

## **Real Man 11**

### Chapter 11

The atmosphere was awkward, but the noise around them made it seem like a natural scenery.

He knew very well that there was an invisible wall in front of him.

It was a wall that he had built by pointing his arrows of resentment at his father for the miserable reality.

He wanted to break it down right away, but he was cautious because he could lose him even more if he did.

He had to wait for his father to open his heart by himself.

This was not a meeting with a buyer that had to produce results within an hour.

It was a difficult task, but he seemed to have taken the first step well.

He had made a place for just the two of them, and even added alcohol to it.

The silence and the drinks would act like a magic key as time passed.

Yoo-hyun believed so.

He picked up the bottle and tilted his hand towards his father's empty glass.

"Have a drink."

“ ... ”

His father silently handed him the glass, and Yoo-hyun quietly filled it up.

One glass, two glasses.

The glasses were emptied and the bottles piled up.

His father's cheeks seemed to be flushed from the alcohol.

Yoo-hyun drank his glass in one gulp and looked at his father.

He looked smaller than the father he remembered from his childhood.

But he didn't have the expression of giving up on life like the father he faced in the future.

His eyes still had a sharpness to them.

His steady breathing and expression, his body leaning towards Yoo-hyun, his arms and legs slightly apart.

Yoo-hyun felt the wall that had crumbled a bit from his father's changed posture and opened his mouth.

“Father.”

“What?”

It was when his father lifted his head at Yoo-hyun's words.

A middle-aged man who looked like his father's age approached them and spoke to them.

“Oh, Mr. Han. What are you doing here? And who is this young friend?”

“My son.”

“Oh, you have such a handsome son. Nice to meet you. I’m Kang Dong Ho.”

“Yoo-hyun.”

Although he had a sullen expression, he didn’t push him away, so he seemed to be quite close to his father.

When Yoo-hyun tried to get up and shake hands, Kang Dong Ho patted his shoulder and made him sit down.

“Oh, don’t get up. Sit down. Sit down.”

“No, but...”

Kang Dong Ho wrapped his arm around his father’s back and said to Yoo-hyun.

“Your name is Yoo-hyun, right? You have a really great father. Do you know that?”

“Mr. Kang, you’re too drunk.”

“No, no, Mr. Han. I have to tell him how great you are. Right? Right?”

“Yes.”

“Actually...”

When Yoo-hyun nodded, Kang Dong Ho rambled on about his father with excitement.

It was mostly about his father’s character.

He would have stayed for an hour or more if his father hadn’t stopped him.

He ended up paying for everything and left.

“He talks too much.”

“He seems nice.”

“...”

His father silently filled Yoo-hyun’s glass with alcohol.

-Why do we have to give everything away? Huh? We’re having a hard time too. We look like we’re going to die any minute, but why do we have to take care of others first? We should take care of our family first in times like this!

He still felt a sting in his chest from the anger he heard from his son after the bankruptcy.

He had given away the money from selling the factory land to the employees who lost their jobs.

As a result, the ones who suffered the most were his family.

He always felt sorry for that.

“Father, have a drink.”

“Yeah.”

His father took the glass from Yoo-hyun with a slightly trembling hand.

He saw his father’s darkened face and guessed what he was thinking.

He didn’t remember everything clearly, but he knew that he had said many cold words that hurt his father in the past.

Especially when he heard rumors that he had given everything away to his employees, he couldn’t contain his anger.

He confronted his father with questions like why they had to live like fools.

But now he knew.

His father still had people around him, but he had no one left when he succeeded in life.

He felt it painfully in his heart.

The truth came out of his mouth sincerely.

“I’m sorry, Father.”

“What are you talking about?”

“Just... I was bad and I said things that hurt you.”

His father heard Yoo-hyun’s words and filled his son’s glass with alcohol with a shaky hand.

“I’m sorry. I’m so worthless...”

“Don’t say that. It’s all my fault.”

“No, it’s me...”

“It’s me...”

Both of them were slightly drunk and kept blaming themselves for their mistakes.

As they continued their endless conversation, a smile gradually formed on their lips.

Clink.

Their glasses also collided.

“Congratulations on passing the document screening.”

“Thank you, but I’ll celebrate when I really get accepted.”

“You rascal.”

They also exchanged light-hearted banter.

Alcohol definitely had an effect on opening people’s hearts.

Before they knew it, they started to have a sincere conversation.

The story of their father, which began with a flashback to the past, continued until the present.

“Don’t worry. I think I’ll get a pretty big contract soon.”

“That’s great, really. You’ve worked hard. Come on, let’s drink to that.”

As Yoo-hyun lifted his glass, his father chuckled and raised his glass too.

“Yeah. If I can land this deal with Usang Construction, the factory will surely survive.”

Clink.

It was when their glasses met.

Yoo-hyun had a flash of insight in his head.

“Usang Construction?”

“Yeah. They’re building a large apartment complex in our area.”

“Really...”

Yoo-hyun hesitated to finish his sentence and organized his thoughts.

He remembered that Usang Construction was also preparing to build a large complex near his school.

And in Yoo-hyun's memory, it was also the place that went bankrupt and caused a lot of damage.

He wondered if his father had also suffered from Usang Construction's failure.

'That makes sense.'

He had no recollection of his father reviving the factory.

If his father's dream of restoring the factory had been shattered by Usang Construction's bankruptcy, it would make sense.

Yoo-hyun's expression became serious, and his father noticed it and put down his glass.

This time, Yoo-hyun spoke first.

"So you haven't signed the contract yet?"

"Why do you ask?"

Yoo-hyun couldn't answer his father's question honestly.

'I can't say I saw it in the future.'

But he couldn't just force him either.

But he couldn't just let it go either.

He had to stop him at all costs.



Yoo-hyun slowly opened his mouth after sorting out his thoughts.

“Well, Usang Construction is also building houses near my school, but I heard some rumors about them.”

“What kind of rumors?”

“They’re spreading themselves too thin and their financial situation is bad. They might go under.”

“That can’t be true. Usang is a big company.”

His father shook his head firmly.

He couldn’t blame him for thinking that way.

Usang Construction was currently one of the top five major construction companies.

Yoo-hyun didn’t back down at all.

“What if you sign the contract and Usang Construction goes bankrupt? What will happen then?”

“Kid.”

“I just want to know for sure.”

Maybe it wouldn’t be a big problem if he signed the contract properly.

He would have received some advance payment, and he could deal with the remaining amount in some other way if things got worse.

The problem was if he signed the contract hastily, as was customary.

The contract that his father was considering was probably the latter, judging by his delayed answer.

And maybe he remembered the previous default, because he was cautious too.

His face darkened in an instant, and Yoo-hyun could easily guess why.

“I’ll suffer some losses... I’ll look into this more carefully.”

“Yes. It doesn’t hurt to be careful.”

“Right. How about another drink?”

“Sure.”

Clink.

After their glasses touched, Yoo-hyun naturally changed the topic.

It was up to his father from then on, he thought.

If things didn’t work out, he could check again later and intervene again.

The conversation moved on to Yoo-hyun’s company story.

The five empty bottles on the table indicated that it was time to wrap up soon.

Yoo-hyun cautiously revealed his true feelings.

“Dad, how should I live from now on?”

“What do you mean? You’re asking a failure like me.”

“I want to hear it, Dad.”

Yoo-hyun bowed his head earnestly, and his father took a sip of his drink.

Then he slowly opened his mouth.

“Yoo-hyun, I may look like a failure, but I still haven’t changed my mind.”

“Yes, Dad.”

“Life is not something you live alone. You have to live with others. It’s not about money or success, but about people. You have to live by looking at people.”

-You have to live by looking at people.

For a moment, his father’s advice from the past and his teaching from the present crossed in his mind.

He had argued back then, asking what his father knew, but now it was different.

It was a phrase he wanted to hear again, and it would be a new milestone in his life.

Yoo-hyun spoke sincerely with all his heart and soul.

“I’ll keep that in mind. Thank you, Dad.”

“Kid.”

His father patted Yoo-hyun’s shoulder without a word.

There was a warm smile on his face.

That was enough for today.

Yoo-hyun smiled brightly for the first time.

During his stay in his hometown, Yoo-hyun visited many places.

He went to see Kim Hyunsu at the car center, and had lunch with Kang Junki at his school.

He didn’t hesitate to give advice to Ha Junseok, who was preparing for a job with him.

It was perhaps inevitable that Ha Junseok, who had been listening quietly, said in astonishment.

“You talk like an interviewer.”

“Dude, this is the minimum you have to prepare.”

“Are you kidding me?”

“Just remember this.”

“Yeah.”

Ha Junseok reluctantly answered.

He could only hope that it would stick in his head.

Of course, it took quite some time to adjust to his level, but that was also fun.

He felt anew that human relationships also required effort.

He also stopped by his mother's side dish shop once in a while, and had dinner with the people who worked with his father at the factory.

As Yoo-hyun spent more time reaching out, their awkward family relationship also improved a lot.

They always ate breakfast and dinner together, and talked until bedtime.

The time they spent watching TV disappeared, and the time they looked at each other increased. Naturally, the time they laughed also increased.

His younger sister, who attended school in another province, was the first one to notice.

She was surprised to see her family sitting in the living room and chatting happily when she came home after finishing her exams.

"What's going on? Why is the atmosphere so good?"

"It's better without you."

"Hey, brother. You hurt my feelings."

“Oh dear, our daughter. Don’t be like that and sit down. Hahaha.”

She pretended to be offended as a joke, but he could tell at a glance.

She couldn’t hate the warm atmosphere of her family that she hadn’t seen for a long time either.

She called him frequently after she returned.

Naturally, her gaze at Yoo-hyun became more lively than before.

All these changes happened in less than two weeks.

“It’s so easy.”

Yoo-hyun was immersed in deep emotions.

He felt happiness that he couldn’t feel when he was running forward only thinking about dying through meeting people around him.

It was time for Yoo-hyun to go back up again.

Maybe it was because of parting with her son, but his mother’s eyes were moist.

“Oh dear, I’m going to miss you so much.”

“Mom, I’ll call you often.”

“Have a safe trip.”

This time, his father smiled broadly and said,

“That’s right. Dad, please take care of your health. You know that health is the most important thing, right?”

“Kid, go ahead. You’ll be late.”

Yoo-hyun bowed his head happily.

He got on the bus leaving behind his mother waving her hand brightly and his father smiling.