

The "Preacher" On Fire

Preacher Adams shook Walt Halahay's hand firmly with a smile.

"Thank you so much for the money, Preacher!" Walt exclaimed excitedly. He stuffed the cash in the pockets of his wash blue jeans and smiled broadly.

Preacher Adams put his hand up and closed his eyes, his eyes crinkling as they shut. "No, no, don't even start. You promised to pay me back, and I do kinda owe you one for setting up that date with your sister. Is she going to be here soon?"

Both Preacher Adams and Walt Halahay were at Caesar's Coffee Empire, one of the classiest places to grab a cup of coffee that was placed at a price of four ninety-nine; and that was for a small cup of black coffee. Any other additions to the drink would increase the price dramatically. It was a building that only served to make the rich feel better about the money they had, which was ironic because Preacher Adams was nowhere near sustaining such wealth.

"Don't worry, Preacher, she's gonna show up." Walt placed his focus on the menu up above the counter and then peered out the glass window to the city street. He saw his sister's blue and gray car drive into the parking lot.

"So, you're a man of the books? A preacher?" A quaint voice rang out behind Preacher Adams. He turned around and had to clench his jaw in hopes it wouldn't fall away from his face. Before him was an astounding young beaut; electric blue eyes, jet black long hair, and the skin of an angel. Her cherubic voice suggested she was one of an innocent heart and mind, not interested in trouble in the least.

"No, I don't really read, I'm more of a lifter," Preacher Adams lied. He was by far the very opposite of a lifter. His thin frame was only undetectable on cool spring days like now when he sported his black windbreaker. Perhaps at one point he was quite the meathead, but that was twenty years ago when he was twenty. Now, at a prompt forty years of age, the heaviest thing Preacher Adams lifted was himself off the toilet.

"Oh, well how about the Bible? I couldn't help but overhear that you're a preacher, so I just tried to put two and two together..." The girl's voice drifted as she realized she probably looked foolish.

"I'm not a preach...I mean, uh, yes! Of course that's what I meant!" Preacher Adams bellowed loudly. People sitting in their seats turned their heads and glared at Preacher Adams, angry that he wasn't respecting the silence of a café.

Walt raised an eyebrow as Preacher Adams droned on about his false career as a preacher. Preacher Adams' first name was actually Preacher; it wasn't his profession by any means. His mother was a former nun who loved to get wasted on Thursdays, and it just so happened Preacher was born on a Thursday; a home birth.

"Well, I did mission trips in Africa and Haiti; the people there are so nice!" Preacher Adams chuckled falsely.

Nicole Halahay walked through the doors, her long heels clicking on the glossy floor. She gave her brother a quick hug, noticing her French pedicure was still drying. She looked over to Preacher Adams who was enthusiastically engaged in a conversation with the young lady he had just met.

"Is that him?" Nicole asked with confusion in her voice.

"Wow, that's incredible," the young woman said back to Preacher. "But I never told you my name; I'm Hatti. You can call me Hat for short," Hatti said with a shy giggle.

Preacher Adams took off his baseball cap and bowed. "Well, 'Hatti' ya' do?" He winked. Hatti smiled and laughed politely, covering her mouth as she did so.

"Excuse me? Preacher Adams? It's me, Nicole Halahay, your blind-"

"Ah, I'll say a prayer over you," Preacher Adams said to Nicole dryly. He was engrossed in Hatti.

Hatti shot a glance at Nicole who was staring daggers at her. Walt had lied and told Nicole that Preacher Adams was a rich man of reputable stature. Walt had then told Preacher Adams that Nicole was easy; Nicole was a gold digger and Preacher Adams was a man-whore.

Walt pulled Nicole to the side and all Preacher Adams heard was, "You know how hard it is for me to get a day off being a cop!"

Walt advised her to lower her voice, and both parties began to create a sinister plan.

Walt brushed off the shove and stared at Hatti with disbelief. She was gorgeous, no doubt, but even she had to see through Preacher Adams' trick.

"So you enjoy your work?" Hatti asked kindly. She was a big advocate for the Bible.

"Yeah, I mean, I guess you could say it's my... 'Job'," Preacher Adams joked, referencing the book of Job from the Bible, the story of the man who lost all of his fortune but kept his faith in God.

"Hey!" Walt interjected in the conversation of the deceptive and the gullible. "What book is the story of David and Goliath from again, Preacher? I always forget." Walt crossed his arms and waited for a response.

Preacher Adams swallowed heavily. "That's the book of Titans, obviously," he retorted confidently.

Hatti raised an eyebrow, not recognizing the book name that Preacher Adams had just said.

"Do you mean Titus? If so, I don't think that's the story of David and Goliath..." Walt walked to his friend's side and observed his new posture. Usually, Preacher Adams was slanted in his stance, his spine resembling the firmness of warm jelly.

"I don't really remember that one," Preacher Adams shot back defensively. "I'm more focused on the books that help you get to heaven where angels like Hatti are."

Hatti smiled coyly and blushed ever so slightly. Walt took notice to this with raw bewilderment, and began tapping his foot anxiously. He wasn't angered that Preacher Adams was pulling one over the head of a young girl; he was annoyed because he had taken the time to set up the meeting between Nicole and Preacher Adams, which Adams completely blew off for a different piece of ass.

"How old are you, Hatti?" Walt asked, ignoring his friend who was trying to buffer knowledge he didn't possess.

"I'm twenty-three," Hatti smiled. She pulled out a small handkerchief and coughed into it with an airy windpipe.

"Wow, you wear it well!" Walt complimented. "Hey, Preacher, how old are you?"

"Twenty-nine," Preacher coughed lowly.

"Hmm?"

"Twenty-nine."

"You look a lot older than that."

"Twenty-nine and a half, okay?" Preacher's voice cracked. He cleared his throat hastily and realized what Walt was doing. "Well, Hatti, I have to go now; I have to go teach a sermon."

"It's Tuesday," Walt interrupted bluntly.

Preacher's eyebrows raised in alarm. His eyes shot over to Hatti who was watching Walt. "It's for the deaf."

Walt tried to stifle his laughter. He had seen his friend do some pretty bizarre things to hook up for a one night-stand, but nothing this irrational. "You don't know sign language."

"They'll have an impicator," Preacher chortled.

"Interpreter."

"What?"

"It's interpreter, you said 'impicator'. That's not even a word. And can you tell me real quick, which commandment talks about lying?" Walt couldn't help it; he burst in an obnoxious laughter.

At the sight of Walt laughing, Hatti herself began to giggle, her hand over her mouth once more.

Preacher Adam's face turned crimson; he hated being laughed at. "I'm serious! Hatti, why don't we schedule a date for sometime this week? Here, I'll give you my card."

Hatti stopped laughing as she watched Adams fumble through his back pocket for his wallet. He pulled it out faster than he wanted and dropped it to the floor, all of his loose cards falling across the glossy floor.

Preacher Adam's mouth opened slightly as his gut tightened up. Of all the cards on the ground, one was his driver's license which Hatti picked up. She read the information, her eyes opening wide when she read the name and birthdate of Preacher Adam's.

"You're not really a preacher, are you? And you're certainly not twenty-nine and a half! You're first name is Preacher, you creep!" Even though she was belligerent about almost hooking up with a man about twice her age, Hatti still kept her sweet form, even amidst her disgust.

Walt went to say something in defense of his friend, but his pocket radio went off. "Officer Halahay, this is HQ. We have a vehicular vandalism reported in the parking lot of Caesar's Coffee Empire. A green Taurus with the licenseplate "HELFIRED" was reported being destroyed by a female with blonde hair, about five feet tall. Over."

Preacher almost choked on his next words as he heard his plate being read off.

Walt sighed as he shook his head. "That sounds like Nicole, for sure. I'm gonna go outside and handle this, Preacher, don't worry."

Hatti grabbed Walt's arm before he walked away. "I've always been interested in the police force. I think it's really, really fascinating!"

Walt grinned widely and nodded. "Here's my card. It has my number and email on it; feel free to send me a message."

Preacher gritted his teeth as Hatti took the card and put it into her pocket. Walt turned to Preacher and winked.

"He's not even a police officer!" is what Preacher was about to say before Hatti kneed him in the groin and stormed out of the café angrily.

Preacher doubled over from the pain and crawled his way to the counter. "Can I have a drink?" he wheezed.

The hostess looked at him in his pathetic state and pointed to the menu. "What would you like?"

"Can I just have a black coffee, extra black," Preacher tried to wittingly joke.

The woman rolled her eyes at the meager joke and wiped her hands across her apron. "Iced or hot?"

Preacher slumped over on the counter, his chin across his folded arms, pain still radiating from his stomach. "Hot," Preacher muttered bitterly. "Hotter than hell."