

TV Show 78

Chapter 78: Cooper in Texas, Peggy in New Jersey

****Three Countries.****

****New Delhi.****

Rajesh's father was speechless upon seeing his son's timid reaction.

He had only intended to give Rajesh some advice in advance—advice he originally planned to share before Rajesh went abroad for his studies—just to remind him to keep a low profile. But who would have thought Rajesh would swing from one extreme to the other?

It was honestly a little embarrassing.

But it was too late now. No matter how much he tried to comfort Rajesh afterward, even suggesting that they invite Adam over, Rajesh had completely lost interest.

Of course, this was still 1992, not the distant 2020. Otherwise, Rajesh might have argued that he wasn't being cowardly—he was just being extra cautious.

As **Lord of the Mysteries** manga began circulation, similar shockwaves spread among Adam's friends.

****The University of Texas at Austin****

Young Sheldon, dressed neatly and carrying his signature tool bag, walked confidently across the university campus.

Here, at last, no one treated him like a little kid. He was a child standing on the shoulders of giants.

"Hey, Sheldon!"

"Hello."

He responded casually to the greeting and continued walking toward his classroom.

"That's Sheldon Cooper?"

"Yeah, doesn't he look like a little grown-up?"

"He seems pretty arrogant—he didn't even call us by name."

"Maybe he doesn't know our names."

"I seriously doubt that. I heard he has a photographic memory—he remembers anything he wants to."

"That impressive?"

"Otherwise, do you think just anyone could get into college at 11 years old and still outperform all the other students? While others are practically turning into two people just to keep up—burning the midnight oil—do you know how he studies?"

"How?"

"He gets it the moment it's explained to him. He connects concepts effortlessly. He's so sharp that sometimes even professors are left speechless by his questions. In fact, some professors even consult him on certain topics. His strongest subject is mathematics—many professors seek his advice on it."

"If he's so gifted in math, why isn't he pursuing it directly? Math is the crown jewel of science, even above theoretical physics."

"Someone asked him that once. He frowned and said that he loves physics the most. Plus, Peggy chose mathematics."

"Peggy? Who's that?"

"Peggy Adler! The youngest student at Princeton University. She's even younger than Sheldon by a few months. She's only been in college for a short time, and she's already published groundbreaking papers in math journals. She might be even more of a genius than Sheldon."

"Shit! Another child prodigy? Are kids these days all this terrifying?"

"I don't think Sheldon is any less talented than Peggy."

"Why not?"

"Do you have any idea how much time and effort Sheldon actually puts into studying?"

"He must be working tirelessly! Scientific research relies on talent, but it also takes dedication."

"Heh, you have no idea. Sheldon always goes to bed at 9 PM sharp. He spends his free time reading comic books, playing video games, learning musical instruments, and watching TV... He wastes so much time, yet his talent still shines this brightly. Now, imagine if he devoted all his time and energy to science—how terrifying would that be?"

"Damn, no wonder Dr. John Sturgis keeps saying that Sheldon is destined to win a Nobel Prize in Physics."

"Of course! Otherwise, why do you think the university gives him so many special privileges? I heard that before Sheldon even decided to come here, the school covered his trip to Caltech to attend a lecture by Stephen Hawking."

"Tch, no matter how smart he is, he's still just a kid. He even needs his mom to stay with him while he's in college."

As everyone marveled at Sheldon's genius, someone couldn't help but grumble with a hint of jealousy.

****Friday Afternoon****

After class, young Sheldon got into his mother Mary's car, ready to head home.

Since Austin was about a three-hour drive from the Cooper home, Mary stayed in Austin with Sheldon during the school week. On weekends, they drove back together.

"Mom?"

"I know, sweetheart. First stop—the comic book store, right?"

"Yes."

Mary sighed and shook her head with a smile, then drove toward the comic store.

Even though she disapproved of the crude and sometimes inappropriate content in those comic books, she couldn't bear to take away one of her son's few non-academic hobbies.

****Comic Book Store****

The moment young Sheldon walked in, his eyes landed on the most prominently displayed comic—**Lord of the Mysteries**. He immediately noticed the label: ****"Adapted from the novel by Adam Duncan."****

His brows furrowed.

****On the Drive Home****

"Sweetheart, why do you look upset?"

Mary glanced at her son's expression through the rearview mirror, concern evident in her voice.

"It's nothing."

Sheldon kept a straight face, unwilling to talk.

"Okay."

Mary smiled knowingly and didn't press further.

"Adam doesn't consider me a friend," Sheldon finally blurted out, unable to hold back. "He wrote a novel and got it turned into a comic, and he didn't even tell me."

"Really?"

Mary frowned. "Sweetheart, maybe it's just a misunderstanding? How about we call him when we get home?"

"Okay."

Sheldon nodded.

****The Cooper Household****

George Cooper warmly welcomed Mary and Sheldon home.

Well, mostly Mary.

Absence makes the heart grow fonder, after all.

Meanwhile, Sheldon dialed Adam's number and explained the situation.

"Huh? I mailed you a copy of the book and the comic! You didn't get it yet?"

On the other end of the call, Adam sounded just as surprised.

Even before the official release, he had sent copies to all his friends. He hadn't mentioned it beforehand—he wanted it to be a surprise.

But between handling promotional events like book signings and interviews, plus volunteering at the hospital, he'd been so busy that he completely forgot to follow up.

He hadn't expected that, after so many days, his friends still hadn't received their packages.

"Maybe the shipment is delayed," Adam mused.

After all, this wasn't the future, nor was it China. They were dealing with FedEx—despite the 'express' in its name, it was notoriously slow. The fact that the packages would eventually arrive intact was already a blessing.

"I see."

Sheldon's face finally lit up with a small smile. "I'll wait for it then."

"Just make sure your mom doesn't see it," Adam reminded.

Sheldon's mother was a devout Christian. She already had concerns about him playing *Dungeons & Dragons*—who knew how she would react to *Lord of the Mysteries*?

****Princeton University, New Jersey****

Peggy was the first to receive Adam's package. When she opened it, she gave a knowing smirk.

****Harvard University, Boston****

Karen signed for the package on behalf of Juno. Seeing that it was from Adam, she furrowed her brows.

****Bergen County High School, New Jersey****

Leonard trembled as he unboxed his delivery.

The moment he saw Adam's name on it, his eyes widened with excitement.

Holding the signed copy high above his head, he shouted, "This is a personally autographed edition from my best friend, Adam Duncan!"

After being teased for weeks about having no proof of their friendship, Leonard finally had the last laugh—his grin stretched so wide it nearly reached his ears.