Former Mastermind To Chaebol Son-in-Law

Chapter 4

We're not going to be living together, right?

A few days later.

During that time, Kang In-hyuk quickly adapted to his current situation.

However, there were parts where his questions only deepened.

His athletic ability and agility were about the same as his previous life.

"Phew—!"

Right now, he was doing pull-ups with the exercise equipment he bought three days ago.

The original Kang In-hyuk's body wasn't in bad shape. Still, doing dozens in a single set would have been hard for him.

Unless it was his body after graduating from UID, a special forces unit, and being scouted to the Taeshin Group's security team.

Clack—

As In-hyuk let go of the bar and came down, he was able to guess one possible reason.

"My body definitely feels like mine, huh?"

It felt as if his own self had overwritten the very being called Kang In-hyuk, the son-in-law of Taeshin Group.

"But, even at this point in time, I wouldn't have been able to manage this much."

During his special forces days, his maximum was about 30 at a time, but just now, he had passed 50.

He did them all at once without resting, and even then he still had stamina to spare.

"... Could it be, is it because of that drug's components?"

The unidentified red ampule Baek Si-hwan injected into him at the hospital.

At that time, he had said the drug would enhance his physical abilities.

If he had to think of the most likely cause, it was that.

In-hyuk wiped off his sweat with a towel and picked up the old smartphone resting on the living room table.

It was a phone he bought with a laptop in Yongsan, and it still had the SD card he had found in the office drawer.

"Regardless of me, just what was this guy plotting...?"

The H&T Fund files on it matched exactly with Kang In-hyuk's memories.

"If I'd known something like this existed, I would've investigated Tae Ju-ha and Kang In-hyuk too."

In his previous life, those two had quickly become forgotten figures.

In-hyuk himself only started moving as Tae Seokho's man around that time, so he hadn't paid much attention.

At the same time, he tried putting together what he'd recalled up till now.

"Don't tell me... on the surface, he was Tae Seok-hyun's son-in-law, but secretly Tae Seokho's spy? Or was he double-crossing and targeting him, too?"

At the moment, the double spy theory seemed most likely.

It was possible that while Tae Ju-ha and Kang In-hyuk were targeting Tae Seokho, they got killed.

Still, the puzzle wasn't complete.

Tae Ju-ha, as Tae Seok-hyun's illegitimate daughter, could attack Tae Seokho to secure her own position.

But unless it was Tae Seok-hyun who used him as a pawn in marriage, Kang In-hyuk didn't have much reason to target Tae Seokho.

"In that case... maybe he even teamed up with Tae Ju-ha."

As his unanswered questions continued to pile up, no proper solution came to mind.

So In-hyuk shook his head and decided to shower first.

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The mood on the fifth floor, where Taeshin Asset Management's Equity Management HQ was, was heavy.

Having arrived at work, In-hyuk calmly sat down at his desk.

"Team Leader."

"Yes, deputy Chief Jung."

"It's about that A2 client from before. Did you have a specific plan?"

He was talking about Jang Hyung-cheol, who'd caused that scene the day In-hyuk returned to the past.

At Taeshin Asset Management, clients were managed in tiers: S1, s2, a1, a2, b1, and B2.

Clients with assets between 10 billion and 50 billion won fell under A2.

"I told you I'd take care of it myself, didn't I?"

"I'm only asking because we can't have losses. And you've never handled an A-grade client, have you, Team Leader?"

The equity management team was divided into three subdivisions.

Teams 1 and 2 handled S and A-grade clients. Team 3 mostly handled B-grade, though they did have a few S/A-grade clients, mostly managed by Deputy Chief Jung Jong-hyun and Assistant Manager Ahn Woo-chan.

In contrast, Kang In-hyuk, who came in as the "parachute" team leader a year ago, hadn't achieved good sales results.

"Are you the team leader here?"

"... Excuse me?"

"I'm the decision maker. Please focus on managing your existing clients, deputy Chief Jung."

"But..."

"And regarding that client's investment, it's already under swing trading, so you don't need to concern yourself."

At that moment Jung Jong-hyun was taken aback.

"Not even a long-term blue chip investment, but swing trading?"

Swing trading is an investment strategy where you hold stocks for at least a few days to a few weeks for profit.

"Is there a problem?"

"Of course there's a problem. The current state of the domestic and global economies isn't stable. With so much overnight risk, swing trading can only cause trouble."

With Jung Jong-hyun's raised voice, all the employees nearby started watching.

"I know you've never considered me your superior. But isn't it quite discourteous to ignore not just my decisions but even the duties I have taken on?"

The original Kang In-hyuk had always let it slide whenever he was belittled from above or below.

But now, suddenly confronting him like this, it was natural that Jung Jong-hyun was flustered.

"W-when did I ever ignore you, Team Leader?"

"You're doing it right now."

"...."

"Everyone has a limit to how much they can endure. If you keep this up, I'll have to take appropriate action as the team leader."

Jung Jong-hyun clamped his mouth shut at the intense warning.

Then In-hyuk turned his head toward the gazes gathered on him. The moment he made eye contact, people hurriedly turned away as if to avoid filth.

"If you have nothing else to say, please return to your work."

Jung Jong-hyun returned to his desk, face twisted in resentment.

Watching him, In-hyuk shook his head and went back to focusing on work.

But before long, a company-wide email alert popped up on every computer.

【Notice of CEO Change】

- Previous CEO: Jeon Joon-seok

- New CEO: Tae Ju-ha ／ Former New York branch manager

- Effective Date: part of △△ month, 2025

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Murmurs quickly spread throughout the office.

"Team Leader Kang's wife is the new CEO? This place is seriously turning upside down."

"In the end, it's all Taeshin family, huh."

"Come to think of it, today there's an emergency board meeting. Must've been because of this."

"Is that why Team Leader Kang started acting tough?"

The stares that had just dissipated now focused right back on In-hyuk.

Meanwhile, In-hyuk's gaze drifted to his phone.

'No way... When she came back to Korea, did she move in and actually live here with me?'

Just from the state of the apartment and call logs, theirs was a typical show window marriage.

There wasn't a single thing in the house that seemed to belong to Tae Ju-ha, except for the giant wedding photo in the living room.

Of course, there were five rooms, and besides the master bedroom, there was another room with a bed, but it was covered in a pristine white sheet and showed no signs of being used.

People around him kept whispering crude things.

Even so, In-hyuk paid them no mind and while working, wondered where Tae Ju-ha would be living.

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Saturday arrived.

After finishing his morning exercise for his health, In-hyuk showered and came out to the living room.

Today, he planned to go out and confirm the whereabouts of Baek Si-hwan after Tae Seokho.

Ding-dong—

Just then, the doorbell rang.

But the problem was, the sound was coming not from the first floor's main entrance, but here, at the front door of his own apartment.

'... Who could that be?'

Based on Kang In-hyuk's call history and relationships he'd figured out over the past few days, there shouldn't have been anyone who would visit him at home.

After a moment's thought, In-hyuk put on a gown, pressed the intercom, and spoke.

"Who is it?"

[.....]

Whether it was broken or not, no answer came from the small, dark screen.

Thus, In-hyuk paused in the kitchen, picked up a fruit knife in reverse grip for safety, then carefully approached the door and called out.

"Who's there!"

Again, there was no answer.

Sensing a chilly suspicion, he reached his fingers toward the door lock's buttons.

Beep-beep-beep—

As soon as the lock clicked open, he twisted the handle and opened the door.

"Gyaaah—!"

At that moment, a familiar someone burst in with a loud scream.

In-hyuk, recognizing an intruder, instinctively tried to thrust upward with the knife in his right hand, but stopped himself at the last second.

"... Go Mi-ah?"

Even though she wore a black hat, hoodie, sunglasses, and a mask, the bright red hair poking out was unmistakable.

That was Go Mi-ah's trademark, the hair color she'd been born with due to congenital lack of melanin pigment.

"It's definitely our first time meeting, but you recognized me even without seeing my face? Wait... you weren't seriously going to stab me, were you?"

She looked at the knife paused beneath her chin.

So In-hyuk immediately lowered it.

"Of course not. Come in."

Go Mi-ah trudged into the living room and plopped down onto the sofa.

Taking off her mask and sunglasses, she gave a look of admiration.

"Not bad for a corporate drone, huh? Is it because you're Taeshin Group's son-in-law? That must be your wife, right?"

She was referring to the wedding photo in the living room.

Trying to show off her background check on In-hyuk, she rattled off the facts.

"For now, yes. But what brings you here all of a sudden? You're not being chased by the National Intelligence Service because you missed your dark web cleanup window, are you?"

Go Mi-ah wrinkled her brow and clicked her tongue.

"No way! I just barely managed it, okay? Like you said, there was a phishing virus hidden in some of the data posted on the dark web."

"Well, that's good."

While replying, In-hyuk put the knife back in its place in the kitchen.

"If you were really worried, shouldn't you have brought a kitchen knife instead of a measly fruit knife? Who are you gonna kill with that, anyway?"

Had In-hyuk recognized her even a split second later, he would have thrust the knife up under her chin.

"It's plenty."

"Haha—! If I just listened to what you said, I'd think you actually killed someone."

In-hyuk smiled faintly at Go Mi-ah's attitude.

When he'd belonged to the special forces UID, even a hand-sized tree branch was enough for him to kill someone.

"How can you be so sure I've never killed anyone?"

"Because I checked everything myself?"

Of course, Go Mi-ah had dug through In-hyuk's personal and criminal records.

There were no dangerous traces, which is why she dared to come herself.

"Believe whatever you want. But since you came all the way here, I guess you've made your decision?"

"I'll make a final decision after I hear how much I can earn."

She was weighing her options.

"How much do you want?"

"Hmm... at least ten billion? Oh, I mean in won, not something like Vietnamese dong."

In-hyuk snorted without realizing it.

"Hmph."

"What's so funny? Was it because I said dong? That was just a joke."

"No, it's just funny that all you want is ten billion won, not even in dollars."

"Dollars? Damn—! Do you even know how much that would be in won?"

"About 14 trillion won, give or take?"

"Who wants to know the exchange rate?! I'm saying it's not possible!"

Despite Go Mi-ah's outburst, In-hyuk remained calm.

"What if it is possible?"

"Are you kidding me? Or are you actually nuts? Fourteen trillion isn't even the name of your neighbor's dog!"

Back when he was Blue One's chairman, In-hyuk's assets exceeded 80 trillion won.

It hadn't been easily earned, of course, but if things went right, it would be easier now than back then.

"If you work with me, it's possible."

"... If you're lying?"

"I'll stake my life on it."

His answer was so instantaneous, so resolute, that her eyes turned serious.

At that moment—

Beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep— click—

Suddenly, someone punched in the password at the front door and came in.

Having no time, In-hyuk signaled Go Mi-ah to be quiet and grabbed a pen from the side shelf, pressing himself against the wall.

Someone entered the living room, wheels scraping the floor.

In-hyuk swung his arm, aiming for a preemptive strike, but as he recognized who it was, he tried to stop himself like with Go Mi-ah.

Yet, since he'd used all his strength, he couldn't quite stop, only change direction.

Snap—

"Kyaaa—!"

The pen flew over the woman's head and exploded against the wall, shattering loudly as she shrieked in alarm.

She was none other than Tae Ju-ha, who had spent the past year in America.

"Ah..."

At that, Tae Ju-ha's gaze moved to In-hyuk and to Go Mi-ah, sitting on the sofa.

At that moment, In-hyuk was wearing nothing but a robe, completely nude underneath.