

# Godfather Of Champions

## - Chapter 1

### Chapter 1: Tony Twain?

A loud clamoring noise that stimulated the nerves of the brain could be heard. The decibels were so great that it could cause one to go deaf. A glaring white light pierced his eyes, as his temple experienced jolts of pain.

Twain could not help but narrow his eyes. However, the white light did not disappear. Instead, it expanded to the entire field of vision.

What is going on? Am I at a rock concert?

Twain silently cursed. As he opened his eyes, what greeted him was a face that was frighteningly big. It was a black face full of sweat, and the hot air that sprayed from his nostrils appeared to have almost stained his face. His wide open mouth revealed a row of white teeth as scary as a wild animal's, and bad breath spewed out from it.

What followed was an intense and direct collision. Twain felt as though his lower jaw had been punched, as his entire body fell backwards.

Crash! They had knocked over the box of bottles placed behind them. The pitiful plastic bottles were unable to handle the combined weight of the two men and crumbled beneath them. White, flowery water splattered out, and there was even a bottle that shot out a waterspout, directly splashing the face of an innocent bystander. Seeing this, the rest of the crowd ran like frightened sparrows.

"Damn it!"

"Preposterous!"

"What is going on?"

"Team doctor, team doctor!"

"How did you manage to play until now like this?"

"I was pushed by that wretched number fourteen... I didn't do it on purpose!"

Twain laid down on the ground and stared stone-faced at the unfamiliar faces surrounding him. Among them, some were anxious, others were gloating over his misfortune, and some were covering their faces to conceal their expressions. Although his surroundings remained very noisy, it had changed its tune as it was now filled with jeers and laughter.

Where is this place? Who are they? What is happening?

“Uh oh! Wait, look at what has happened on the sideline.” The live-broadcasting commentator suddenly became excited, as he stood up and probed downwards from the highest floor. “Team Nottingham Forest’s striker, David Johnson, was striving for the ball with someone from the opposing team when he was knocked toward the technical area on the sidelines. The unlucky manager, Tony Twain, happened to be standing in the way while giving his instructions for the match. Oh! Look at the miserable situation on the ground. This was a collision between Mars and Earth! It is much more interesting than the boring match!”

Twain laid on the ground; his light grey-colored suit was already drenched. On top of that, it was wrinkled with grass stains and mud. At one glance, it appeared as if it was a rag that had just been used.

A big-nosed, black-bearded man who looked like Super Mario appeared in Twain’s field of vision. In one motion, the man deftly took out and put on a pair of white gloves from the bag he was carrying and began examining Twain’s body.

“Is there any obvious sense of pain in your rib costal area?” He exerted some strength and pressed down on Twain’s chest area. “Lower jaw... hmm, there’s some bruising. Have any of your teeth come loose?” He pried open Twain’s mouth and looked with his head slightly tilted. Although he had been continuously asking questions, he was obviously not anticipating any answers. This was merely his habit of muttering to himself. “After that is... the eyes.” He shifted his gaze toward Twain’s eye area and discovered the problem: Twain’s pupils seemed to have not moved at all, and his eyelids had not blinked even once. In addition, his facial expression was dull and sluggish. He did not wince, nor did he cry out in pain. His silence was like that of a dead person....

Dead person!

He appeared to have landed on the back of his head!

“Hey, Tony, Tony? Can you hear me?” He extended his hands before Twain’s eyes and waved. His tone was significantly more flustered than before.

Twain’s eyeballs finally moved, as he focused on this person’s face. He was unfamiliar, and yet somewhat familiar at the same time...

“The referee has blown the whistle, paused the match, and run to the sideline.... I’ve been a football commentator for 31 years, but it’s still my first time seeing the manager injured by one of his own players! I bet that manager Tony Twain will definitely be featured on the news, even though he might not have wished to become famous like this...” The BBC commentator John Motson continued chattering away. “Team Nottingham Forest is really extremely unlucky. First, their team is down by two goals, and now their substitute manager, Tony Twain, is injured by his own player. It’s pertinent to note that this is a home match! He was injured during their home match!”

At the same time, the television screen began repeatedly replaying the scene from before. David Johnson, during his fierce strive for the ball, was pushed by the opposing team’s member. As a result, this dark, burly man flung sideways toward Tony Twain, who happened to be at the sideline. The weird thing was that Twain was originally able to avoid it. He had sufficient time to dodge it, but stood still on the sideline like a wooden puppet and watched as his player ran into him. What followed was a scene that made even the commentators cover their faces and avert their eyes while saying, “Oh my god!”

Team Nottingham Forest’s players frantically surrounded their manager, and at the center of it was, naturally, Twain, who lay flat on the ground. The black striker, David Johnson, knelt on the ground and could not stop praying. If something bad should happen to his manager, it would make him the first player to kill his own manager on the field.

Different from Team Nottingham Forest players’ apprehension, their opponents were mostly standing around in the field, looking at the commotion with their arms folded. There were also some extremely curious people who took on the role of spies for the team, and made frequent trips to and fro to share information on the situation with their teammates.

The fans of Team Nottingham Forest did not appear to worry about their manager’s life, and instead took the opportunity to curse and swear at their own team’s disastrous performance. Various vulgarities spewed out from their mouths and were accompanied by various upraised middle fingers. This combination of actions made the 0-2 score on the big screen especially glaring.

Team Nottingham Forest’s team doctor, Gary Fleming, was still trying his best. He had seen Tony’s eyeballs move slightly, but still wondered why there had not been more of a reaction.

He patted Tony Twain’s face, but there was still no response. The substitute manager of the team laid on the ground like a wax statue with his mouth slightly ajar and his eyes staring widely, as if he had seen something frightening.

The blue skies, the white cotton candy clouds, the varying skin tones and facial expressions, and the noisy surroundings were all very familiar, and yet so unfamiliar at the same time. It was as if they were thousands of miles away from him.

This... What is happening?!

The head referee announced his decision for the team doctor to handle the matter on his own. He could not let an injury that occurred off of the field of play cause the match to be paused indefinitely. He blew the whistle to signal the players to return to the field. The match had to continue, even though the players from Team Nottingham Forest did not have the heart to keep playing.

“But he could be in mortal danger!” Immensely furious at the head referee’s cold attitude, Fleming shouted at the manager while pointing toward Twain, who was still lying on the ground.

“Then you should call the ambulance; I am only a referee!” The head referee rebutted indignantly. “He doesn’t seem to be in such critical condition,” he said as he pointed behind Fleming before running back onto the field.

Fleming turned around, only to see Twain slowly standing up, while caressing the back of his head. Fleming rushed forward to help him up. “How are you feeling, Tony?”

Twain asked back blankly, “Where is this place?”

Fleming turned around and cursed. He had been really unlucky recently. “Des, Des, come here!” He waved at a golden-haired man in the technical area, signaling for him to come over.

Des ran over. “How’s Tony?” he asked meekly.

“Absolutely disastrous. He even asked me where he was.”

Des’ reaction was the same as Fleming’s, as he turned around and swore.

“I suspect that it was caused by the impact of the collision.”

“Gary, is the situation dire?” Des bit his lips and wore a serious expression on his face.

“I don’t know. It may be good, or it may be bad.” Fleming shook his head.

“What does that mean?”

“If we’re lucky, it is only short-term memory loss, and he will be able to recover after a short rest. In the worst case scenario... do you still need me to say it?”

Des waved his hand, signaling that he understood Fleming's words. "Then, what do you think we should do now? Send him to the hospital? The match is still going on, and we are behind; we need him to give directions for the match." As he said this, he turned around and glanced at Tony Twain, only to shockingly discover that he was slowly walking towards the players' passage.

"Hey!" Des quickly left Fleming behind and ran forward to stop his colleague.

"Tony, where are you going?" Amidst the noisy environment, Des shouted at the top of his lungs, but only managed to achieve the effect of a whisper.

Twain turned around and looked at Des blankly. The look in his eyes sent a chill to Des' heart. At that moment, the golden rays of the sunset shone brightly, yet Des was unable to see any reflection of it in his eyes.

"Tony, where are you going?" Des asked again.

"I...I don't know.... perhaps.... go home..." Twain muttered as he tried to break free from Des' hand.

Fleming also ran over from the side and said, "Tony, you cannot go home. We are in the middle of the match, and you are the manager. You have to direct the team!"

The tussling of the three people near the entrance of the passageway drew the attention of the reserves from both teams, as well as that of the audience. Some of the players on the field were even stealing glances of them.

Twain suddenly smiled. "I am the manager?" This is too absurd, how can I be the manager... Although I am a football fan, and I regularly play a football manager game, how could I be the manager? This must be a dream, and a darned nightmare at that! "Alright, alright, you are...?" he looked at Des and asked.

As though it was the first time both of them had met, Fleming introduced from the side, "He is Des, Des Walker. Former center back for the England national. He just retired from the team last season, and now he is your colleague, your assistant."

Twain nodded his head and said to Des, "Alright, now you will direct the match on my behalf. I am going to rest." After which, he shrugged off Des' hands, paying no heed to the loud jeering noises and the two dumbfounded people, and walked into the passageway.

Fleming looked at Twain's figure, and then looked at Des Walker.

Walker sighed deeply and turned around. "There's no way we can win this match!"

Twain sat in the passageway with his back leaned against the walls as he stared blankly at his surroundings. The white wall opposite him had a large logo. Below the red-colored giant “mushrooms” were three wave-like curves, and further below was a single word: Forest.

Where am I? What is happening? I just drank a little bit too much and fought with two idiots who launched a sneak attack on me. And then... How did I get here? And who were those high-bridge-nosed and blue-pupiled people who were spouting that incomprehensible language? Am I dreaming? Or watching a movie?

Twain rubbed the back of his head. There was still a slight pain.

That son of a gun attacked me from behind!

Twain continued cursing as he grimaced in pain.

He was a football fan who liked to drink alcohol occasionally and watch football matches in crowded places, for instance, bars... Recently, the team he supported was on a no-win streak, either tied or lost. As he was already in a bad mood, faced with the provocation from two football fans from the opposing team, his bad temper and the influence of the alcohol caused them to break out into a fight. He was completely fearless, despite fighting against two people. However, there was nothing he could do about the other party's underhanded ways. While one person attracted his attention, the other had stealthily snuck up behind him and struck his head hard with a bat.

After that, he opened his eyes only to discover himself in a noisy environment and knocked down to the ground by a dark-skinned man. Other people were saying things he did not understand—he could understand each and every word they were saying, but could not comprehend their meaning. He felt as though his brain had been torn into two. One half was familiar with this environment, while the other half was restless and at a loss for what to do.

“What’s my name?” He muttered to himself, before covering his mouth. Only at this moment did he realize that he was actually speaking the so-called incomprehensible language—English.

“Son of a gun, what is happening?” This time around, the words were spoken in his native language.

Twain was going crazy. He had discovered that within his now two brains, there seemed to be two completely different trains of thought. One moment, it would cause him to believe he was the Englishman, “Tony Twain”; the next moment, he would think of himself as a Chinese man from the Sichuan Province named “Tang En.”

He knocked his burning head against the wall, finally allowing it to cool down slightly. He began to close his eyes and search carefully. Following this, he began to realized that

he was at a football field at City Ground. The match that was going on outside was a normal English Division One match between Walsall and Nottingham Forest. That team was under his charge.

Twain, who finally understood where he was, was yet again at a loss. This was too unbelievable, so much so that his overloaded brain stopped responding. He squatted in the players' passageway and opposite him was Team Nottingham's logo. Outside was filled with loud jeers. Yet, all these seemed to not have anything to do with him anymore.

The incident was replayed on the news.

"...This is the scene which transpired in City Ground this afternoon. Team Nottingham Forest's substitute manager, Tony Twain, was standing on the sideline when he was knocked over by one of his players, following which, he fell into a short period of comatose. When he regained consciousness, he walked straight into the players' passageway. On his behalf, Des Walker continued to direct the rest of the match, and attended the post-match press conference. However, Walker refused to divulge any information regarding manager Tony Twain."

Where was Tang En at the moment?

He was at home, looking at himself in front of the mirror.

Compared to the neighboring houses which were brightly lit and filled with sounds of laughter, Twain's house was as gloomy as an old haunted castle. It was eight o'clock in the evening, yet his house was pitch-black, without any lights turned on. Borrowing the dim light from the street lamps, Twain stood in the shower and looked at himself in the mirror. What greeted his eyes was a westerner who possessed a high-bridged nose, a pair of blue eyes, and brown hair.

In actuality, Tang En, who came from the Sichuan Province in China, was only 26 years old, and yet the person in the mirror had wrinkles on his forehead! Thirty-four years old! That was Tony Twain's age. Before this, Tang En had already been forced to accept yet another fact: the current year was not 2007, in which he had picked a fight with someone. Instead, it was January 1st, 2003. The price to pay for accepting this fact was the torn New Year's wall calendar which had the full Nottingham team picture from the 02-03 season on it.

Not only did he possess an Englishman's body without an apparent reason, but he had travelled back in time four years and three months!

Although he had never thought of himself as suave, or someone who could receive the adoration of various females, at least he had been looking at the same face for 26 years. He hadn't grown the least bit tired of it. Now, he had to accept a different him, along with a different face. This was vexing.

“Who the heck is this person?!” he shouted towards the mirror. He broke it with a punch. His reflection instantly shattered into countless broken pieces and crashed to the floor. Countless faces stared at Tang En as if they were mocking him.

Tang En felt slightly giddy as he took a step backwards. He was panting heavily as he leaned against the wall.

Why did this happen to me?

Amidst the darkness, Tang En remained silent for a few minutes before regaining his composure. He had decided not to think too much about these overly complicated questions. Back in China, he had the habit of finding a place to drink whenever he was met with troubling matters. In Chengdu City, bars were easily found everywhere, and he could even land himself a one-night stand occasionally. Out of sheer habit, he treated Nottingham as Chengdu City and decided to find a bar to drink his sorrows away. He could not be bothered with his current status.

Looking at the overcast sky, he put on a windbreaker before heading out.

“Losing in its own home match to Walsall with a score of 0:3, this has indeed not been a smooth-sailing year for Team Nottingham Forest. Despite the high hopes placed on him, Paul Hart was not able to bring favorable results to the team. As such, he tendered his letter of resignation to the chairman of the football club, Nigel Doughty, after the previous rounds of matches. His resignation was accepted shortly after. Today was the first time that the substitute manager, Tony Twain, was set to direct the team. Who would have expected that he would be injured by his own player on the sideline? Let’s look at the footage. He seems to be momentarily stunned and forgot to dodge...”

The television, which was placed on the tall racks, was broadcasting the day’s sports news. Naturally, the focal point would be on the happenings during Team Nottingham’s match.

A wave of jeers was heard throughout the noisy bar.

“I’ve never seen such a disgraceful manager!” a drunk burly man said as he pointed a middle finger toward the television set. “That Tony Twain, I know of him! He is the prat who used to be Paul Hart’s assistant at the youth team. Frankly, I don’t have much of an impression of him. A man of few words and looks like a timid person. Surely it isn’t possible to rely on such a coward to get Team Nottingham out of their predicament? Nigel, that old fogey, is also not as ambitious as he used to be. Nottingham is done for! Done for, done...” He chanted as he lay flat on the table. Beside him, the area was full of empty bottles littered around thoughtlessly.

Right as the drunk finished his speech, Tang En happened to push open the door and entered. The sound of the moving door attracted a great amount of attention from the people inside. Turning their gazes toward the door, when they saw the identity of the



person who had just entered, they were shocked at first, but their shock was soon replaced with teasing smiles.

“Hehe, look who’s here!” A classic middle-aged Englishman raised his glass and stood up, announcing loudly, “Our manager Tony Twain has arrived!”

“Woo woo!” The people in the bar made sarcastic welcoming jeers.

“Let’s cheer for his beautiful blocking of Johnson off the field!” The middle-aged man raised his glass in the air, while the rest of the surrounding people followed suit. “Cheers!”

Another man who had obviously had too much to drink stood up unsteadily and walked up to Tang En. Extending the beer bottle in his hands to Twain’s mouth, he belched and asked, “Manager Twain, that was beautiful defense. However, the head referee and the audience apparently don’t... don’t think that way... burp! You, what do you think about this?”

After he finished asking, he turned around and started laughing, along with the rest of the people in the bar.

Tang En did not want to start trouble, as he was only there to drink his sorrows away. As such, he gloomily pushed away the beer bottle before him, walked straight to the bar counter, and said to the bartender inside, “Can I have a...” Out of pure habit, he wanted to ask for a bottle of “Small Er”—a small bottle of Erguotou. Although he was from Sichuan Province, he had attended a university in Northern China. It was during that time when he began liking this kind of hard liquor. However, he realized that he did not know the English equivalent of “Small Er.” More importantly, it struck him that he was currently in England and not China. Lowering his head, he cursed and swore a few times, before he changed his wording, “Give me your strongest hard liquor.”

Hearing his order, the people who had been observing him broke out into laughter.

“Yo! Scaredy cat Tony actually dares to drink liquor?!”

“We have freshly squeezed milk instead. Do you want to try that? I still think that milk suits you better, Tony!” a fat person said, as he squeezed his obviously drooping breasts with both his hands. Hearing that, the surrounding people broke into laughter, pounding on their tables.

Faced with these rowdy customers, the young bartender was at a slight loss for what to do. As he wanted to get the liquor, he had been stopped by the drunkards’ call. “Get him fruit juice! Fruit Juice!”

“No, no, it should be milk; we have the freshest milk!”

“Ah ha ha!”

The owner of the bar was alarmed by the loud noises and came down the stairs. Standing at the base of the stairs, he saw that, aside from those who were asleep on the tables, almost all of the remaining customers had surrounded the bar counter. Seated in the middle was a man covered in a black windbreaker from head to toe. He was being made fun of by the drunkards.

“Guys, what’s going on?” His loud voice momentarily caused the bar to quiet down. The drunks, who were still very arrogant up until moments ago, instantly quieted down upon seeing the person standing behind them.

Tang En felt that this was strange; what kind of person could this be to have the ability to make this bunch of rowdy people behave themselves? He turned his head slightly and saw a person’s silhouette walking out from the staircase.

The young bartender frantically pointed at Tang En, and said, “Boss, he wants some hard liquor.”

After realizing Tony Twain was in his bar, the owner was slightly shocked. However, he still said, “Then give it to him.”

“But...but they won’t let me.” The bartender looked embarrassedly at the drunkards, who had already returned to their seats.

The man looked around the bar, but the people who entered his line of sight either averted their eyes and pretended to sleep, or lowered their heads and continued drinking. Tang En gradually became more intrigued by this capable and experienced middle-aged man.

“I don’t see anyone that has any objections. Pour him a scotch whisky; my treat.” The bar owner turned his head toward Twain and asked, “Single or double? Any ice or water for you?”

Tang En asked in shock, “On the rocks?”

The drunks who were watching from the side started bursting out in laughter.

Even the bar owner laughed. “I forgot what kind of person you are.” He filled half of the glass with a golden yellow whisky and added half a glass of water, after which, he delivered to Tang En. “This is my hometown specialty.”

Twain drank one mouthful and immediately started coughing. He rarely drank western liquor. Moreover, this pure scotch whisky had a rich, charred taste.

The bar was filled with gloating laughter.

“The Tony Twain that I knew never drank alcohol. He lived as though he was a traditional puritan. Moreover, he would never look at me with the kind of look that you had. Don't you know who I am?” The man stared at him, and Tang En realized that he had been completely seen through by this man. He had no choice but to come up with a method to cover up for himself.

“Erm... I...” Tang En lowered his head and took another sip. This time he did not dare to let the alcohol stop in his throat and directly gulped it down. The unbearable feeling had definitely been alleviated. “I fell down on the sideline this afternoon.”

Yet another roar of laughter.

The man touched the back of his head, signaling that he understood.

Someone from the side helped break Tang En out of his predicament and said loudly, “Looks like our manager Twain really injured his head! The person seated beside you is Team Nottingham Forest's pride, two-time European Cup Championship valued player, 1978 recipient of the Football Writers' Association Footballer of the Year award, Mr. Kenny Burns. He is a hundred times stronger than an idiot like you! Idiot! You are an idiot!”

Although Tang En was thankful for this detailed introduction to the big shot before him, it did not mean that he would have to accept such humiliation. When a person first enters an unfamiliar environment, it is common for him to become easily anxious and irritated. This unknown irritation in his heart had been accumulating since his disgraceful display that day. Although he had endured the humiliation when he first entered the bar, it did not mean that he could continue to do so. Moreover, he was no pushover. When he was in China, he had been a bad-tempered and rash teenager. If not for that, he would not have time-travelled after getting into a fight...

The person behind him laughed loudly as he continued to say, “Idiot! Idiot!” completely defenseless against the target of ridicule. Tang En forcefully splashed the remaining half glass of liquor at him. The golden scotch whisky, under the bright light, glistened dazzlingly as it drew a beautiful arc in midair, before accurately splashing directly on the unlucky person's face — as precise as a David Beckham right-legged free kick.

After getting his face splashed with liquor, the target stood up, wiped the liquor from his face, and scolded, “You b\*stard...”

Bang! His vulgarities had been smashed with a solid wine glass, as Tang En lunged at him at an unimaginable speed, together with the wine glass. He could no longer hold back his temper. Being brought here, travelling back in time for four-and-a-half years, being ridiculed and humiliated, all these without rhyme or reason... He wanted to immediately release his anger on somebody, regardless of whether he was the one hitting or being hit.

The two of them knocked into the table behind them, causing the empty beer bottles to crash onto the floor.

The sounds of laughter immediately stopped, as all the people present were momentarily stunned. They had not expected Tony Twain, who had been considered a coward only moments ago, to suddenly explode.

The first person to react was the bar owner, Kenny Burns. Pushing away the fat guy who was standing beside the bar counter, he shouted, "What are you doing standing there? Go break up the fight!"

This voice snapped everyone out of their shock, as they rushed forward to pull apart the two people who were already entangled. Apart from the miserable state of the floor, the man with whisky in his face was now bleeding profusely from his forehead. A red-colored sphere appeared there, which was indeed the mark of the wine glass. Aside from that, his left cheek had taken a punch, and it appeared as if it was the flush from being drunk.

Tang En, on the other hand, besides having his hair and clothes messed up, was completely fine. After being pulled away, he appeared to have finished venting all of his anger, as he did not resist the fight being broken up. After tidying his clothes and hair, he turned towards the unlucky person and spat. "I don't care who you are—don't mess with me."

He then turned around and said to Burns, "I'm very sorry to have caused such a mess at your place. Today is just too damn..." The sheer thought of him travelling back in time made him furious. "I will personally come and apologize another day. As for the compensations, you also need not worry about it."

After the speech, not waiting for the bar owner to respond, Tang En turned around and walked toward the entrance. As he walked past the fatty, he said sarcastically, "You should save the milk for yourself, fatso."

Everyone watched as he pushed open the door and exited, and nobody thought of holding him back. Just like that, they watched him leave behind a mess.

The bar was completely silent. At that moment, the drunkard sat up on the table and looked at the quiet bunch of people alongside the mess. Confused, he asked, "Did I miss out on anything?"

Dejected, Tang En walked aimlessly, passing by street after street. Even he did not know where he was. Feeling tired, he sat down on a long bench. Even though he had just gotten into a fight, his mood had not improved. Instead, it had made him even more vexed. That was because he realized that he could only helplessly resign himself to the reality that he had become an Englishman, with no hope of returning to his former body.

This darned sky. He raised his head and looked at the skies. Aside from the thick, dark clouds, he could not see anything. He still could not understand why it had to happen to him. If this was fate's arrangement for him, then was there a special reason that it had chosen him? Or was it that fate had randomly picked out a person, just like China's welfare lottery randomly picked a ping-pong ball from a mountain of ping-pong balls. Whoever was chosen had to resign to his unluckiness.

I don't want to be a darned manager! I don't want to be a westerner! Let me go back, let me go back! Could Tang En shout like this? No. In Tang En's 26 years of life, he had never bowed his head to anybody or anything. He was as stubborn and as annoying as a clogged toilet. Therefore, he had no accomplishments to his name, and had always been regarded by his primary school teacher as the student most difficult to teach and manage. In university, as he was not well-liked, he was never a part of any club activities or other extracurriculars. Even after graduation, he had been ostracized by his colleagues, and he had not even had a girlfriend before... In summary, his 26 years had been an utter failure.

Tang En raised his head yet again and looked at the pitch-black night sky. He suddenly came to terms with his current situation. Since his "previous life" was extremely disastrous, why not take this chance to live a life that was different? Although he had not assumed the position of a football manager before, he had watched over a decade of football, and played every series of football Manager. As such, he more or less had some understanding of what a manager's job entailed. Was this not a good opportunity for him to take on a challenge?

He no longer thought about lame questions like why the heavens had chosen him. Now, he only had to think about how to be more like a professional football manager. Even though this would be extremely tough, it was worth a shot.

"Hey, dude. You dare barge into my house without my permission. If by the count of ten, if you don't leave, I'll call the cops!" An aged voice suddenly came from the side. "One, two, three..."

Twain looked blankly at the old man standing opposite him. Hugging a lot of newspapers, he held on to a half-eaten burger.

"This... is your house?" He pointed at the long bench which he was seated on.

"Of course."

"Ah, I'm sorry for the intrusion..." After Twain stood up from the bench, the other party immediately sat down, and soon after, laid down. Afterwards, he placed a layer of newspaper on the bench before covering his body with more newspaper.

Seeing the beggar who had eaten his burger contently while resting in a “newspaper nest”, Tang En had to thank the heavens for not giving him beggar’s body. It appeared that fate had not treated him poorly.

Seeing that a cab stopped before him to let its passenger out, Tang En immediately rushed up and entered the cab. Glancing one last time at the beggar who was enjoying his dinner amidst the cold winds, he asked the driver to deliver him back to that unfamiliar house.

From now on, an entirely new world would unfold before Tang En’s eyes.

Tang En did not manage to sleep well for the entire night.

Away from his familiar bed, he tossed and turned on the more spacious bed. His head was filled with various absurd dreams. In his dreams, he saw that he was full of vigor, carrying a travel bag as he stood in front of City Ground’s entrance. Afterwards, he stood beside a green and lush football field. Beside him was a middle-aged man with more than 10 young football players surrounding them as they listened attentively. That middle-aged man appeared in his dreams several times, and each time he did, Twain’s body stood beside him without uttering a single word, like a statue. After that, he was back at that lush green football field again. However, this time, the middle-aged man had disappeared. Instead, it was his turn to be surrounded by the group of young football players, as he said something to them. And then, the scenery changed. He saw a familiar scene—the football field which he was at that day. A middle-aged man stood beside him as usual. As he directed the match in his trim suit, Twain continued to remain silent. The dreams kept changing, and the man beside him also became increasingly hot-tempered and irritable. Until finally one day, there was no one beside Twain. Instead, an old man stood before him and patted him on the shoulders. His mouth seemed to be saying something, but unfortunately, nothing could be heard.

And then... Tang En woke up.

When he opened his eyes, he saw that the sky was still dark. Outside the windows, the sounds of pattering rain could be heard. He sat up in his bed, and his eyes gradually grew accustomed to the dark room. Looking at the completely unfamiliar furnishings in the house, he still had some doubt about coming to England just like that. He even became a football manager, albeit just a substitute one... He rubbed his face with his hands, in order to make himself sober up, after which, Tang En jumped out of bed and pulled open the tightly shut curtains.

Outside the house it was daybreak, and there were not many people on the streets. The wet ground reflected the lights from the streetlamps and from the cars. It was raining.

This kind of weather made him think about his hometown, a small city in Sichuan Province. It was also a city where it rained frequently. Regardless of whether it was summer or winter, it was always wet. Seeing this kind of morning, a slight cordial feeling bloomed in his heart.

Feeling slightly cold, Twain realized that he was still only wearing his underpants. He quickly put on his clothes and went to the bathroom to wash up.

The place where manager Tony Twain was staying was a place called Branford Gardens. It was a very common residential area called Wilford District, located at the south bank of the Trent River. The home was a very common red brick house in England with a small garden. For a single person like Twain, the house was considered fairly large. However, its size was definitely not considered large in Nottingham. The rent was very cheap, and the most important thing was that it was very near to Team Nottingham's training ground and youth training camp. Walking in the northeast direction for 20 minutes, one would be able to see the gates of the training ground, hidden amidst the forest.

After washing up, Twain decided to go to the kitchen and find something to eat.

Only when he walked to the refrigerator did he notice that the door was filled with paper notes. Upon opening the door, he found a carton of milk and a piece of bread. Then, he simply stood in front of the refrigerator and read the notes while he ate his plain breakfast.

The most eye-catching one was an A4-sized form. Tang En felt dizzy after looking at the content.

6:30 – 7:00, Morning run.

7:00 – 7:20, Breakfast.

7:00 – 7.40, Read newspaper.

7:40 – 8:00 Go to training venue (Remark: for match days, other arrangements)

This was a very detailed day-to-day work-rest planner, and the time allocation was precise to the very minute with a large amount of remarks. From the second that he opened his eyes in the morning, this planner was carried out faithfully, until he once again lay on his bed and closed his eyes to sleep.

“Darned OCD!” To the lazy Tang En, the method of planning out one's daily life and splitting it into segments down to the minute and filling them in with concrete details was simply a living torture. From the moment his eyes' opened, his daily activities had been planned out, doing a specific thing at a specific time, and doing some other specific thing during another specific time. This was done to the extent that he even included a

specific time slot for the toilet, inside his timetable, showing his ordered habits. Tang En finally understood the reason why Kenny Burns, from the day before, was shocked at the fact that he drank liquor—the old Tony Twain was one hundred percent workaholic through and through, without any emotional appeal, completely unaware of how to enjoy life, and was an inflexible, stubborn machine.... For this kind of person to live to be a 34-year-old was simply a miracle!

Around this white planner, there were also some yellow, green, and red little strips of notes pasted. Different contents were written on each of them. The yellow ones were memos which reminded him when he had any meetings. The green ones were the contact details which he took down on a whim. There were not many of these green notes, hence it seemed that these contact details were ultimately transferred into Twain's personal phone book. The red ones made up the majority of them. They were important arrangements for the day, and there was one for every day. Tang En continued scanning through the refrigerator line-by-line, and he finally found a red note which was pasted the morning before.

Aside from the date, there was only one line of words written on it:

“This first league one match I'm coaching as manager must be won!!!”

After seeing so many memos left behind by Twain, this was still the first time he saw him use an exclamation point to hint at strong feelings, and he'd used three of them at that.

Looking at the hastily and messily written words on the red piece of paper, it was unlike the rest of the memos. Twain could even imagine what kind of expression and actions that person was making, when he was writing that sentence. He must have clenched his fist tightly, gritted his teeth, full of anticipation and fighting spirit when he used his entire body's worth of strength to write this vow.

A pity... Tang En recalled what was reported in the news the day before. Team Nottingham Forest had lost 0:3 pitifully in their home ground to the weak Team Walsall. Was it his sudden appearance which snatched his victory away? Tang En wondered as he stared blankly at the refrigerator door pasted full of paper notes.

He must have come up with a comprehensive plan and told his own players the day before the match. But what use was there? The match was still lost. There was a Chinese saying that went like this: Plans always fall behind changes.

One by one, Twain extended his hand and removed the notes on the refrigerator door. In the end, it was only left with the red note which had the words “must be won” written on it. Afterwards, he chucked the notes and milk carton into the garbage can and clapped his hands as he left the kitchen.



When he returned to his bedroom, the daylight was already very bright. Although it was still raining, the number of pedestrians and cars on the roads had gradually increased.

Recalling that he had to go to the training ground at eight o' clock, Tang En lowered his head and checked his watch. It was just 7:40.

No matter how terrible and absurd reality was, Tang En had become Tony Twain. Being his replacement, he naturally had to do his work. Tang En was not an irresponsible person. Moreover, whenever he watched football, that was not a time which he thought that victory could be obtained without any effort. He put on his overcoat and grabbed a black umbrella near the door before he pushed open the door and walked into the rain.

Team Nottingham Forest's training ground was also in Wilford District. The east-flowing Trent River made a quick 'N' shape turn, clearing out a large plot of flat land. One century ago, this place was still a big plot of fertile cultivated land and forest. Nottingham was only a small plot of land located at the south bank of the river. Today, the city's development had passed by the Trent River. It had already become a considerably large scale residential area, and Nottingham Forest Football Club had bought a portion of it to build its own training facility.

The narrow and long training ground had been separated into two by a small alley called "Wilford Lane." The Northern side was slightly bigger and was the training ground for the youth team. This youth team training camp was one of the top few youth training camps in all of England. On the other hand, the slightly smaller southern side was the training ground for the first team, also known as "Wilford."

England's rain in the winter was not heavy, but very annoying, as it hardly stopped. Tang En felt helpless. After all, regardless of whether he was in his hometown or the city he moved to after graduation, it did not stop raining once winter came.

The training ground's guard, Ian Macdonald, looked at the drenched Tony Twain with a puzzled look. "Tony, what are you here for?"

Tang En felt that his question was slightly ridiculous. "For training, of course."

Macdonald replied, "But Tony, today is January 2nd, 2003. The football teams have gone on a vacation, New Year's vacation."

Tang En patted his head, as he had forgotten about it.

Seeing him pat his head, Macdonald lightly shook his head. He must have thought that Twain's head was slightly off as a result of the incident the day before.

"I was thinking, it is so, so quiet here. Happy New Year." Twain awkwardly smiled at Macdonald before turning around to leave. At that moment, he also saw a dark red colored Audi A6, stopped beside him.

The back door was opened, and a plump old man appeared from within. Tang En's subconscious mind was telling him that that person was his boss, the football team's chairman, Mr. Nigel Doughty. The next person to alight and follow suit was a middle-aged man. He was around the same age as Twain, tall and experienced-looking. Wearing a casual jacket, he held an umbrella in his hand, mostly sheltering the chairman's head.

Doughty saw Twain who was standing by the road, and automatically extended both of his arms to hug Twain. "Tony, I saw yesterday's news. Forgive me for not calling you, my son just came back from America to visit me. Are you alright?"

Twain was slightly shocked at the boss' attitude towards him, and replied frantically. "I think I should be... alright. Thank you, Mr. Chairman."

Nigel let go of Twain and said to him as he pointed at the middle-aged man standing beside him, "My son, Edward."

Edward Doughty extended his hands of his own accord, "Hello, pleased to meet you. Mr. Coach..."

His father beside him interrupted him, "Edward, I've said it many times. Don't call him 'coach', you have to say 'manager'. We are in England, not America."

Edward smiled apologetically at Twain, "Sorry, Mr. Manager."

Tang En also extended his hands, "No worries. I'm also pleased to meet you, Mr. Doughty."

Chairman Doughty interjected from the side once again, "My son just returned from America. He has been staying there since he was young, and has become unfamiliar with England. He is now an 'American' who grew up watching the NBA."

Toward this kind of sarcasm, Edward could only smile helplessly. He did not attempt to argue.

Standing before him was the boss who paid his salary, Tang En recalled from the red note on the refrigerator. He felt that he had to explain the defeat from yesterday, even if he had to lie. "Er, Mr. Chairman, regarding yesterday's defeat, I am terribly sorry..."

Unexpectedly, his boss patted his shoulder lightly, and instead began comforting him. "Tony, I also don't like to lose, but this is not a responsibility that you should shoulder yourself. These two seasons..." At this point, Doughty gazed into the horizon with his somewhat troubled eyes and muttered a mouth of vulgarities, after which, he retracted his gaze. "Do a great job and don't think too much. I won't give you any pressure. Happy New Year, Tony." He lightly patted Twain's shoulder before turning around with his son to enter the team's training ground.

Tang En stood at the door and saw the chairman's stooping figure. Beside him was his son, Edward, who was supporting and sheltering him with an umbrella. Seeing this, he could not express himself with words. What exactly were the feelings he had? He had readily accepted the fact that he had become a football manager, but he was unable to emotionally accept this team within a day's time. He did not have much of an understanding regarding Nottingham Forest, aside from the fact that it had a glorious past. He also was not a fan of Team Nottingham Forest.

However, the pat on his shoulder from the chairman, made him feel a sense of warmth in his heart. As a "foreigner", this kind of warmth was extremely precious to him. He had made up his mind to do his job well, to his fullest capability. Not merely out of spite from those bunch of drunkards, but also to not let down Mr. Doughty's trust in him—even if he does not know that the person he was trusting was not the Tony Twain who he was familiar with.

"Happy New Year, old man..."

After leaving Wilford training ground, Tang En strolled aimlessly through the streets. The rain had already stopped, so he might as well have used the umbrella as a walking stick.

There were several times more pedestrians on the road than when he had just left the house. It was a given, seeing that it was a public holiday. Everyone roamed the streets and played with their friends. It was New Year's after all. However, this kind of festive mood did not belong to Tang En, as the current him was not in the mood to enjoy the festival.

He felt that it was strange that he could read and understand every English word as though he was born with this ability. He was as familiar with this country's language as he was with Chinese, as well as some other life skills. However, he had forgotten some other important things.

As though there was a lapse in his memories, he could not remember how Tony Twain trained the team, nor how he came up with the battle tactics. He was also not very sure of his human relations with the other people from the club, his influence, or his reputation. As such, he could not understand why Chairman Doughty was so cordial to him. It was only in spurts that those lost memories would resurface and stop in his mind for a very short moment, before once again disappearing.

However, he knew what kind of person Tony Twain was in the past. He was well-behaved, a man of few words, serious in his work and a hardworking, steadfast person. In terms of his private life, he was like an ascetic monk. He neither smoked nor drank, and did not have much experience in love. He had never visited places of promiscuity, and had only rested at home aside from work. He was like the giant dull clock at London Bridge, conscientiously and inflexibly making each and every sound. He loved silence,

and the only thing which could be considered his pastime was putting on his headphones and listening to classical music in his room.

After fishing out some relevant information of Tony Twain in his mind, Tang En could not help but exclaim, "Damn! This is simply someone who lived in the middle ages. He's so boring! How can there still be someone like this in the world?!"

Twain came up with a conclusion on his own. The current body which he possessed did not belong to him. It belonged to someone from the middle ages, called "Tony Twain." As such, he possessed the natural instincts that allowed him to be familiarized with the English lifestyle. At the same time, his heart as Tang En was beating inside this body, so he possessed a character that was completely different from the instincts of this body.

Now that he thought about it, he still had to thank that disgraceful experience of the day before. Now that everyone knew about his head injury, he would not have to worry about anyone having any suspicions regarding Tony Twain's immense change in character.

Tired from all the walking, Twain sat down on a long bench by the street to rest. After that, he began to ponder seriously, what he had to do to become a successful manager, in order to not let down the chairman's hopes for him.

He pondered for half a day without any leads. He did not know how to train a football team, nor how to lead the team to victory. The Football Manager game he used to play was utterly useless in this situation. As for the Nottingham Forest players, he was also completely unfamiliar with them. At least, the current him was not familiar. He could not gesticulate like he was used to when he would watch the rebroadcast on television and make comments like, "The manager should send this guy out," "move that player to the left side," "let that person assist actively..." Faced with an entirely unfamiliar football team, Twain was unable to comment no matter how much football he watched.

The worse thing was, there was not much time left for him to make preparation. The team was on break for one day, and they would re-assemble the next day in preparation for the third match of the English FA Cup on the 4th. Their opponent would be West Ham, which came from the Premier League.

Now that Team Nottingham Forest had suffered three consecutive losses in the English FA Cup, and the newly appointed manager had become a laughingstock in the telecast, their morale was at an all-time low. Although West Ham did not have an impressive record in the Premier League, they were still much stronger than Team Nottingham Forest.

Twain laughed bitterly. "When it rains, it pours... If this is what fate has in store for me, then I can only say: what a piece of shit you are!"

The vexed Twain raised his head and saw a rather large-scale bar around the corner of the opposite street. Looking at the English words 'Pub' written on it, he decided to go inside and have a drink, temporarily tossing aside his woes.

"Travelling to England is also not without its good points, at least there are bars all over the place." Tang En muttered to himself as he crossed the road, pushing open the reddish-brown door.

Hearing the sound of the door opening, a middle-aged man behind the bar counter in the midst of wiping cups raised his head and said, "Sorry, it is still not operating hours. I forgot to hang the sign on the door..." However, when he saw who the person was, he was stunned.

Tang En was also stunned, because he recognized who that person was. That was the person who had treated him to a drink the day before —Kenny Burns. The day before, he had been immensely short-tempered, and messed up the bar. To think that he had come here yet again!

Tang En's immediate reaction was to return outside. He raised his head, looked at the sign board before entering, and looked around the bar. He could not help but scoff, "How the heck did I even walk here?"

Burns looked at him with a slight interest and said, "Looks like that accident caused our Tony Twain to have a change in character."

That was a good opportunity for Tang En to extricate himself from an awkward position. Following the flow, he replied, "I know, the past him... Er, I did not swear and was as gentle as a woman. Still not open? Then I'll move on to another..." Just as he was about to leave, Burns' hearty laughter resounded from behind him.

"Don't waste your efforts. There won't be any bars that are open before 11:30 in the morning."

Twain turned around embarrassingly and said, "... I rarely come, so I don't know."

"Not rarely, today is only your second time in a bar. I've said before, you used to live like the purest puritan. You don't mind me talking to you like this, right?"

Tang En shook his head. He was an atheist and was not religious. As such, he did not care about which religious camp people thought he was in.

Burns walked out from the bar counter and waved toward Twain who was standing by the door. "Since you're already here, don't leave. In any case, I am rather bored alone. How about chatting with me? Of course, my treat."

It just so happened that Tang En was also looking for someone to talk to. Blinking his eyes a few times, Twain asked, "The purest scotch whisky?"

Burns laughed out loud and replied, "That's right, from my hometown, the most authentic scotch whisky! But please don't press a wine glass against my face."

"Ah! That incident...My sincere apologies."

"It's alright. It is common for fights to occur in bars. It is easy to become excited after a few drinks, especially when it comes to football matches..." Burns nodded his head to express that he understood.