

Godfather Of Champions

Chapter 12: We Were Raped Part 2

Tang En remembered Walker's words and went straight from the player's corridor to the press conference room. There were not many people except the cameras set up in the small room. The host was somewhat astonished that Twain was so early.

Tang En saw the odd expression in his eyes, so he asked, "Am I too early?"

"Yes, sir. Most of the journalists are still interviewing the players in the mixed zone at this time."

Tang En looked at the table and sat down in the seat marked with his name, "Then I'll just wait here."

The press officer did not object. Tang En took the opportunity to carefully observe the press conference scene. He knew he would at least have to make frequent appearances here for half a year. Ah, what a wonderful thing it was to be able to deliver a harangue in front of so much media, and then let the reporters turn the words into print.

But now Tang En was not in the mood to think about that. He was still brooding over his team losing to an "act of God."

He was so deep in thought that he didn't realize that more and more people were in the press conference room and the sounds were getting louder. When Tang En turned his attention back, he found that most of the reporters had already appeared in the room, but very few of them were seated in their places, they were standing and chatting in groups.

What are you chatting about... are you chatting about the match just now?

The visiting manager's seat to his side was still empty. Tang En's heart welled up in anger. Roeder, you bastard, you won the match and still let me wait for you, arrogant jerk!

He knocked on the microphone, the knocking sound was amplified through the speakers, the reporters on the scene turned to look at him.

"I hereby declare that the press conference has officially started, whatever you wish to ask, you can do so quickly, now." Twain completely cast the press official aside and took on the additional duty.

The reporters did not expect the manager to be so impatient, so they looked to the press officer. The press officer also felt that it was okay for him to be interviewed first, so he shrugged, "We can begin."

Reporters then took their seats one after another and raised their hands to ask questions. Of course, what everyone cared about the most was still why the difference was so great in the Forest team between the first and second half.

"Regarding this question... it's very simple. During halftime, I invited a group of fans to the locker room." Twain briefly answered the question. The room immediately erupted.

The reporters knew what kind of place the locker room was. This mysterious place was completely closed to reporters, many of them had racked their brains to pry into a team's locker room secrets, to no avail. Yet Tony Twain let the fans strut into the locker room!

For a moment countless hands immediately raised, and the scene became somewhat unmanageable. The press officer did not know what to do. So many reporters asking questions. Who to call?

Tang En helped him out of the predicament and slapped his hand on the table. With a bang, the whole room fell silent.

Twain spoke to the reporters with a straight face. "I know what you want to ask. Maybe the locker room is sacred in everybody's eyes, but not in my eyes. It's as simple as that. I refuse to answer all the questions regarding the locker room again. You want to know the situation, go find those fans yourselves. Next question." He looked at his watch impatiently, this had already taken 10 minutes, and Glenn Roeder had not yet arrived. A Premier League manager was definitely different. Such arrogance. If I hadn't taken the initiative, I'm afraid I would still be waiting here like a fool.

The reporters looked at each other in alarm. This manager seemed to have a bad temper. There were very few managers who did not give a damn about the press, only big-name managers were entitled to do so. Like Sir Alex Ferguson...

The room was silent for a moment. Tang En thought the reporters had no further questions to ask so he got up to leave. At this time someone raised his hand. "Wait, Manager Tony Twain! I'm Pierce Brosnan, a reporter for the Nottingham Evening Post. In the second half, we had two goals that were invalid, and I want to hear your opinion on it," a fair-skinned young man with gold-rimmed glasses stood up and asked.

This man reminded Tang En of Glenn Roeder, so he grumpily asked in return, "What do you want to hear? I made the most appropriate tactical arrangements, I brought on the best players, I thought I could secure a beautiful victory. But when you find out no matter how hard you try, you can't fight against some 'act of God,' then you can understand how I feel now." Pausing, he looked at the poor speechless young man who seemed to be about the same age as him. Maybe he was a newspaper intern.....

"You ask me what I think? My opinion is this: We were raped by the referee."

There was an immediate buzz in the room. Someone asked loudly, "Mr. Manager, did you say 'raped'?"

Twain nodded in certainty. "Yes, raped. Not 'offended', nor 'violated', 'forced', 'insulted'. It's 'raped'! Two perfectly fine goals judged invalid, if it was not rape, then what is it?"

The press officer whispered to him on the side as a reminder, "Manager Twain, I think you know what the consequences will be for you ..."

Twain gave him a look, "Whatever." Then he pointed at the excited reporters and said, "You write it as it is, not a word changed. I don't care! Good day, gentlemen!"

He put down the microphone and turned to step down, just as Roeder came out from behind the billboard. From the guy's glowing face, he had so clearly celebrated his victory in the locker room.

Twain put out his hand first and held hands with Roeder under the glare of the reporters' flashbulbs.

"Congratulations, but you'd better pray that your team doesn't get relegated." He whispered these words and then turned away. Roeder looked in surprise at the back of Twain, thinking he heard wrong. This was his first time meeting such an ungracious opponent. But little did he know that Twain was just telling the truth, because after the end of the season, his West Ham United was really relegated... Although West Ham frantically scrambled for points in the second half of this season, the final score of 41 points was still of no use. When the time came, it was possible that Roeder might think that it was Twain's malicious curse that led his team to have such a high grade and yet be relegated.

Tang En did not care about the noisy press conference and the astonished Roeder behind him. He was now in a bad mood. He went back to the locker room with his head lowered and found everyone waiting for him. While he stood at the door, he scanned the room, and everyone looked miserable just like him.

This would not do. He was still dependent on this team to score and earn a living. He promptly gave a bright smile. "Don't take this matter to heart. You've done well." The players' expressions still remained unchanged. "Though losing this match made

everyone unhappy... there's no other way." Twain shrugged. He thought his words were too unconvincing because he did not even believe in his own words, much less that they would make anyone feel better. So, he took a deep breath and said in a loud voice, "Ok, what's done is done. The match is lost, no matter what the reason is for losing. Looking miserable will not let the damned referee change the score. The most important thing is the next match. Our loss here, we will get it back in other places! Dismissed!"

All the players were back on the bus. There were still plenty of loyal Forest fans in the parking lot, cheering for the team's excellent performance in the second half. Once the players began to enjoy such a post-match scene, several of them also had a smile on their faces. Even Twain, who was standing outside the bus, received no boos. He also did not see Michael and the others in the crowd. He thought it was a pity that he could not have that drink he was buying.

The drink was not the point. How much would a drink cost? Tang En was now a manager, although still a substitute, his salary was enough to pay for countless drinks. He just wanted to see Michael's expression when buying him a drink.

Now that he was not getting that drink, the marvelous expression was naturally gone too.

When he snapped out of it, he suddenly found two people missing from the bus. The two assistant managers. Des Walker and Ian Bowyer.

He was not familiar with Bowyer, but Walker was someone with a sense of discipline. It was unlikely that he had not come out by now.

He spoke to the driver and decided to go back to look for him.

The Forest team's locker room was very small, but with only two people in it now, it could be described as empty.

Bowyer leaned against the wall and faced his colleague, saying nothing. Instead Walker looked furious, glaring at the other man with his fists clenched.

The two men stared at each other for a long time before Bowyer finally gave in first, "You told me to stay behind so that we can gawk at each other? If it's okay, I'm leaving first."

He had just gotten up when Walker suddenly rushed forward and pushed him back.

"Where's the Ian Bowyer I like? Where's the Ian Bowyer I admire? Where's Ian Bowyer who fought alongside me?" Walker thundered at Bowyer.

Bowyer said with a calm expression, "Sorry, Des. I don't think I understand what you're talking about."

“Don’t you pretend not to know! Where were you when the team was in chaos? Where were you when the team and I needed you? Don’t think I don’t know what’s on your mind? You have served the team for so many years, and now the day comes when your feelings for the team has deteriorated?!”

Bowyer remained silent in the face of Walker’s fury.

Walker finished venting his anger only to find that Bowyer was as unresponsive as a dead man. Walker suddenly did not know what to say next. Should he use the team’s honor to inspire him? He had received more honors than himself. What had he not experienced? Perhaps his jealousy of Twain was as it should be. After all, he was a senior figure of the team, a champion. If it were him, he would also think that Hart’s position should belong to him. He could not understand Bowyer’s conduct and actions, but everyone had the freedom and power to choose. Wasn’t that the case?

He suddenly sighed, loosened his grip on Bowyer’s collar, and then lowered his head to leave.

Just as he was walking out, he saw Tony Twain with his ear stuck to the wall. He was startled and was about to open his mouth to say hello, but Twain was quick with his eyes and hands, and covered his mouth. Then he pointed to the locker room and gestured to him to look.

Walker turned around. The two men peering through the half-opened door, saw Bowyer bending down to pick up a red scarf from under the cabinet inside the locker room. Des looked back somewhat strangely at Twain who said nothing but indicated to him to continue watching.

That red scarf was also tossed down by the Nottingham Forest fans, but it was definitely not one of the ones that Twain picked up for Walker. It was forgotten in the corner, only Bowyer found it.

Walker saw Bowyer picked up the scarf and carefully brushed the dust off. Then he lifted it up high like Dawson did, and scrutinized it under the light. At this point, Twain gently patted Walker and signaled to him to get on the bus.

The two men quietly walked back.

“Des, come with me to Burns’ bar tonight, my treat.”

“Good idea, but why do you suddenly like drinking and smoking? Ah, I know! I forgot to thank God, although the former Tony Twain did not smoke or drink, and he was modest and courteous, I still like the current Tony!”

