

STARTING WITH REAL MADRID

Chapter 5: This is War!

Martin is definitely not easy!

This is what Gao Shen felt after talking with Martin for just ten minutes in the chairman's office.

At the press conference, he was put on a pedestal. Not to mention Martin, even Butragueno, Floro, and others saw the clues. But the new president of Real Madrid didn't react as everyone guessed. Instead of getting angry at Gao Shen and firing him on the spot, Martin praised Gao Shen fiercely, giving him ample encouragement and support.

To the unknowing, it might seem that everything at the press conference was genuine.

This surprised Butragueno and the others.

Gao Shen wasn't surprised. He thought this was the mindset and courage a successful person should have.

The incident had already happened. Martin was now in deep trouble and couldn't clear his name.

Even if he fired Gao Shen on the spot, what could he save?

Not only could he restore nothing, but he would also damage his interests and image. So now, he could only align with Gao Shen wholeheartedly.

Given that, why be angry with Gao Shen?

"Chairman, please rest assured. After returning, I will immediately start to rectify the team according to your instructions, vigorously promote the youth training players, and reignite the team's fighting spirit and form a fighting force as soon as possible."

Before saying goodbye, Gao Shen seriously issued a promise to Martin, Butragueno, and others.

"I promise, if we can't win against Atletico Madrid at home in this weekend's derby match, you will see my resignation letter on your desk after the game!" Gao Shen said solemnly.

Martin was so angry that he cursed inwardly, "You ****, you're too good at pretending!"

But with so many people watching, he could only put on a moved expression, give more encouragement, and even say that even if they lost the derby, it wouldn't damage his trust and support for Gao Shen.

Of course, Gao Shen knew that Martin's promise held no weight.

On the other hand, Butragueno, Floro, and others were unexpectedly paying more attention to Gao Shen.

They never imagined that this nearly twenty-five-year-old fresh graduate was actually a cunning little fox!

...

"You're too bold!"

On the way back to Valdebebas from the Bernabeu, Raul shook his head and smiled wryly.

But it seemed that his expression was quite happy.

In the past few years, superstars had always been the boulders pressing on his heart.

It was precisely because of the superstar policy that his status in the locker room had dropped again and again, and his position on the court had been pushed back, even playing as a defensive midfielder.

How could this make Raul, a striker and the golden boy, feel?

Gao Shen's remarks were a relief, but they also completely exposed the internal contradictions of Real Madrid.

He completely offended the superstars.

This press conference made Raul look at Gao Shen with admiration, but he thought Gao Shen was just an impulsive young man, especially considering what Gao Shen said on the way to the Bernabeu.

Raul was now beginning to believe that Gao Shen had really given up.

"You still have to be careful, especially..." Raul reminded.

Gao Shen understood and nodded his thanks to Raul, "Actually, they are not monolithic."

Raul was stunned for a moment, then understood the deeper meaning.

They are all superstars and foreign players, but who said that the interests of so many superstars are the same?

By the same token, do all local players have the same interests?

Don't Raul, Guti, and the others not get along with Salgado?

The same is true of the superstar groups. The Brazilian team and the English players do not necessarily stand together, and Zidane and Gravesen may not necessarily support Carlos and others unconditionally.

At this time, Raul realized that every word of Gao Shen had been pointed directly at the heart of the matter.

With this kind of vision and speaking level, no matter how you look at it, Gao Shen didn't seem like a young man who had just walked out of the school gate.

Gao Shen was also observing Raul, and he clearly felt that Raul was no longer as hostile to him as he had been the previous day.

Many people think that doing things depends on relationships, but they don't know that relationships can be created. To accomplish things, you must reach an agreement on key points.

Gao Shen had little friendship with the new chairman Martin, but this didn't prevent them from sitting down and discussing the future of Real Madrid now.

In the same way, Gao Shen and Raul also had many similarities.

Realizing this, Raul would start to try to accept Gao Shen, at least he wouldn't hold back.

This was a good start.

And Gao Shen also wanted to further deepen Raul's impression of him.

After arriving at Valdebebas, Gao Shen did not go to the first team training building with Raul, but went directly to the second team.

"Time is running out. I will transfer these young players to the first team in the afternoon."

Acting quickly, this further improved Raul's impression of Gao Shen.

...

When Gao Shen walked through the barbed wire fence of Valdebebas to the second team's training area, far away in Miami, USA, the former president Florentino, who had just stepped down from Real Madrid, was vacationing at a seaside manor.

Wherever he went, his personal assistant, Manuel Redondo, followed him.

At this time, Redondo had just finished a call from Madrid and was reporting to Florentino about the latest events in Madrid.

Florentino lay on a soft beach chair, basking lazily in the warm sun, feeling quite comfortable.

Although he kept his eyes closed the whole time, Manuel Redondo stood beside him, reporting seriously.

"My old comrade-in-arms has always been like this. He'll suddenly play his wayward cleverness, but he always thought no one could see through him. This time, even a twenty-five-year-old kid saw through him, haha..."

Florentino, still with his eyes closed, spoke in a calm tone, as if everything happening in Madrid was under his control, and no one could escape his grasp.

"You know, I've reminded him many times over the years that if he listened to me, the market value of his company would be several times higher than it is now. But he was always so willful, and this time, he thought he could get Bosque and Hierro back?"

Florentino sneered, "Naive!"

"Then what do we do now?" Redondo asked.

"It's not necessarily a bad thing to let that Chinese kid make a fuss. Some people really need a lesson, otherwise they think my favor is a given. If they don't know how to restrain themselves, after this season, they should be hit hard."

Redondo nodded silently, keeping it in mind.

"Martin must be regretting his decision now. He's lived most of his life and got outsmarted by a twenty-five-year-old kid. The more he gets involved, the more he regresses, but the situation at Real Madrid is not something a child can solve. Martin still wants to get Bosque back, but he can't do it."

Redondo continued to nod silently.

"His gamble is doomed to fail!" Florentino said firmly.

Bosque's grievances and entanglements with Florentino were long-standing, so much so that Bosque once said he would never return to Real Madrid if Florentino did not step down.

Now that Florentino had stepped down, the new chairman, Martin, happened to be a good friend of Bosque. The most recent title of Real Madrid was won by Bosque in 2003, so the voices on the Real Madrid board of directors for Bosque's return were high.

But Florentino couldn't accept this.

"Calderon has been a bit conspicuous on the board of directors recently," Redondo reminded lightly.

"He's also a guy who can't stay out of the limelight. I guess he wants to see if he has a chance this summer."

Redondo nodded, "Should we arrange for someone to talk to him?"

"No, let him go. He can't cause much trouble. If he wants to come out to elect the chairman, he's not qualified," Florentino dismissed the member of the board of directors.

"I'm actually interested in that Chinese boy now. Are you sure he's a fresh graduate?" Florentino asked curiously.

"Just graduated last summer, majoring in sports at Loughborough University, UK."

"That's kind of interesting. He might be the most unexpected surprise in the past day. He has vision, courage, and guts. That's really good!"

After speaking, Florentino laughed.

Redondo was a bit surprised.

Who is his boss?

The leader of a top-ranked construction group in the world, well-connected in both political and business circles, and a master who controlled Real Madrid single-handedly. When had anyone seen him give such a high evaluation to someone else?

"Should I arrange for him to meet you when we return?"

Florentino waved his hand, "No need, he won't last a few days."

His tone suggested he had already seen the day Gao Shen would be kicked out of Real Madrid.

...

"Wow, Gao, you're too courageous!"

As soon as he arrived at the second team's training building to find Fernando Lucas, the Spanish youth gave him a thumbs up.

"Declaring war on the superstars, this is the first time in six years!" Lucas laughed.

Gao Shen seemed very calm, as if he had just done something trivial.

"What's the reaction in the locker room?"

"It's very strong. Some people are furious and cursing. Some are calmer and are working together to study countermeasures. Most people are still waiting and watching. They are very sensitive right now."

After listening, Gao Shen nodded. After Raul returned, these local players should adjust their positions

This made Gao Shen breathe a sigh of relief.

In fact, what he said at the press conference was like casting a vote for Raul and the local players.

According to his original plan, he intended to talk to Raul in the morning. But then the chairman suddenly decided to hold a press conference and even asked Gao Shen to attend. Since he was already with Raul, he adjusted his plan and staged the press conference accordingly.

Plans can't always keep up with changes. The key is to control the direction and adapt as needed.

Gao Shen's strategy was to win over the local players. First, they were closer to the fans. Second, the Brazilian contingent was unreliable and too self-willed. Third, it was about promoting youth training.

After making the chart yesterday, Gao Shen carefully listed which players in the team were worth attracting, which players should be suppressed, and which players needed to be appeased.

In the first team, he had no direct supporters and no foundation, so what should he do?

The Brazilian group led by Carlos was the first to oppose him, and their resistance was the strongest. However, their roles in Real Madrid were very prominent. For example, Ronaldo was currently Real Madrid's top scorer, and this was their biggest bargaining chip. So how to deal with it?

The great leader *** said that politics is about making fewer enemies and more allies.

If there are no direct supporters and no foundation, then find a way to attract a group of people. The Brazilian group is important but not the right approach.

Punishing them is impossible, and selling them is unrealistic. So the only option is to marginalize them, put pressure on them, and force them to relent.

Therefore, Gao Shen decided to promote youth players in their twenties to the first team.

Doing so would not only address these two issues but also cater to the local group led by Raul, killing three birds with one stone.

"By the way, Fernando, how is the head coach of the second team, Portugal?" Gao Shen asked suddenly.

Lucas didn't understand the purpose of Gao Shen's question, but as an intern with the second team, he was quite familiar with Portugal.

"Portugal's resume is relatively weak. In 1997, he coached the Real Madrid youth team for two years. In 1999, he coached the lower-level team Toledo, but his results were poor. At the end of 2003, he coached Cordoba for two months, and his results were also poor. The rest of the time, he has mostly been idle."

"It wasn't until December last year that the club promoted the second-team coach Corolla to the first team to put out fires, and Portugal found the opportunity to return to Castilla to coach."

After a pause, Lucas added, "He seems to cherish this coaching opportunity very much."

Gao Shen nodded lightly, understanding what he meant.

If he remembered correctly, Portugal also briefly served as Real Madrid's sporting director during the subsequent turmoil.

Gao Shen had made a lot of noise this time. With more players to be drawn from the second team, he still needed Portugal's cooperation.

This is a war, and he needs to unite everyone who can be united.