

Real Man 3

Chapter 3

The situation was already tilted in Yoo-hyun's favor.

The trembling eyes of the man and the bowed head of the woman proved it.

They seemed to rack their brains frantically, but there was no answer.

In the end, they had only one choice left.

It was the moment when Yoo-hyun's finger touched the phone button.

The man shouted like lightning.

"Hey! Run!"

"Brother!"

As soon as the short conversation ended, the three of them ran away like crazy.

The funny thing was that the young man with a cast on his leg was the fastest.

"Crazy bastards."

Yoo-hyun smiled coldly.

He had already captured their faces on his phone camera.

Did they think he would let it go?

A cold smile crossed Yoo-hyun's face.

Thud thud.

As Yoo-hyun walked, the people who were watching moved aside with a flustered expression.

He didn't care.

They were men after all.

"Poo."

Yoo-hyun sighed and walked through them.

"Just because of these guys..."

He remembered his own appearance 20 years ago, when he had to bow his head for no reason.

It was a miserable memory of having to kneel and wipe away tears without doing anything wrong.

"..."

For a moment, Yoo-hyun tilted his head.

"Something is strange."

The repetition of the same situation added to his confusion.

It was too similar to his past memory to pass it off as a coincidence.

But that was not all.

Along with the vivid old scenery in front of him, his past memories came to mind vividly.

It felt like he had gone back to that time.

“What is this?”

Yoo-hyun tilted his head repeatedly.

He walked with complex thoughts in his head.

His footsteps touched the road he had passed countless times before.

He saw his face reflected in the coated glass and had to stop walking.

He was not a middle-aged man in his late 40s, but a young man in his 20s.

Exactly as he looked 20 years ago.

“What is this...”

Was it just a dream?

But everything felt too real.

Yoo-hyun slowly lowered his hand that covered his mouth.

Without the wrinkles and dark circles around his eyes, he looked much younger.

His bright skin tone and rosy lips made his face look even more youthful.

More than anything, there was no sagging underarm fat, so he looked much more gentle.

“Ah!”

He pinched his cheek and felt pain.

“It’s not... a dream.”

His memories of the last 20 years were too vivid.

He had run like crazy to achieve his goal and eventually became the president.

But...

Everything felt so empty.

He remembered what the old bartender said when he handed him a service cocktail.

-It will help you.

As soon as he took the glass, his head spun and he felt dizzy.

“ ... ”

Was it because of a cocktail?

It was absurd.

That's when it happened.

Creak.

The door of the restaurant in front of him opened and men in suits came out.

They seemed to have enjoyed their lunch with loud noises.

Yoo-hyun froze for a moment.

He saw the faces of his seniors who used to work with him before.

But they were young.

Too young.

He felt like his values were crumbling down.

Clack.

"Ah, I'm sorry."

"..."

The man who bumped into Yoo-hyun's shoulder bowed his head.

It was Kim Young-gil's face, who had informed him of Kwon Se-jung's death.

Of course, he looked like a fresh youth now.

Then he heard another voice.

"Kim, what are you doing? Come on."

"Yes, Manager. I'm coming."

Kim Young-gil hurriedly walked away.

Yoo-hyun looked at them with a stunned expression as they walked ahead.

Their cheerful appearance contrasted with their bitter faces at Kwon Se-jung's funeral.

He followed them as if bewitched and saw a tall building.

Hanseong Tower.

It was the name of the building written on the signboard at the front.

It was also where Yoo-hyun had been for the last 20 years.

Creak.

Clank.

Someone got out of the car parked in front of the main gate.

The security guard ran over and greeted him.

The employees next to him approached and bowed their heads.

The man shrugged his shoulders and walked away.

It was Yoo-hyun's appearance from yesterday.

He remembered again.

20 years ago today, or rather, now.

Yoo-hyun was here.

He had received a text message that he had passed the paper screening of Hanseong Electronics and came to see the company in person to set his goal.

He had seen a similar scene then too.

He looked up at the building from here and vowed to become the highest person here.

He had a vivid memory of that day because he had met the self-harm gang, which left him with a trauma.

Yoo-hyun stayed in the same place for a long time and then turned his body.

How far had he walked?

He wandered around the streets like crazy and finally sat down on a bench with a collapsed face.

Yoo-hyun looked up at the sky.

The blue sky was still the same.

But the world had changed.

With his body.

With his eyes.

It was a terribly accurate reality.

“Does this make any sense?”

He couldn't accept it no matter how hard he tried to understand.

What if it was true?

Yoo-hyun bit his lower lip and looked at the newspaper next to him.

<Hanseong Group's Shin Hyun-ho Chairman's 10th Anniversary of Inauguration, Catching Two Rabbits of Innovation and Growth.>

It was the news on the top of page 3.

There was a picture of the former chairman of the group, whom Yoo-hyun had watched until his death.

The other newspapers were the same.

They all pointed to the contents of 2007.

“Sigh...”

As he sighed, something flashed in Yoo-hyun’s head.

‘Mother?’

Yes.

That’s right.

If he had gone back to the past, his mother, who had passed away, would be alive too.

That alone was enough to confirm it.

Yoo-hyun picked up his phone without hesitation.

The phone ringing was not very long.

-Hello. Yoo-hyun, why?

The voice was familiar.

His mother’s voice.

With that alone, Yoo-hyun collapsed completely.

Regret.

And guilt.

All those emotions rushed to his chest like a waterfall.

He covered his mouth with his hand and barely calmed down his choked heart before opening his mouth.

Of course, his tone of voice was exactly like when he was young.

He didn't need anyone to teach him.

It came out naturally.

"Mother..."

He couldn't talk for long because of his heart that was about to burst.

He wanted to see her right away, but he heard his mother's words telling him to finish the rest and come down.

He checked the previous text message and saw that he still had things to do at school.

"I'll be done in two days."

He sorted out his thoughts lightly and got up from his seat, but his face changed abruptly.

“Oops.”

He vaguely remembered where his boarding house was.

He had an idea in his head for a moment.

That’s right.

The address of his boarding house was in the text message he sent to his mother.

But he had a hard time finding the way there.

He asked people and took the subway and then transferred to a bus.

He felt like he had really gone back to the past after going through some troubles.

He got off the bus and went up the alleyway.

Woof woof.

The sound of a dog barking.

The villas that were stuck together.

The wires hanging over his head.

The green-roofed house that was oddly located between the hills.

It felt like walking through a nostalgic scenery.

It was only strange.

As he walked, his curiosity turned into anticipation.

“I wonder what it looks like.”

There was a delivery box in front of the door.

It was a side dish sent by his mother.

Yoo-hyun opened the door with the key in his bag and went in.

Click.

When he turned on the light, the dark room brightened up and a familiar scene unfolded.

It was small.

Very small.

It felt smaller than the bathroom of the house he lived in.

He took off his shoes and went in, and saw a small family photo on the wall.

There were young mother and father, and a sister who looked very young.

They were smiling.

Seeing their affectionate family, he remembered some old thoughts that he had forgotten.

At that moment, he muttered without knowing it.

“Stupid bastard.”

He was never a kind son.

He went to work and became independent, and only saw them once or twice a year.

When he was busy, he couldn't even take care of that, but his mother never complained once.

She passed away suddenly in an accident and he could only see her then.

He thought he was indifferent to emotions, but he remembered how much his heart hurt at his mother's funeral that day.

“Poo.”

He took a deep breath and sat at the desk.

The phrase written on the desk was very impressive.

<Don't regret it.>

He was proud that he lived a life that matched his motto.

There was no regret in Yoo-hyun's life as a successful man.

That's what he thought.

But now he felt it differently.

Maybe he had gone back to live a life full of regrets again.

He wondered if heaven had given him this opportunity for that reason.

He was lost in thought for a moment and turned on the computer main unit on the desk.

Chirp.

The first thing that hit his ears was the booting sound.

It was so big.

It had been a long time.

He waited for the booting screen to appear on the palm-sized monitor and looked around the desk.

There were stacks of Hanseong Group's aptitude test papers.

He opened one and saw that it was nothing but meaningless content.

It was just a test to weed out people who had problems with their personality or didn't fit the company.

But he could guess what he felt at that time by looking at the papers that were blackened.

Desperation.

He was desperate.

He pushed himself hard as if he would become a loser in life if he didn't get into a large company.

The English books and major books that filled the bookshelf told him how much sweat he had shed.

In a word, they were worn out by his hands.

The computer screen was even worse.

There were folders of self-introductions written for large companies such as Hanseong, Ilseong, Shinwha, Yurim, LK, etc.

Inside, there were files with names like 'version01', 'final', 'last', 'really last', etc.

There were hundreds of them.

It showed his obsession beyond desperation.

He opened the folder with the sorted files and saw a calendar with his job schedule.

The companies that had announced their results had O or X marks on them, and the only one with an O was Hanseong Electronics' paper.

It meant that he had failed all the other companies in the paper screening.

And today.

The final paper results, including the aptitude test results, came out.

Yoo-hyun marked a circle under today's date.

"If I was really my old self, I would have marked an O while jumping around."

He would have done that.

Even then, Hanseong was one of the top companies in Korea.

He felt like he had gained the world when he got a job.

His goal was clear.

To become the president of Hanseong Electronics.

He realized it only after he achieved his goal.

It was all meaningless.

A bitter smile appeared on Yoo-hyun's lips.