Former Mastermind To Chaebol Son-in-Law

Chapter 8

Somehow, It Turned Out That Way

Tae Ju-ha could not understand what In-hyuk was thinking when he said such a thing.

"Just now... Did you really say you'd hand over the H&T Fund files?"

"I did."

"How does that make any sense?"

"Executive Director Tae Seokho had me do this for him for now, but if I don't comply, what method do you think he'll use to get it next time? Is there any guarantee that he won't use force?"

In-hyuk asked in a very serious voice.

At this, Tae Ju-ha couldn't answer right away and her expression grew complicated.

"... Are you saying my life could be in danger?"

"I can't say it won't."

Tae Seokho orchestrated this matter for both his own goals and to test In-hyuk.

But it was unclear whether the original Kang In-hyuk actually delivered the H&T Fund files.

If one inferred from the situation, he probably didn't; in which case, the likelihood was high that Tae Ju-ha died in a car accident as a result.

However, the real issue was the fact that In-hyuk also had separate copies of the H&T Fund files.

'If I delivered my own copy, and during that time, Tae Ju-ha caused trouble separately and angered Tae Seokho...?'

Through his conversation with Tae Ju-ha, he began to piece together the missing parts of the puzzle one by one.

"That doesn't mean I can give up the H&T files."

"Then what do you plan to gain by going against Executive Director Tae Seokho? Were you perhaps thinking of demanding shares in Taeshin Life—the parent company of Taeshin Asset Management?"

At that moment, Tae Ju-ha's expression grew even more rigid.

In-hyuk had simply tried inserting one of the pieces of the puzzle he'd yet to figure out.

But Tae Ju-ha's expression seemed to confirm his guess.

"... How much do you know?"

Her reply turned his suspicion into certainty.

"If it's not out of a grudge, I just considered what would benefit you."

"Just from that?"

"It's not difficult when you think about who the opponent is and what their intentions are."

Tae Ju-ha gazed at In-hyuk with a strange look in her eyes.

"You... were you always this sharp?"

The original Kang In-hyuk was known to be very quiet, so it was natural for her to be surprised.

"I'm not exactly slow on the uptake. So, what will you do?"

"In the end, you mean to demand the H&T files?"

"But if I can give you shares in Taeshin Life without using those files, what would you do then?"

Tae Ju-ha's expression twisted slightly.

"Do you really think that's possible for someone like you, Kang In-hyuk?"

The original Kang In-hyuk was born an orphan.

He was raised in an orphanage and later graduated from university with help from the Taeshin Education Foundation.

He began his career as a recruit at Taeshin Trading, built up experience in sales and the affiliated office, and then married Tae Ju-ha.

He wasn't incompetent at work, but he wasn't exceptionally talented either.

Naturally, it was hard for her to take what In-hyuk was saying at face value.

"In the meantime, let me give you this."

In-hyuk took an old model smartphone from his inner pocket and held it out.

"... What's this?"

"Check the file inside."

Not long after, her eyes went wide.

"This is also an H&T Fund account file, isn't it? How did you get this, Kang In-hyuk... Don't tell me...!"

For a moment her eyes darted toward the room, thinking it was the copy she herself had hidden.

"I secured this myself. There may be differences in the contents, so please give me your file as well."

"... How did you get it?"

"I picked it up by chance."

In truth, he had no idea from whom or why he had received it.

On the other hand, perhaps because In-hyuk's explanation was so outlandish, Tae Ju-ha's brow furrowed deeply.

"You expect me to believe that?"

"Think what you like. What will you do? If I can't give you as much Taeshin Life stock as you want, use the files however you see fit."

Tae Ju-ha took a deep breath, pondering her decision.

"All right. But you're not going to tell Executive Director Tae Seokho about the existence of this other file, are you?"

"If you don't trust me, do as you wish. I'll just tell him I couldn't find the files."

If it came to that, Tae Seokho's attention would focus entirely on Tae Ju-ha.

Besides, since he already knew the files existed, Tae Ju-ha would be under scrutiny no matter what.

"Well then..."

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The next day.

After work, In-hyuk visited "Seunghwa's Set Menu" in Donui Neighborhood again.

As last time, Lee Jae-jun only let him in after picking up his phone and frisking him.

Tae Seokho, also like before, sat at the center table eating kimchi stew and drinking soju.

'Does he not know any dishes other than that...?'

Thinking so as he approached, Tae Seokho turned his head.

"I saw you at the chairman's house yesterday, but I didn't expect to see you again today. So—what did you want to see me about? Don't tell me... there's a problem with the task I gave you?"

To answer the question, In-hyuk took a red OTG USB memory stick out of his pocket and placed it on the table in front of him.

"I brought what you asked for."

"... Already?"

At Tae Seokho's gesture, Lee Jae-jun moved, took out a tablet, and connected the memory stick.

It didn't take long to check the contents.

"These are indeed the missing account files from the fund."

Lee Jae-jun returned the memory stick to him and went back to stand by the door.

Meanwhile, Tae Seokho picked up the USB stick and looked at In-hyuk, asking,

"Where did you find it?"

"It was hidden inside a travel suitcase."

"And you found it so quickly?"

"I thought the longer I dragged it out, the more likely they'd hide it even deeper, so I checked right away."

At In-hyuk's explanation, Tae Seokho's expression grew subtly complicated.

"Not bad. But you didn't pull anything funny, did you?"

He was asking whether In-hyuk had made a copy.

In response, In-hyuk let out a small laugh.

"Would I do something so obvious?"

"You never know."

"If the file's that important, perhaps you should have asked someone else instead of me?"

At that, Tae Seokho smiled.

"I'll trust you. Now, tell me what you want. There has to be a reward for resolving this."

He was making it sound like a favor.

In-hyuk didn't think long.

"Nothing comes to mind right now. Would it be all right if I bring it up when another opportunity arises?"

"... Do that, then."

"I've finished my business, so I'll be heading back."

"Not even a drink?"

"I've got too much to do."

With that, In-hyuk bowed slightly and left.

As soon as the door closed, Tae Seokho, who had been quietly seated, tossed the memory stick into the kimchi stew on the table.

"Whoo—!"

By this time, Lee Jae-jun had locked the restaurant's door and walked over.

As the sigh ended, the slight smirk on Tae Seokho's lips faded.

"I thought he might have something else up his sleeve, but I didn't expect he'd find and bring the file so quickly."

"..."

"Could it be... did he realize from the start that the file was a fake?"

Tae Seokho's gaze fell on the memory stick boiling in the kimchi stew.

In fact, the memory stick was bait left behind by H&T Fund to catch the internal traitor.

The most likely mole was the blonde Western woman caught in the photo last time.

The contents had deliberate traces left to identify exactly where the file had come from.

"It's the H&T Fund's public ledger under the name of a shell company entered as is. Would Kang In-hyuk be able to figure that out?"

He was only stating objective facts, not a guess.

This made Tae Seokho ponder once more.

"Is he genuinely that clean— or just trying to look that way...?"

"Shall I put someone on him?"

Up until now, Tae Seokho had been quietly observing to see what kind of person Kang In-hyuk was.

Whether In-hyuk would display further abilities in future tasks was now the important point.

"No. If I move directly and the chairman finds out, it could be disastrous. Leave him be. In any case... I have plenty of eyes and ears inside Taeshin Asset Management."

"Understood."

Tae Seokho's eyes narrowed.

"Still, I'm surprised Kang In-hyuk didn't name his price. He even turned down the chairman's offer to transfer to Taeshin Trading."

While it worked out for the best, considering that Kang In-hyuk had been demoted to a subsidiary right after getting married, it would have been a very tempting offer.

It certainly looked like he was up to something else.

Tae Seokho remained deep in thought as he poured the remaining soju in his glass and drank it down in one shot.

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A few days later.

As February came to a close, the fifth floor housing the Equity Investment Headquarters of Taeshin Asset Management was in an uproar.

The previous month's performance reports had been shared with the team leaders.

Voices of astonishment were echoing all around.

"Last month, team 3's profits hit over 300%!?"

"How is that possible?"

"Is it really 300%? Did someone from the top feed them information to beef up their figures?"

"That's possible... but if it really happened, would they waste it just to boost numbers?"

The staff of Equity Investment Team 3 also looked bewildered.

All of their eyes were on In-hyuk, who sat quietly at the team leader's desk.

'Is it about time to head out?'

In-hyuk didn't pay your attention and put on his jacket, then approached Deputy Section Chief Jung Jong-hyun.

"Mr. Jung, I have a meeting with an outside client this morning, so I'll be back after lunch."

"... Ah, yes."

A faint answer came back.

In-hyuk glanced at the people who were staring at him. They hurriedly looked away, startled.

The meeting place was "Hoam", a Korean restaurant in Cheongdam neighborhood.

After about thirty minutes, he arrived to find a distinguished elderly man with short white hair and beard already sitting there.

This was none other than In-hyuk's A2 client, Jang Hyung-cheol.

"You arrived much earlier than our scheduled time."

Their meeting was at 11. Even though In-hyuk had arrived thirty minutes early, Jang Hyung-cheol had come before him.

"Old folks—time's all we have, you know."

"This is a light meeting. Wasn't this place a bit too extravagant?"

"I won't ask you to pay, so just sit."

In-hyuk took off his jacket and sat across from him.

"What shall we do first? Eat, or business?"

"It's not a serious matter, so let's eat first. But... Haven't you changed quite a bit since our first phone call?"

The first time, Jang Hyung-cheol had blown up right off the bat.

Even though In-hyuk remained calm, the contrast left a deep impression.

"Haha! Those who bring in the money are always the boss, aren't they? The underdog can't very well take it out on the top dog."

"I'm glad you see it that way."

Soon, Jang Hyung-cheol called an employee in to set the table.

Before long, an array of elegant side dishes filled the big table, and a quiet meal commenced.

After they'd eaten enough and had a glass of water each, Jang Hyung-cheol brought up his business.

"So, what's the total profit?"

"Right now, Raisen Energy's stock is at $76.55, so it's a 223% gain. Excluding the initial 700 million won invested, that's about 800 million won in profit."

Jang Hyung-cheol's eyes widened.

"To make that much in less than a month... Was it a sure-shot investment?"

"For the most part, yes."

"Then why put in only 700 million and not the full 1.5 billion?"

In-hyuk smiled wryly at the question.

"If you'd bet all 1.5 billion, I was worried your heart might not survive the strain."

At his answer, Jang Hyung-cheol burst into hearty laughter.

"Hahahahahaha! So you were looking out for me?"

"You're the client who's given me the biggest sum to manage."

Jang Hyung-cheol paused, looking perplexed.

"With that much skill... and I'm still your biggest customer?"

"Somehow, that's just how it turned out."

Jang Hyung-cheol let out a hollow chuckle.