

## Godfather Of Champions

### Chapter 11: We Were Raped Part 1

The singing in the City Ground stands continued as time went on. West Ham had a bit of a comeback in the final stages of the match. They did not want to end the Nottingham trip in such a pathetic state.

Unfortunately, West Ham lost its last offensive striker when Defoe was changed and could only put forth Joe Cole. Joe Cole did not have the makings of a striker. He was like a duck to the water in midfield but was overwhelmed once he got into the penalty area. Michael Dawson was entirely in his element marking a player like Joe Cole. Tang En did not need to worry about it.

On the other hand, the harried West Ham gave the Forest team more chances to counterattack. When Tang En saw the anxious Roeder waving his arm to signal to his team to step it up on the sidelines, he sneered on the inside. After all this time, there's no point for you to press on. Worried that the one-goal advantage is not enough? What have you been doing until now?

Tang En decided to use the second substitution in the quota for this match. He called the warmed-up David Johnson to his side and indicated that he would be brought on to substitute for Lester. Together with Harewood, they were to break West Ham's defenses one after another, because Twain found a weakness. West Ham's substitute in the second half, center back Gary Breen's actual position was a sweeper. He often lingered at the farthest back of the defense. This was clearly a good chance to play a quick counterattack. So, Twain asked Johnson to substitute for Reid and instructed him, "More straight passes. Don't be afraid of offside, just seize a chance, and we can wipe them!"

The fourth official raised the board again, and Johnson went in for Lester.

When Lester came to the sidelines, Twain extended a hand toward him, "Nice work, Jack. Go take a shower in the locker room."

Lester took his hand but shook his head, "No, I don't want to go back to the locker room at this time. I have to be together with everyone."

Twain smiled and shook his hand, "Then you stay here."

By this time, Tang En was still full of confidence in winning this match. Strangely, no one had told him that they would win this match, and he had never heard of this match in his memory, did not know what the final score would be or the outcome. But he firmly believed that they would win. Where did this confidence come from?

Maybe it was the fans who kept singing in the stands. Perhaps it was the unrelenting players on the field. It was possibly Des Walker sitting behind him and supporting him, or maybe... something else.

He closed his eyes slightly; his excitement earlier had finally calmed down. It was like he was in a dream state for the first 40 minutes, not standing on solid ground, but among the white clouds. Did I really direct a League One team to push a Premier League team to such a sorry state? I'm not playing the Football Manager game, am I? The players running on the field are not rigid data. They are living, breathing people. I'm not in the pub having an idle discussion on strategies and tactics with a group of drunk fans. All this real. My stuff can overcome the opponents.

Tang En thought this was his greatest reward.

When he opened his eyes again, seeing the crowded stands and the players running back and forth on the field, his heart filled with a sense of accomplishment.

Johnson's being brought on exemplified Tang En's gift and talent in his onsite field of command. He'd just played on the field for half a minute and he already got a great opportunity. Unfortunately, the Jamaican shot the ball wide when he faced James.

Watching the football brush the goalpost and go out, the Forest fans let out a huge sigh. The match time was running out. If the ball had gone in, they would have taken West Ham United down. All the Forest team fans looked forward to ways on celebrating this match's victory this evening.

Tang En was also very sorry. Squatting on the sidelines, he held his head in his hands and sighed in despair exactly like a fan, not one bit of the capacity of a manager's steady calm.

He stood up again and looked at the electronic scoreboard. There were only three minutes left. The fourth official had not prompted how many minutes for the injury stoppage time, but after that noisy scene with Bowyer and Defoe, there should somehow be five minutes to make up the time. With eight minutes to get two goals... seemed a bit difficult.

At this time, he resented the referee on the field once again. If Dawson's ball did not get blown out, at least now they could have eliminated West Ham United with only one goal.

While he was vexed about this, the Forest team got the perfect opportunity once again!

Again, it was Reid who assisted with a midfield cross and straight pass. Johnson made a beautiful start and received the football in front of the goal area and then lobbed the ball toward the goal!

The football hit the net hard!

But this time without waiting for the Forest players and fans to cheer, the assistant referee took center stage. He raised the flag parallel to the ground, pointed to the far end, and the meaning was obvious—Johnson was in an offside position.

Johnson did not understand this offense. He pointed to himself asking the assistant referee “What? What?” The assistant referee did not answer his questions, just raised the flag parallel to the ground and looked ahead, as if Johnson was made of air, standing before him.

Other Forest team players also came around to question the assistant referee’s judgment of the offside. A huge buzzing came from the stands. This time it was no longer aimed at their team. The fans’ target of resentment was the referees.

On the contrary, Twain did not have any extreme expression on the sidelines.

Seeing the ball being ruled as offside by the referee and assistant referee, the fourth official on the sideline turned to look at Twain. The ill-tempered man did nothing. He only turned to the technical area with opened arms and helplessly shook his head.

Even his partner, Walker, felt that Twain’s “meek” display was strange.

He watched Twain come back and sit his butt down beside him. “Tony, are you okay?”

“What can I do...” Twain glanced at the players who were still arguing with the assistant referee. “Des, we’ve lost the match. There’s nothing you can do such a referee.”

Sitting on the bench, Twain buried his head in his arms, looking dejected.

Yes, I predicted the opposing manager’s reaction, I also anticipated my players’ performances, my tactics completely suppressed the opponent, and I inspired the confidence and morale of this group of players. The only factor that I didn’t account for was the referee. There would always be such incidents on the football field, and today was my turn.

Walker did not know what to say when he saw Twain so dejected. They had a wonderful start in the second half, but they did not expect to powerlessly accept defeat in the end. “Tony... I think you’ve done a great job. Who would have thought we could see such a team before halftime? There are some things we can’t control...”

The referee insisted this ball was an offside offense. West Ham manager Roeder breathed a sigh of relief, so did the thousand plus West Ham United fans. They felt that today’s match was a risky foray into a perilous dense forest, and they were lucky to narrowly escape.

The final result of the match was 2:3. The Forest team lost to the Premier League Team West Ham United on their home ground.

When the referee sounded the final whistle, the Forest team players were obviously not happy with their results. Tang En even saw tears in Dawson's eyes from the sidelines. He worked so hard, but he did not secure a well-deserved victory.

Roeder, who had celebrated his victory with his own men, had wanted to shake hands with Twain and say a few words, but when he looked over, he could not find the home team's manager in the technical area. Tony Twain had already walked toward to the player's corridor.

Des Walker was busy comforting the players when he found that Twain was already walking straight off the field, without shaking hands with the other manager. He called out to stop him, "Tony, where are you going?"

"Heading back."

"You still have to shake hands with the other manager!"

"You shake it for me." Twain continued to go in without even turning his head back.

"But you're going to the press conference! I can't go on your behalf anymore..."

Twain stopped in his tracks, turned around to look at Walker and nodded, "Okay, I'll go."

Looking at the stubborn figure, Walker sighed. He really did not know what to do with him. When he found Roeder looking at him, he quickly gave an apologetic smile and reached his hand out to the other party.