better," Juno quipped with a sly double meaning. "So, how's it feel? A witch's charm really hits different, huh? 😏"

"Let's stick to business, alright?" Adam said with a sheepish grin.

Juno's move had two purposes: one, to avoid some soap-opera nonsense where Sandra might overhear their chat; and two, to prevent any other awkward soap-opera disasters.

Karen's a nurse—super pro at this stuff.

As for Juno quoting Emperor Roselle from Lord of Mysteries... well, Adam had let that exact exclamation slip earlier, totally caught up in the moment.

He didn't think Juno had eavesdropped or anything. It's just that the line fit too perfectly.

No surprise Juno guessed it—he'd be more shocked if she'd also figured out he was thinking of Howard at the time. That'd be wild! 😏

Emmm. Just a little wild, though.

Why Howard, you ask? Well, duh—Howard's a freaking genius when it comes to "mecha-bugs."

MIT grad, total pro in robotic hands, robotic mouths, full-on robots, robot girlfriends, robo-ladies—you name it. The guy's inspired countless ideas for Japan's robotics scene and movies alike.

And get this: the Sandra that Adam's dealing with? She's a multidimensional counterpart of Black Widow. And another version of Black Widow just happens to be Motoko Kusanagi from Ghost in the Shell.

You could basically say Motoko's the ultimate dream of Howard's robotics obsession.

Adam said it himself!

Well, the original timeline's Howard, anyway. In this timeline, Adam's not so sure anymore. He has no clue how much Lord of Mysteries might've messed with Howard's head.

Compared to superheroes, Emperor Roselle from Lord of Mysteries might actually be Howard's new idol. They're cut from the same cloth—total gearheads and shameless flirts! 😏

If this butterfly effect's real, then Motoko might not be Howard's endgame dream anymore.

Nope—it'd be Roselle's first wife, Matilda Gustav! Why? Well, there's reason to suspect Empress Matilda might just be the God of Steam and Machinery.

Picture this: Matilda's body is a mechanical girl crafted by Roselle under the guidance of the Steam and Machinery God—a vessel for divine descent.

A mechanical wife with a goddess's soul at home.

A tempting witch with a killer vibe on the side.

穿越异世界 (穿越异世界 = crossing into another world), inventing steam power, upgrading sailboats, kicking off the Industrial Revolution, conquering north and south, calling himself Caesar.

Chestnut curls, blue eyes, sharp nose, thin lips, and a perfectly groomed mustache.

Boom—there's your mental image!

Looks, hobbies, personality—everything screams Howard Wolowitz. If he'd crossed over, he'd be doing the exact same stuff as Roselle, no question.

Adam's kinda hyped to meet Howard someday and ask what his ultimate dream is now.

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In the study:

"So, what's she really after?" Juno asked.

"Nothing much," Adam said, shaking his head with a sigh. "She thinks since I wrote Lord of Mysteries and now there's a Tarot Club serial killer popping up in England, maybe there's a real secret Tarot Club out there.

You know how the West is—secret societies everywhere!"

"So she's digging for clues about the real Tarot Club killer from you," Juno said, stifling a laugh. "Or maybe she thinks you're the evil mastermind behind it all?"

"Even if I'm not, she's convinced I'm some big shot in a mystery group," Adam said with a shrug. "Find proof, and she's got a scoop way juicier than 'baron's son turns copycat killer.'"

He glanced at Juno and grumbled, "Damn it, in a way, she's kinda stumbled onto the truth!"

Juno's Little Red Riding Hood crew was slowly turning into a full-on Little Red Riding Hood army.

Adam had never straight-up talked it out with her, but if Juno's squad ever got into trouble, he couldn't just sit back and do nothing.

So yeah, technically, he is part of a mystery group.

"Heh," Juno chuckled, clearly pleased with his subtle nod to that fact.

She's cool with being the shadow behind Adam's sunshine, shielding him from the dark stuff. He's her best friend, her light—and she'd do it quietly even if he didn't notice or want it.

But getting a little positive vibe back? That's a bonus she'll happily take! 😊

"So, what's your plan?" Juno asked, grinning at him.

"She's got some messed-up values and a total lack of balance," Adam said after a pause. "She needs a serious reality check."

"Same vibe here," Juno agreed, nodding. "You're way better at handling her than I am, though. Just... don't get yourself tangled up in her mess, okay? Think of Robin—another news gal. She's nothing like Heather or MAX."

"I get it," Adam said with a nod. "I know who's on my team."

News folks, especially the ambitious ones, love a big, splashy exclusive. Sometimes they don't even care if it's their own crew they're exposing.

"Don't get cocky yet," Juno warned, shaking her head. "Your heart's too soft."

"..." Adam blinked.

Too soft?

Me?

Since when?

But Juno's dead-serious look made him relax. She's the expert here—if she says it, it's probably true.

"No worries, you'll keep me in check," he said with a laugh.

They locked eyes and shared a grin.

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The next day:

Late morning.

Sandra groaned as she forced her eyes open.

Who am I?

Where am I?

What am I even doing?

The classic soul-searching trio echoed in her foggy brain.

"You're up?"

A gentle voice cut through the haze, and a familiar face popped into view.

Sandra vaguely recalled her—the plain girl from last night who somehow made Adam immune to her charm.

"Bet you're thirsty. Here, have some water," Juno said with a warm smile, handing her a glass.

"...Th-thanks," Sandra mumbled, still dazed but parched as heck. She struggled to sit up against the headboard, took the glass, and chugged it down.

With each gulp, bits of last night started flashing back—and then she let out a mortified yelp: "Ugh, so annoying! ~" 😊

Chapter 722: The Widow's Charm

Duncan Apartment. Main Bedroom.

After hydrating herself, Sandra finally pieced together what happened last night.

And then came the overwhelming mix of shame and frustration. 😞

Uh... don't get the wrong idea!

It's not that she couldn't handle certain things.

A woman who could make a playboy savor the legendary "true fragrance" moment had to be a seasoned pro, right? Why would she care about that?

No, what she couldn't stomach was how her sharp journalist instincts and professionalism had—yep, you guessed it—gone out the window again.

The first time was when she went to interview an artsy film director for her school paper.

She showed up at his room, barely got started, and he handed her a glass of wine. Next thing she knew, it was morning, the director was gone, and she had zilch for her story. 😞

The second time was that whole mess with the baron's son—investigating and gathering evidence.

Sure, the ending turned out perfect, but the process? Ugh, don't even ask.

She'd genuinely been swayed by the guy, flip-flopping so hard she forgot why she was even there.

If he hadn't been dumb enough to spill the beans himself, she'd probably have lost sight of her goal entirely.

And now, here we are—strike three.

Compared to the last two flops, this one hit different. It wasn't just unforgettable—it left her mortified.

Why? Because this was her first big move after making a name for herself.

She thought she'd matured, gotten professional.

But nope! Not only did she forget her purpose again, she'd spilled every detail of why she was there—thanks to Adam's sly nudging.

Yup, she said it!

She laid it all out! 😬

What the heck?!

How could she blurt that out?

Investigations like this are supposed to be hush-hush, catching people off guard. Otherwise, what's the point?

Now? The whole thing's ruined.

Once her target knows her game, only an idiot would let her keep digging.

Her pride as a rising media star? Shattered overnight by Adam—like a wrecking ball through a house of cards.

So infuriating! 😡

Sandra chugged the rest of her water in frustration, only then noticing the girl in front of her grinning cheekily, eyes wandering a bit too much.

"Ah!"

Sandra yelped, suddenly feeling a chill, and yanked the blanket up to cover herself.

How could the classic "playboy's true fragrance" morning-after scene skip that graceful post-night curve show? 😊

In the world of American TV dramas, guys and gals don't seem to feel the cold. Not using a blanket? Total basic move.

Even in freezing weather, they strut around in skimpy outfits, sip ice water during those days of the month when hot tea should be the vibe, or even go barefoot on icy streets.

If you can't imagine it, they're out there doing it.

People call polar bears the toughest creatures, but the men and women in this TV world? They're no joke either.

Kids watching at home, though—don't try this!

These folks are different—they've trained for it, grown up like this, pros through and through!

Oh, and their ice water obsession? It's got reasons.

First, they eat crazy high-calorie stuff, so chugging something cold feels amazing.

It's the same anywhere—after scarfing down a big, meaty meal, an icy drink just hits right.

Second, it's their culture.

They see freezing as the antidote to death—any plant or animal "dies," and bam, it's straight to the freezer to stay edible.

So, ice gets added to everything. Their fridges have built-in ice makers, and every restaurant starts you off with a glass of ice water.

"No worries!"

Juno laughed. "I'm a doctor."

"..."

Sandra was speechless.

What does being a doctor have to do with this?

Last night's guy was a doctor too!

Doctors are terrifying, okay?!

In this TV drama world, public bathhouses? Nope, not a thing—for guys or girls.

Why? Because you never know what kind of weirdo you're sharing the water with...

"Just freshen up a bit. Adam ordered you breakfast—it'll be out there soon," Juno said with a smile. "I'll head out first."

"Wait, he specifically ordered breakfast for me?" Sandra asked, incredulous.

"Yup," Juno nodded. "Should suit your taste. You... still have an appetite, right?"

"..."

Sandra froze, clutching the blanket even tighter.

Once Juno shut the door behind her, Sandra finally had a moment to think.

What's going on here?

Last night, they'd basically interrogated her purpose out of her, and instead of kicking her out, he's... thoughtfully getting her breakfast?

Did he fall for her?

No way!

Sandra quickly tossed that idea—beauty's usual go-to assumption—out the window.

Love doesn't work like that!

Not a chance!

So, he's got some ulterior motive?

That's it!

Her hunch must be spot-on.

Adam Duncan—this dazzling-on-the-outside guy—has something to hide.

That's why he's pretending he doesn't know her real goal, trying to throw her off.

Smart move!

Last night, she'd bared her soul—spilling her mission, no filter, even rambling about her whole life, normal stuff, weird stuff, funny moments, embarrassing ones, all of it.

She'd been half-asleep, half-awake.

Adam probably thinks she doesn't remember that little chat.

After all, when you're stuck in one scene too long, you lose track of time, of yourself—like driving down an endless, empty highway and nodding off.

In that case, playing dumb is his best bet.

What else could he do?

Angrily kick her out?

That'd just scream, "Yup, I've got secrets!"

And does she look like the type to give up easy?

Even if she can't get close, she'd dig from a distance.

As long as she doesn't quit, she'd find his weak spot eventually.

But if he acts clueless, letting her think he's in the dark about her goal, she'd keep "sneaking" closer. If she finds nothing, she'd lose interest and chase a new lead.

Why would she doubt the stuff she worked so hard to uncover?

Clever guy!

But he slipped up.

Her memory's top-notch—even in that hazy state, she knows exactly what she said!

Now, he doesn't know she knows he knows her purpose.

Sure, a lot of what comes next might be a fake-out he's set up.

But no one's perfect. If she gets close, it's way more efficient than snooping from afar. She's got a solid shot at nailing the key scoop.

That's the confidence of a media rising star! 🦋

Hmph!

Adam Duncan, you might be a genius, but you'll slip up eventually—and I'll be there to catch you.

When that happens, I'm dropping a bombshell exclusive.

Just wait and see!

With that thought, Sandra's mood lifted. Her worries melted away, and last night's fun crept back into her mind, lingering like a catchy tune.

Seriously—gone from her frown, straight to her heart.

"No rush, no rush, take it slow..." she mumbled to herself.

Chapter 723: The Plasmolysis Certification Exam

Two days flew by in a flash.

The intern doctors were about to face the certification exam that'd decide their fates—testing everything they'd learned during their internship and locking in their residency specialties.

Everyone was buzzing with excitement! 😊

Medical Center:

The search-and-rescue team had just found a missing hiker and brought them in for treatment. Normally, the interns would be scrambling around, helping out—but today, they could only stand off in the distance, staring longingly.

"We should be studying," George piped up.

"This is studying," Christina shot back, leading the pack as usual. She was laser-focused on the hiker who'd just been wheeled in—hands, feet, and nose all severely frostbitten, swollen up like Ouyang Feng's sausage lips.

"How do you treat frostbite?" she quizzed.

"Rewarm them, avoid surgery unless auto-amputation causes a deep infection," George answered on autopilot.

These past few weeks, prepping for the exam had turned rapid-fire Q&A into second nature.

Emmm. Like, really second nature.

Take George, for example—back home with his girlfriend Kelly (a senior ortho resident), he'd even started begging her to quiz him. She finally snapped, "This distraction trick isn't gonna work..." 😏

Christina, though? She took it to another level—hounding Dr. Burke with endless questions until the guy was just a blank slate of zero emotion.

It's not that she was scared of flunking some measly certification exam. Nah, she was gunning for the top score. Christina Yang doesn't settle for less! 🦊

"See? This is studying," she said casually.

Just then, an ambulance rolled up with another hiker—this one wailing in pain from heavy injuries.

"Looks like a flail chest! I've never seen one up close—c'mon, let's check it out!" Christina's eyes lit up as she grabbed Meredith and dragged her over, grumbling, "Why'd they have to schedule the exam for today of all days?"

"What are you idiots doing just standing there?!"

Dr. Bailey—running around like crazy because she had no interns to help—spotted the group gawking and lost it. She stormed over, dragging an oxygen tank, yelling as she went.

"In a few hours, you're taking an exam! Your scores will shape your futures! The bottom five interns? Gone. Fired!"

What am I doing?

What are you doing?

Don't make me drag you out of here—go back and study now!" 😞

"Adam's taking the exam too, and he's still in surgery," Christina muttered under her breath.

"What'd you say?!" Bailey's voice hit a new octave.

"Nothing!" Christina threw up her hands and bolted, playing it smart.

"Good choice," Bailey said, a tiny smirk tugging at her lips as she watched them scamper off. "Adam's a guaranteed pass—can you say the same?"

Even talented interns could crash and burn if they weren't in top shape. Three years back, a stellar intern at the center pulled three night shifts before the exam, could barely keep their eyes open, and had to redo the whole internship.

These past few weeks, Bailey had gone out of her way to give them study time—taking on their grunt work herself. No night shifts scheduled either—she wasn't about to let her interns flop on her watch.

She'd done all she could behind the scenes. The rest was up to them.

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A few hours zipped by.

A hospital conference room had been set up as the exam hall. The interns trickled in, chatting in little clusters.

"Adam's not here yet?" Christina scanned the room, winking at Meredith and George with a smug, "Guess surgery's got him tied up."

Meredith and George cracked smiles.

Couldn't blame them.

Ever since that cruise ship accident a while back, Adam had been the center's golden boy—his rep climbing even higher.

The chief, the dean—used to keep it all stern and professional around him. Now? Still stern... with everyone else. But the second they saw Adam? Instant switch—genuine, heart-melting smiles that could fool anyone who didn't know better.

All that "how you holding up?" small talk? Ugh.

Emmm.

Jealousy's got me looking like a whole different person.

Jealousy's got my cell walls splitting! 😊

"If you don't know the answer, pick B—it's usually B," Christina advised Meredith and George.

She was a straight-A nerd who'd dissected years of past exams and cooked up her own strategy:

- Three long, one short? Pick the shortest.

- Three short, one long? Pick the longest.

- Two long, two short? Go B.

- Same length? Pick A.

- Mixed bag? D's your friend.

- Total mess? C's unstoppable.

And this exam? Mostly two-long-two-short vibes.

Five minutes later:

"What's the holdup?" Christina, seated and ready, got antsy when the proctor hadn't handed out the tests yet. She raised her hand, annoyed. "It's 9:03 AM—time's up, why aren't we starting?"

"Hold on a sec," the proctor—a friendly-looking Black woman—gave a professional smile, glanced outside, then said, "Sorry, the exam starts at 9:13. Ten more minutes—you can review your notes."

"..." Christina's mouth twitched.

Exams always start on the hour—or at least 9:10. 9:13? Seriously?

Don't think I didn't catch that little eye signal with the nurse peeking in from outside! That nurse flashed a "10," and then you bumped it to 9:13.

And why's a nurse out there playing lookout?

No need to guess—Adam, obviously!

Sure, Christina loved a good gloat when Adam tripped up, but calling him out in front of everyone? Nah, she's his friend—she wouldn't go that far.

Besides, this exam's a national thing, but since it's hosted at each hospital to test their residency programs, the centers have a lot of wiggle room.

Pushing the start time back a few minutes? No biggie. Postponing the whole thing or letting someone retake it solo? If the higher-ups push for it, it's fair game.

And would the hospital bend over backwards for Adam's last-minute surgery stunt?

Do you even need to ask?

To them, it's not "Adam being reckless"—it's "Adam putting patients first." Big doctor energy.

Sure enough, ten minutes later:

Adam rushed in.

"Everyone, take your seats, put your books away..." The proctor snapped into action, handing out the tests.

Christina shot Adam an envious glance, then dove into her paper.

But she hadn't gotten far when Adam strolled up, handed his test to the proctor, and zipped out the door.

She noticed everyone else looking up too—their faces all kinds of weird.

"Ahem, focus on your exams—no looking around!" the proctor barked.

"Damn it, Adam! Did you have to finish that fast?!" Christina grumbled under her breath, scribbling furiously.

Chapter 724: Let Me Guess—Your Last Name's Grey!

Medical Center.

A bunch of intern doctors were still sweating over their exams.

Adam, though? He'd already bounced back to the operating room to keep doing surgeries.

Exams were a breeze for him—way too easy.

With that kind of time, he figured he'd rather do another surgery, save a life, and tack on some extra years to his own clock. Obviously the smarter move!

So, he didn't bother pacing himself. If anything, he cranked up the speed.

But that just piled insane pressure on the other interns.

No one thought Adam was throwing in the towel—not a chance.

Instead, they were all like, "Wow, Adam's Adam for a reason," while secretly stressing out like crazy. 😊

Today's exam wraps up, tomorrow the results drop, and boom—one year of internship officially done.

A year ago, the surgical chief, Richard, hauled them all into the practice room and laid it out:

"Eight of you will transfer to cushier departments, five will crack under the pressure, two will get the boot. This is your starting line, your arena. Where you end up? That's on you."

Now, a year later, it's playing out exactly like he said.

Alex and Liz, that chaotic duo, were the first to flop. Between all their messy drama, they didn't heal their childhood baggage or take their patients seriously. Yep, they're the two who got kicked out.

Then there's today's big evaluation exam.

The bottom five—those who couldn't handle the grind over the year or totally bombed this test—either burned out or got cut.

Another eight will shift to easier specialties.

The big three in surgery? General, cardiothoracic, and neurosurgery.

Everything else—neonatal, plastics, urology, ophthalmology, OB-GYN, you name it—those are the "easier" gigs. Places where less-than-stellar surgical interns end up, whether by choice or not.

Right now, Adam and Cristina are locked in for cardiothoracic.

Meredith's pretty much set on general surgery.

George? He started out dreaming of cardiothoracic—Burke's little shadow, always bragging about being his right-hand man.

But with Adam and Cristina already dominating that field, George doesn't stand a chance. He's stuck picking between neuro or general.

General surgery's no slouch, though—Chief Richard came up through it.

Top-tier, just below legendary status, the peak of the game.

Two spots left, and barring any surprises, they're probably going to Bianca and bald Chris.

Bianca's eyeing neurosurgery, while Chris is leaning general.

Final call depends on tomorrow's scores and the hospital's plan.

Outside the Exam Room.

"Time's up! Pens down, please," the proctor announced, glancing at the clock.

Most interns dropped their pens, but a few kept scribbling like their lives depended on it.

And honestly? With five getting cut, it's no joke.

This is their future—who wouldn't go all out?

The exam's difficulty? It's relative.

For Adam, it's a walk in the park.

For Cristina, no biggie either.

But for the less gifted—or the ones coasting through internship—it's a nightmare.

Every question's a debate, every answer a shaky guess.

They double-check, second-guess their gut, and before they know it, time's gone.

Their answer sheets? Still half-empty.

Drop the pen now? No way!

"Doctor, please put your pen down!"

The proctor had to march over to one intern still scribbling away, reaching for the paper.

"Mm-hmm," the intern mumbled, still writing, even chasing the paper as the proctor pulled it away.

Only after a stern warning did they finally throw their hands up like, "Fine, I'm done!"

Over the top? Maybe.

But this is tame, trust me.

These are doctors—interns, sure, but legit MDs with degrees!

They've got the book smarts and they've seen life-and-death stuff in the hospital.

They've built some mental toughness and physical grit.

Plus, this isn't even the make-or-break med school exam.

Fail this? They can reapply for internships—worst case, at a less prestigious hospital.

So yeah, it's tense, but not "Cristina's dream medical-emergency-during-the-exam" tense. 😊

Law exams, though? That's brutal.

Take Matthew and Lily's wedding—Matthew's old crush, that law school senior, kept hurting herself just to skip the bar exam.

Not without reason.

Law students grind for years, grad school and all, only to face a two-day hellscape of a test for freedom.

It's their version of the med school gauntlet—pass, and you're a lawyer.

But they're not doctors. They haven't stared down death daily.

With a 50% pass rate and that kind of pressure, people snap.

Some puke the second they get the paper and get carted off.

Others scream "No, no, no!" mid-exam, bolting out the door.

When time's called, they collapse on desks like drained robots—classic scene.

So, law students dodging that stress with wild excuses? Totally get it.

Doctors and lawyers—these "middle-class gold standards"—aren't easy gigs. Capitalist cash doesn't come cheap!

"Tonight, Old Friends Bar—Dr. Duncan's treating!"

A little nurse stood outside, beaming at the interns streaming out. "Everyone's invited!"

"Sweet!"

"Internship's done—tonight's for letting loose!"

"Hell yeah, results tomorrow? If I don't get trashed tonight, how am I sleeping? I'm in!"

The interns were all hyped.

Adam had tipped the nurse to spread the word.

He'd kinda flexed his privilege, throwing everyone off their game a bit, so a little payback felt right.

Plus, it's the last day of internship—time to celebrate! 🎉

After tomorrow, this crew might never cross paths again.

Even if they do, it'll be different vibes, different roles.

Nighttime. Old Friends Bar.

This place had long replaced Joe's shuttered joint as the go-to spot near the medical center.

Every night, it's packed with hospital staff.

Tonight? Even crazier.

Adam had declared it an open tab—free for all med staff. Basically turned it into a massive hospital party!

Anyone in scrubs could roll in and enjoy.

After mingling with the crew for a bit, Adam hit the bar, told the bartender and waitstaff to keep everyone happy, and got ready to dip.

He's a busy guy.

A time-management guru like him? Every minute's gotta shine.

Hanging out here shooting the breeze? Not maxing out his clock.

"Hey!"

A girl slid up next to him, flashing a friendly grin.

"Hey," Adam replied, keeping it cool.

She wasn't drop-dead gorgeous, but she was easy on the eyes.

"Can I buy you a drink?" she asked, jumping right in.

"Never seen you before—are you new?"

Adam didn't call her out for being bold—he's used to it. He smirked. "Wait, don't tell me. Let me guess—you just came from Boston, and... your last name's Grey, right?"

"You know me?" she said, wide-eyed.

"Nah," Adam chuckled, teasing. "You just remind me of your sister. Same bar-hopping vibe, same forwardness. I can't tell if it's 'cause you're both doctors—or 'cause you're both Greys..."

Meredith's half-sister, Little Grey, Lexie Grey: "..."

Chapter 725: There Are Bad Guys in the Hospital

Old Friends Bar.

At the counter.

Little Grey—Lexie Grey—was left speechless by Adam for a moment before shaking her head with a laugh. "Okay, I get it. You're my mom's doctor—she must've shown you my picture!"

"I'm just your mom's doctor. Why would she show me your photo? ~" Adam teased with a smirk.

Lexie's eyes darted away, avoiding his gaze.

She wasn't like her sister Meredith, some seasoned pro at this stuff. How could she handle being teased by her idol?

Yup, you heard that right!

Lexie's a total Adam fangirl.

Ever since that legendary Grey lecture video started circulating in the medical world, Lexie watched it and bam—instant fangirl mode activated.

She's not alone in that, either.

Even if Adam looked like an alien, his vibe on that stage—holding his own as a mere intern, going toe-to-toe with the legendary Dr. Grey, and answering a crowd of doctors' questions with total confidence—would've made him a med student icon.

That cool-headed swagger and insane skill? Irresistible.

Then came the recent cruise ship accident rescue livestream, and her fangirl level shot through the roof.

The lecture video was just theory—impressive, sure, but for someone like Lexie (aka "Lexie-pedia" with her near-photographic memory), it was still in the realm of "I can kinda picture that."

But the live rescue? That hands-on mastery? Forget it—not even the biggest hotshot doctors could claim they'd pull it off.

In a field that bows to authority, running into a powerhouse idol like Adam and not worshipping him?

Sorry, this girl can't help it! 😊

"Alright, no more joking around," Adam said, noticing Lexie was nowhere near Meredith's league in handling banter. He dialed it back fast. "Three reasons:

One, I know everyone at the medical center, so you've gotta be new.

Two, you don't just act like Meredith—you look a little like her too. Genetics are wild like that.

And three, your mom told Meredith you're at Harvard Med too, graduating this year, with the new intern batch starting tomorrow.

If it's not you, then who?"

"You really remember everyone at the medical center?" Lexie asked, her heart doing a little flip as she stared at him with wide eyes.

"My memory's decent," Adam said with a modest smile.

"Mine's decent too, but I could never pull that off," Lexie replied, her gaze practically glowing as she looked at him.

Brain space is limited, you know. Even someone like Sheldon's got memories locked away—stuff he won't recall unless something triggers it.

Memorizing med school facts already takes a ton of effort. Who's got time to casually memorize every single staff member at a whole medical center like Adam does?

"Heh, how's your mom doing lately?" Adam asked, smoothly changing the subject.

"She's good!" Lexie grinned. "Thanks to you, really. She still hiccups, but with daily massages, it's under control—no big deal anymore..."

Her face turned pink mid-sentence.

She'd just remembered how her parents' relationship actually improved because of this—still showing off their lovey-dovey vibes in front of her, even at their age.

So embarrassing! 🙄

"As long as it's not disrupting her life, that's what matters," Adam said with a nod. "Surgery could fix the hiccups quick, but her latest checkup stats weren't great. I'm worried about post-op infections, so I didn't push for it right away."

"I totally agree," Lexie said, nodding eagerly. "Turning a small issue into a big one with surgery happens way too often. My whole family's super grateful for you."

"You graduated from Harvard Med—why didn't you apply to Mass General for your internship?" Adam asked, curious.

"I wanted to stay closer to home..." Lexie said, her eyes flickering. "Plus, New York Medical Center's an amazing teaching hospital now—its rep's just as good as Mass General's these days..."

"Make sure you say that to the surgical chief and the dean!" Adam laughed.

"What's my sister like?" Lexie couldn't hold back anymore, blurting it out.

"Meredith?" Adam paused, looking at her eager face. "She's... complicated. Sensitive. Probably won't be as easy to get along with as you're hoping, at first.

Your dad left her for you and your mom, after all. Now, thanks to your mom's efforts, she's starting to warm up to you guys—but it's gonna take time.

Especially with you."

"Because I got the dad-love she missed out on?" Lexie said, piecing it together. Her voice dropped. "I really wanted a sister like her. But my dad never talked about her much."

She does have a sister—her full sister—who'd had a kid at the medical center a while back.

But that sister fell in love young, got married, had a baby—living the standard life with no big ambitions. Lexie, who'd clawed her way through Harvard Med and graduated, couldn't relate much.

Deep down, she's got some career drive—how could she not?

So finding out she has a half-sister—Meredith—who's also a Harvard Med grad? Even without meeting her, that instant sense of connection and closeness was unavoidable.

Growing up with both parents doting on her, Lexie's not the type to have a mean bone in her body.

"She'll come around eventually," Adam said reassuringly.

"Really?" Lexie's eyes lit up as she looked at him.

"For sure," Adam said with a playful grin. "But you've gotta follow some rules first!"

"What rules?" Lexie asked, tilting her head.

"Rule one: Don't hit on guys at bars—or let guys hit on you there!" Adam said, holding up a finger, barely holding back a laugh. "Rule two: Don't hook up with coworkers at the hospital—especially not the senior doctors!

Rule three: Get yourself a sturdy belt!

Rule four: Never get drunk!"

"..." Lexie's jaw dropped.

What the heck?! 🤔

"Because you never know if the guy you meet at a bar—or some coworker at the hospital—has already gotten cozy with your dear big sis," Adam explained with a chuckle. "You don't wanna end up as that kind of sisters, right?"

"No way!" Lexie yelled, her face flaming red.

"Exactly," Adam teased. "Meredith wouldn't either... well, maybe she wouldn't care that much, but she probably doesn't want it either. So if you want to break the ice with her faster, stick to these four rules.

Rules one and two stop any awkward sister overlap from the root. Rules three and four keep you from doing something dumb on impulse.

All for your own good.

Our hospital's got some bad apples, you know..."

Lexie squirmed, brushing off the "bad apples" bit, and looked at Adam with a worried frown. "You and my sister... are you two close?"

"Not like you're thinking," Adam said, standing up. He paused by her side and leaned in a bit. "Wanna know what else you and your sister have in common? You both offered to buy me a drink—and I turned you both down. How do you think I came up with these rules? I've got experience!" 😊

"Oh!" Lexie's face lit up, then fell, then lit up again. She turned to him, whispering, "I'll totally follow those rules! Can I be your intern?"

"We'll see," Adam said with a noncommittal smile. "Catch you tomorrow, Dr. Little Grey!"

"It's Lexie..." she protested softly. "See you tomorrow, Dr. Duncan!"

Chapter 726: Adam's Little Crew

The Next Day. Welcome Day at the Medical Center.

Adam and the seasoned crew rolled in early. While they were changing, Jessie, the surgical chief's secretary, popped in, waving a stack of envelopes. "Big moment's here, folks!"

"Our scores!"

The group swarmed her instantly.

"Adam, this one's yours."

Jessie handed him the first envelope. "Congrats on passing your internship—you're officially a resident at the medical center now!"

"Thanks!"

Adam took it with a grin, but before he could open it, Cristina snatched it, ripping it open.

"Holy crap! That little time, and you still got a perfect score?!"

Cristina stared at the paper, half-expecting it but still blown away. 😬

"Was there ever any doubt?" Adam teased, clearly in a good mood.

"Dr. Yang, here's yours."

Jessie started passing out the rest. "Grey, this one's you. O'Malley... here's yours."

Adam caught the brief pause in Jessie's voice and that quick flicker of pity in her eyes. He sighed inwardly, Poor George O'Malley...

As the chief's secretary, Jessie obviously knew everyone's results ahead of time—who passed, who flunked, all crystal clear.

"Did you pass?"

Cristina skimmed her own scores, then eyed her bestie Meredith.

"Of course!"

Meredith didn't sound so sure at first. She opened her envelope, double-checked, then let out a relieved breath before faking that confident tone.

"What about you, George?"

Meredith turned to the oddly quiet George.

"You didn't fail, did you?"

Cristina's sharp instincts kicked in. She grabbed his score sheet. "What the—?! You actually failed?! Dr. Bailey's gonna lose it!

Even Alex and Liz could've passed if they were still here!

And you flunked? What were you even doing?!"

George stood there, hands half-raised like he was still holding the paper, frozen and speechless. His chubby face cycled through a dozen emotions.

He never, ever thought he'd be one of the five cut.

Being mentored by Dr. Bailey—the hospital's most seasoned resident—was proof of his chops.

Plus, over the year, he'd done solid work, even earning the "good helper" title from Dr. Burke.

Sure, five out of eighteen getting axed was a decent chunk, but it shouldn't have been him.

"I'll check for you."

Adam pulled out his phone, dialed Chief Richard, and asked. After hanging up, he shook his head. "You scored third-to-last. The chief reviewed your paper personally—total mess. Were you too stressed and just choked?"

"Man, you're pathetic," Cristina jabbed. "Your girlfriend—who aced this exam once—helped you study, and you still bombed a test this easy?"

"Alright, Cristina, ease up!"

Meredith jumped in to stop her, then looked at Adam. "Any way to fix this? Can he retake it?"

"This isn't a no-show situation—how's he gonna retake it?"

Adam shook his head. "He's got two options: leave, or reapply for an internship. With George's record, the chief would probably greenlight it."

Missing an exam might get you a redo.

Failing it? If that got you a second shot, everyone who got cut would demand one—endless loop city.

"Reapply for an internship?"

George's eyes widened. "So I'd be trailing behind you guys?"

Right then, he was mentally cursing his girlfriend, Callie.

If she hadn't stressed him out so much, making him focus on proving his "boyfriend skills" instead of studying, he wouldn't be here.

Her intense "review sessions" left such a mark that during the exam, every question reminded him of that stuff with her.

With his skills, how could he end up third-to-last otherwise?!

"You think you're still shadowing Dr. Bailey?"

Cristina smirked. "First, your girlfriend snagged her chief resident spot.

Now you pull this, humiliating her.

You better steer clear for a while, or she's gonna chew you out so bad!"

She paused, then added, "Seriously, though—how does Callie even qualify to replace Bailey?

Does she have Bailey's clout to boss around the other residents?

'Cause I'm sure not listening to her."

Yup!

The chief resident gig finally settled—and it wasn't the top pick, Dr. Bailey.

Not even the runner-up, Sydney.

It went to third-place, low-key ortho resident Callie Torres.

"There's a reason for it," Adam explained. "Chief resident's just a title—doesn't matter much if Bailey takes it or not.

Her track record's already earned everyone's respect.

When she talks, we residents listen—that's more 'chief' than the title itself.

She's proven her management skills to the chief.

Now, she needs to spend more time in the OR, not stuck scheduling shifts or writing papers.

With her talent and grit, she can level up to a top specialist—or even higher."

He grinned. "Haven't you heard the rumor?"

"What rumor?" Cristina perked up.

"The chief's been thinking about retiring," Adam said. "That's why Burke, Shepherd, Montgomery, and Sloan are all jockeying for his spot.

But the chief's real pick? Bailey.

She's just a resident now, not quite ready.

Respect? Check. Management skills? Check.

What's she missing?

A big-shot attending title.

Chief resident would just slow her down—that's why the chief went this way."

"Ohhh, got it!"

Everyone nodded, lightbulbs popping on.

"What about you, Adam?" Cristina asked. "You gonna be chief resident someday?"

"Probably," Adam said with a laugh. "I've got the energy for it—no big deal."

"Oho!" Cristina cackled. "George, your girlfriend's screwed. She might get one year as chief resident—if Adam weren't just promoted to resident today, too green to jump straight to chief, she wouldn't even have a shot!"

George stood there, dazed, not reacting.

Getting cut had clearly hit him hard.

"Hey! Snap out of it!"

Cristina stepped up, snapping her fingers in his face. "What's with you? It's just failing and redoing your internship—why's that gotta be bad?

You forgetting who you could be shadowing?"

"Who?" George mumbled, on autopilot.

Cristina tilted her head toward Adam.

George followed her gaze, and his eyes lit up.

It clicked—trailing Adam openly wouldn't be much worse than Cristina or Meredith shadowing big-name attendings.

No, scratch that—it'd be better!

With Adam's rep at the center and his insane surgery grind, George would get way more juice following him than the others would with their mentors.

That little sting of "trailing his old crew"? Not worth sweating.

Shadowing Cristina or Meredith might get him laughed at by insiders.

But Adam? No one's laughing.

They'd just be jealous, wondering if he tanked on purpose—and if they could pull off the same "genius move." 😊

"Dr. Duncan, intern George O'Malley reporting for duty!"

Chubby little George shook off his funk, flashing a big, eager grin at Adam.

"Uh..."

Adam's mouth twitched. "Let's hold off—intern assignments are up to the hospital."

"I don't care!" George blurted. "I'm your little shadow from now on!"

Cristina and Meredith stood there, smirking, enjoying the show.

Chapter 727: I'm Not Targeting Anyone

Medical Center.

Changing Room.

"Adam, what's that supposed to mean?"

Meredith frowned, confused. "George is our friend, and he's in a tough spot. Are you seriously still refusing to take him on as your intern?"

"Yeah," Cristina chimed in with a smirk. "Just thinking about dragging those clueless newbies around later gives me a headache. Having George—an intern with actual experience—would be a total win. Way too good to pass up! Hey, George, how about you just join me instead?" 😊

"No way, not happening!"

George shook his head fast. "I, George O'Malley, would rather quit than work under you, Cristina Yang."

"Oh, wow, excuse me?!"

Cristina had just been teasing, but now her eyes narrowed as she shot him a glare.

"Okay, enough messing around—let's get serious," Meredith said, playing peacemaker before turning to Adam. "So, what's the deal?"

"Well..." Adam hesitated. "You guys know I'm someone with ambitions..."

"What, and taking me on kills your ambition?"

George's pale face darkened.

"No, no, it's not about you specifically," Adam said earnestly. "But with this batch of interns I'm leading, I'm planning to set up a real 'survival of the fittest' vibe. Like, a legit competition where it's all about talent or grit—nothing else. That means no cozying up to senior doctors beyond a professional level..."

Cristina and Meredith's faces darkened too, so Adam quickly added, "Hey, I'm not targeting you guys! I just want to train some real top-tier doctor material."

Like he'd told Cristina before, Adam was gunning for the Chief Resident spot.

He had the energy and skills to take on that role—overseeing all the residents as a mini surgical boss, tackling problems they couldn't handle, coordinating surgeries, and keeping the whole department running smoothly.

In the process, he'd get first dibs on all the high-stakes, critical cases—totally fair and square.

Back when the Chief of Surgery was picking a Chief Resident, Adam was still an intern, not a full resident, so he'd been out of the running. Plus, the top pick back then was Dr. Bailey—someone Adam respected, and honestly, the whole hospital did too.

So, he'd shelved the idea of pushing for Chief Resident as an intern.

I mean, with pros like Bailey and Sydney—senior residents who were well-liked and close to Adam—waiting in the wings, him swooping in as an intern would've been a slap in the face. Super insulting and a total morale killer.

Adam wanted to earn Chief Resident with as little drama as possible. At the very least, he needed to be a resident for a bit, mentor some interns, and show off not just his medical and management skills, but the third big thing teaching hospitals care about: teaching.

That cruise ship accident a while back? Adam's insane medical skills and leadership in the field got everyone's attention.

Now, he was determined to nail the teaching part too.

What better way than to churn out a few universally recognized future star doctors?

Step one: set the rules. Make his interns compete purely on medical skill—pushing them to level up constantly for more opportunities, building a solid cycle. No sleeping with senior doctors to snag a spot.

And these three in front of him?

Meredith—dating Derek Shepherd, the Neurosurgery Chief.

Cristina—dating Preston Burke, the Cardiothoracic Surgery Chief.

George—dating Callie Torres, the current Chief Resident.

Yikes. 😬

Okay, Cristina? Her talent and hustle totally matched her rep as an amazing surgeon and future star.

Even knowing she was with Burke, people didn't have much to gossip about.

But Meredith and George?

If word got out that George flunked and had to redo his internship, you know the whispers would start: "Told you they just slept their way up..."

Training legit star doctors wasn't hard if you had the right approach.

Anyone who'd made it this far had decent talent—it came down to grit and drive.

Take Cristina: even with Burke as her boyfriend, they lived at the hospital. Their one "date" got cut short before dinner was over because they rushed back to save someone. All they ever talked about was medicine—pure dedication.

Meredith, though? She and Shepherd were always off being romantic, hitting the town whenever they had a free second, and don't get me started on the drama.

Even if her skills were legit, people would still call her a "watered-down" surgeon.

Adam wanted to prove his teaching chops and produce some undeniable stars. Set a high bar, stick to it—talent rises, weakness falls. With his skills and resources, it'd be a breeze.

Plus, there's a bonus:

These star trainees would become his loyal crew down the line, spreading out into a rock-solid network.

Future department heads at big hospitals, at least!

How do you think dynasties—money, politics, academia—get built? It's all about this.

Not that Adam was after anything specific from them—just that kind of network can work wonders sometimes.

"I can follow your rules," George said, gritting his teeth. "I swear I won't pull resources from Callie or mess up the competition."

"You sure?"

Adam raised an eyebrow. "Torres is Chief Resident right now—she's got a ton of resources. Even a little help from her would make people jealous. Over here, you'd be competing with three others. You've got a year of experience, but that doesn't mean you'd outshine them."

"I've got confidence!" George shot back with a self-deprecating grin. "If I can't beat them even with that, then I'll accept it."

"Alright, fine," Adam sighed, nodding. "But let's be clear: break the rules, and you're out. You'd have to leave on your own, or even if we're friends, you're benched. No negotiation."

"Deal!"

George agreed instantly, looking pumped.

Adam just shook his head inwardly.

He'd said all he could—turning George down now would be too harsh.

Truth was, he really didn't want to take George on.

Dr. Bailey was awesome, sure, but her old "Nazi" rep had been trashed by Meredith and crew. She could never stay tough on them.

George, the resident nice guy, had picked up some bad habits tagging along with them.

A whole year as an intern, and in Adam's eyes, that wasn't a plus—it was a minus.

Everything settled, they changed, and George eagerly trailed behind Adam.

"Adam, where are we headed now?"

"Sorry, George."

Adam stopped and turned, dead serious. "You should be calling me Dr. Duncan from now on."

In American TV drama land, first names mean closeness—friends, even family, use them all the time.

But in a hospital? No one's calling their boss by their first name.

Even senior doctors rarely use juniors' first names.

"Dr. So-and-So" is the pro move.

Starting now, Adam was fixing George's mindset.

Chapter 728: What a Reincarnation

Medical Center.

Surgical Director's Office.

"Five interns are a bit much. Let's drop one."

Adam brought George along to discuss the list with Richard, the surgical director. Normally, a resident doctor just gets assigned interns and has to deal with it. But with Adam? Oh no, Richard made sure to give him a heads-up and let him pick whoever he wanted.

Thing is, Richard didn't know George was tagging along with Adam. So, he'd already handpicked four interns, prepared their files, and was ready to announce them once Adam gave the green light.

Adam skimmed through the files, pretty impressed with Richard's prep work. He shot George a meaningful glance and scratched one name off the list.

George stood there awkwardly, his chubby face turning a little red from embarrassment. Four interns per resident? That's the tried-and-true teaching model—not too many, not too few. But because of him,

one intern who should've been with Adam got bumped. For that poor soul, it was a huge loss. Still, expecting George to play the saint and step aside? Yeah, not happening. 😊

"Jessie, pass this list to admin. Let the interns find their residents."

Richard made a quick tweak and handed the list to his secretary. Adam and George headed out.

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Nurse's Station.

Christina was hunched over, scribbling in a patient's chart, when she felt a shadow creep up behind her. She looked up and turned—four interns, two guys and two girls, all beaming at her with the brightest, most eager smiles.

"Holy crap, was I like this back in the day? ...No way, I definitely wasn't this bad!" she grumbled to herself. Standing up straight, she faced the four newbie interns with a blank stare and said, "Listen up, I've got five rules. Memorize them!"

The four straightened up like soldiers. Two of them even whipped out notepads, ready to jot down every word.

"Rule 1: No sucking up! I'm always gonna hate you guys, so flattery gets you nowhere."

Christina's icy gaze swept over them. She's naturally a cold person, and this vibe? It shut those four rookies up real quick—they didn't dare make a peep.

Over on Meredith's side, things were way chillier.

"Trauma protocols, call lists, pagers—here you go, take them. If something happens, the nurses will page you."

She handed stuff out to her four newbie interns, keeping it nice and calm as she laid out Rule 2: "You've gotta be on call and show up fast—like, running!"

"Your first shift starts now. It's gonna be 36 hours straight."

Back to Christina—she was leading her four interns around, showing them the surgical wing. In her frostiest tone, she passed down the rules she'd inherited from Dr. Bailey: "You're interns. You're nobodies. Bottom of the surgical food chain. You run labs, write charts, and pull all-nighters. You keep going until you drop—just don't you dare complain!"

Since she was walking ahead, the interns trailing behind didn't catch the smirk creeping onto her blank face. She was loving this. Some superhero once said: Share joy, and it doubles. Share pain, and it halves, bringing relief. For Christina, devout follower of medicine, her intern year wasn't exactly "pain"—so no halved suffering turned into joy there. But watching these rookies squirm? Oh, that was pure bliss. Four interns = four times the fun! 😊

They reached the on-call room.

"This is the on-call room. It's usually hogged by attendings, but you can catch some sleep here when the time and place are right."

Christina pushed the door open, letting the interns peek inside, then gave them a cold stare. "Now, Rule 3: If I'm sleeping, don't wake me unless your patient's dying! And Rule 4: When I get there, your patient better still be alive. Otherwise, you didn't just kill a patient—you woke me up for nothing. Trust me, you don't wanna see that version of me!"

The four interns nodded like crazy—picture little chicks pecking at rice.

"What's up?" Christina asked, eyeing a bald Black guy raising his hand.

"What about Rule 5?" he asked cautiously. "You only gave us four."

"Rule 5?" Christina smirked, shifting from arms crossed to hands on hips. She patted the pager on her waist with a dramatic flair and said, "Rule 5 is: I move, you move!"

But then—awkward moment alert! Last year, when Dr. Bailey got to this part, her pager went off right on cue, and she smoothly demonstrated the rule by sprinting off with the interns in tow. Now? Christina kept tapping her pager... and nothing. Nada. Zilch.

She stood there, trying to channel Bailey's cool vibe, but the silence was deafening. The four interns just stared at each other, confused. Luckily, Christina's poker face was intimidating enough to hold the scene together. Realizing the script wasn't working, she rolled her eyes and barked, "Go!"

The four scattered like startled birds, no clue why they were running or where to go—but they ran anyway. That's the power of a senior doctor! 🦊

Meredith, meanwhile, was also passing down Bailey's five rules, but she added her own twist. Tradition? Legacy? This was it!

At the on-call room, she got serious: "You can crash here anytime, but listen—don't sleep with anyone. Especially not an attending. Trust me, it's a terrible idea."

Too bad her warning backfired. Instead of scaring them off, two of her female interns' eyes started sparkling with interest. Oops. 😬

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Adam's group? Way more chill. Three guys and one girl stood in front of him.

"Let's do some intros," Adam said with a smile.

"I'm John Carter, graduated from NYU School of Medicine. I did a medical internship in the ER here at the center under Dr. Duncan."

Carter, decked out in his white coat, oozed confidence. Adam gave him a look, sensing some cockiness, and mentally noted to bring him down a peg later.

"I'm Lexie Grey, Harvard Med grad."

Lexie flashed Adam a smile before glancing at her three peers.

"Grey?" George blurted out, surprised.

"She's Meredith's half-sister," Adam explained, then turned to Lexie. "In the hospital, we go by last names. I know you're not thrilled about it, but to avoid mix-ups with Meredith, we'll call you Dr. Little Grey. That cool?"

"Yeah, no problem," Lexie said with helpless shrug. With Alice Grey around too, the medical center now had three Dr. Greys.

"I'm George O'Malley," George said, grinning at Lexie. "Your sister's friend."

Adam's eyes landed on the last intern. Short guy, radiating pride, with a cool, detached vibe.

"Neil Melendez, Johns Hopkins," he said flatly.

Chapter 729: One King with Four Bombs

Medical Center.

Adam was meeting his four new interns.

Except for the last one, the other three were familiar faces.

Carter had been with Adam in the ER.

Hmm.

Back then, he was sharp and humble, but after a month or so apart, now that he'd ditched the medical student cap and become an official intern, he seemed a bit too full of himself.

Was that a good thing?

Nope, not really!

But Adam figured after surviving the first 36-hour intern shift, Carter would come crashing down from his "Dr. Carter" high—whether he landed on his feet or his face was up to luck.

Honestly, Adam got where Carter was coming from.

Think about Howard—same vibe.

With his buddies, it was always "Dr. Cooper, Dr. Hofstadter, Dr. Koothrappali," and then... "Mr. Wolowitz."

Later, it evolved into "Dr. Cooper, Dr. Hofstadter, Dr. Koothrappali, Dr. Fowler, Dr. Rostenkowski," and still... "Mr. Wolowitz."

Anyone would lose it inside.

If Howard ever snagged that PhD and joined his crew—and his wife—at that level, adding "Dr. Wolowitz" to the lineup?

He'd probably float back to the International Space Station.

No rocket needed this time, and definitely no screaming or wetting himself.

He'd soar through the atmosphere like a pint-sized Jewish-Greek god—Wolow-Zeus—looking down on the planet.

Who'd be crazier then? Sheldon with his "foolish Earthlings" rants, or Wolow-Zeus? Tough call.

After Howard's embarrassing space trip, he came back with this cocky edge everyone hated, bragging about being an astronaut who'd "been to the stars."

Sheldon and the gang even bet on it—pick any random topic, and Howard would somehow tie it back to his proud astronaut status.

Spoiler: he always did.

Even his wife, Bernadette, got so fed up with his rocket-launch-style flirting that she lost all interest.

Hard to say if later, when Howard tried studying for a PhD with Sheldon—and got pranked into dropping it—Sheldon's antics were partly fueled by a gut feeling that a Dr. Howard would get way too full of himself.

Back in the day, Howard was the king of messing with Sheldon, and he was just "Mr. Wolowitz" then.

A "Dr. Wolowitz"?

Sheldon's science-snob mental attacks would drop 50%, while a unleashed Howard's physical jabs at Sheldon would spike 50%. Sheldon probably couldn't handle it.

Carter going from "Mr. Carter" to "Dr. Carter" wasn't that extreme, but it still turned heads.

One's a cocky PhD who'd just get mocked with no real harm done.

The other? A doctor whose slip-ups could mean life or death!

It took Howard ages to wise up.

Adam wasn't giving Carter that long.

Carter had no clue about the whirlwind of thoughts in Adam's head. When he saw Dr. Duncan glance his way, he flashed a confident, buddy-buddy grin, sneaking side-eyes at his three peers, sizing them up.

"George? No threat. Sure, he's Dr. Duncan's colleague and has a year of experience, but he flunked the boards and got cut. He's weak.

Plus, being a colleague means he'll never be Duncan's inner-circle guy!

Little Grey's a stunner—dangerous.

But with Dr. Duncan's straight-laced style, that's actually her Achilles' heel.

If she's anything like Dr. Grey... her fancy Harvard Med grad status won't mean squat.

Here's hoping Grey is just Grey!

The real threat's this short guy—Johns Hopkins grad...

Damn it!

Why are they all from these elite schools?!

I hate Ivy Leaguers!"

If Harvard Med was a Nobel Prize, Johns Hopkins was a Fields Medal.

One's world-famous.

The other's unbeatable in its field!

Either way, they crush NYU Med a hundred times over.

If Carter didn't already have that ER history with Adam, he wouldn't be strutting around. He'd be flashing humble smiles at every smug glance from these top-school grads.

"Some of you probably know this already," Adam said, scanning the group with a grin. "The surgical department here has five rules for new interns."

Carter and George jumped in unison, kicking off their little show, rattling off the classic five rules like pros.

"Nice."

Adam shot Carter an approving smile.

He'd been in the ER before, but nailing the surgical rules so fast and clean showed he'd prepped hard.

Not too cocky yet.

Good! 😊

Lexie's smile stiffened at Carter and George's display.

Nobody likes a show-off—especially not your rivals.

Yup!

She could already smell the battlefield smoke.

And it was thick.

Meanwhile, short-stuff Neil Melendez stood off to the side, totally unfazed by the rookie showdown.

"Maybe this guy's the real future star," Adam thought, eyeing their reactions.

George and Carter were average talent-wise. One was a friend and colleague; the other was his first follower, with a bonus for those braised pig trotters vibes.

How far they'd go depended on their hustle.

Lexie's resume sparkled, and with the Grey name—even if she wasn't Alice Grey's blood—her talent was legit.

But her personality? She didn't have her sister's seasoned, go-with-the-flow grit or Cristina's laser-focused medical obsession.

Could she push past her mental blocks and grow into the big-doctor mindset of her half-sister's mom? That'd take some serious coaching from Adam.

Out of the four, only this Johns Hopkins shorty had a rocksteady vibe and that Cristina-like, all-in passion for medicine in his eyes.

Adam was sure: give him a shot, and he'd shine fast.

The catch? Would he impress Adam enough?

No matter how bright he burned, if the Medical Center's "sun" didn't feel like shining on him, what good was it?

A rotten attitude could leave his brilliance—and everyone else's dimness—pointless.

"So, those are the five rules, more or less," Adam said with a laugh. "But I'm tweaking the first one a bit. I don't hate you guys, so let's swap it for a basic, non-negotiable one..."

Then he laid it out: survival of the fittest, no cozying up to senior docs—period.

"Follow it, and we're golden. Don't, and you're either warming the bench, wasting your precious intern days, or out the door."

Adam scanned them again. "We clear?"

"Crystal!"

All four shouted back.

But their vibes? George gave a bitter smirk, Carter puffed up proud, Lexie looked deflated, and Neil Melendez's eyes blazed with fire! 🔥

Chapter 730: The Perfect Bad Example

Medical Center.

A king leading four aces—white coats swaying, BGM blasting in the background—they strutted through the hallways, officially making their debut.

Adam was showing his four interns the ropes of the surgical wing. Sure, he could've dumped this on George, but nah—Adam wanted to do it himself. If he was gonna mold these rookies into legit future star doctors, he had to be hands-on from start to finish. No skipping steps!

And let's be real—Dr. Bailey's intern orientation? Absolute classic. Worthy of a salute from Adam.

"Dr. Duncan!"

As they passed a patient room, a familiar bald guy called out, stopping Adam in his tracks. His four interns, glued to his heels, screeched to a halt too.

"Vince!"

Adam turned to his fellow Texan with a grin. "How's Rick doing?"

"Thanks to you guys, Rick's recovering fast," Vince said, beaming. He glanced at the four interns trailing Adam and added, "I always knew you were the best, Dr. Duncan. This is the kind of crew you deserve—total Texas vibes!"

Eyeroll. Yep, that's right! Back at the cruise ship accident rescue, it was Christina who nudged this tough-as-nails Texan Vince to beg Adam to save his buddy Rick, who was pinned under a car. Back then, Vince was freaking out, worried Adam might be some hardcore Texan—or at least had a Texan soul. Now? He's proud as heck that Adam's a Texan too. All that old awkwardness? Poof—gone, like it never happened.

"It's just a resident with a few interns," Adam said with a laugh. "Rick's the real hero here. He deserves the best care we can give."

Some random nobody, no superpowers, no fancy assets—just a regular mechanic named Rick—ran into danger during a disaster without a second thought. Saved over a dozen trapped people, only to end up crushed under a car himself, suffering like crazy and flirting with death multiple times. To Adam, that guy's a hero, no question.

With Adam guiding over the phone and Christina drilling into Rick's skull on-site to stabilize him, plus a rescue team (quietly tipped off by Karen) rushing in to lift the car off, Rick made it. Christina got him onto an ambulance Adam had lined up, and they sped to the hospital. Dr. Shepherd took over, pulling him back from the brink. Recovery's still gonna take time, though. Right now, Rick's chilling in a VIP room Adam hooked up for him.

Vince was clearly there to check on him.

"Not everyone respects heroes," Vince said, looking at Adam gratefully. "Rick's in your hands now. I've gotta head out—won't be able to visit before he's discharged."

"No worries," Adam said with a nod and a smile. "New job?"

"Kinda," Vince replied, his grin getting wider. "Heading to MIT for grad school. Military training program."

"You're military?" Adam asked, eyebrows shooting up.

In that moment, the light bouncing off Vince's shiny bald head hit Adam just right, and a memory flashed—Vince in a military uniform.

Oh crap! It's him!

"Used to be," Vince said with a chuckle. "Retired, went to college, became an engineer. But Rick's rescue shook me up. One person's strength? It's nothing against a disaster. Then my old boss called—Air Force has this training gig. My background and service record fit, so I applied. Now I'm off to MIT for a master's in mechanical engineering."

"Haha, nice! That's better than a physicist-turned-engineer," Adam said, half-laughing, half-stunned. "Never asked before—what's your last name?"

"Williams!" Vince grinned. "Vince Williams."

Bingo. Adam was sure now.

This bald Texan tough guy? At first, Adam pegged him as the brother-in-law of that narc cop from Breaking Bad. But nope—turns out he's the Air Force colonel from The Big Bang Theory. The one who scared Rajesh speechless with a single line, made Howard think feds were tailing him, and sent him flooring it through red lights—only to get pulled over and stumble out of the car with shaky legs. Colonel Williams!

Fate's wild like that. 😊

Beep beep.

Beep beep.

Adam's pager went off.

"Sorry, Vince—got a patient coming in," he said, glancing at it. "Congrats in advance for MIT! Catch you later!"

With a wave, he bolted toward the ER. Three of his four interns sprinted after him. Neil Melendez, the short guy, was the fastest—not George, who came in second. Carter was third. Lexie? She was the slowpoke, lagging behind.

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ER Entrance.

A multi-car pileup had been called in, and everyone who needed to know was there.

"Listen up—big accidents are our favorite! They're your best shot at hands-on practice!" Christina announced, practically buzzing as she led her crew in.

Meredith rolled up with her team too, same energy.

"Don't copy her," Adam warned his interns. "She's not wrong, but you've gotta keep some compassion for the patients. Plus, if they or their families hear her say that? Best case, you get punched. Worst case, sued—or maybe even a bullet to say hi. So don't go plastering excitement all over your face and mouth like she does."

"Hey! You serious?" Christina overheard and marched over, glaring. "Using me as your little 'bad example' for teaching interns?"

"Am I wrong?" Adam shot back with a grin. "I've told you a million times to tone it down. You don't listen, so why can't I use you as a cautionary tale? If I mess up, feel free to do the same—I won't mind!"

"..." Christina had no comeback.

Everyone around cracked smiles, but George and Lexie straight-up laughed out loud.

"Oh, great—Adam's mocking me, and now you're laughing too, O'Malley?" Christina snapped, narrowing her eyes and raising a brow. "Guess my interns are gonna have plenty of 'bad examples' to learn from soon. Starting with: Don't be a 007!"

"Christina!" George's grin froze.

"Alright, ambulance is almost here. Go wrangle your interns and get ready for patients," Adam cut in smoothly.

Christina shot George one last glare before stomping back to her team.

"Dr. Duncan," a nurse ran up, "they found that last missing hiker—still alive. He's on his way, critical condition, with a climbing axe stuck in his head. The director wants you on it."

"Got it," Adam nodded.

"Damn it!" Christina muttered, her little eyes practically glowing with envy.

A hiker with an axe in his head, still kicking? What a cool case! Now the pileup patients she was about to handle felt boring in comparison.

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