

Chapter 7

The car was filled with soft music, and young people were humming along to the melody of 1990s songs. Mhok stopped the car to get money to pay the installment of a second-hand car he had guaranteed for his sister. After Mhok asked to drive out to prevent the battery from aging, Day also came out with him. The two people started a short trip, but the trip had to end before the sun went down. This time they didn't have to worry about Day's mother scolding her, as she had just flown back to Milan to deal with some contract paperwork before she returned.

"Do you want to go somewhere? But it can only be nearby. If you go too far, your brother will suspect that we drove away." When the red light turned on, Mhok stopped the car and asked. After hearing this, Day shook his head and said there was no place in particular he wanted to go. In fact, he is no longer as opposed to leaving home as he once was. But since he hasn't gone out to see the outside world for a long time, he has nowhere to go. When the traffic light turned green, Mhok sped off. At this time, the young man heard a loud horn sound from behind, which seemed to be not far from him. He frowned, feeling a little confused, and the voice didn't mean to stop.

"Did we break any traffic laws? Did someone blow their horns to tell us to leave?" Day asked.

"No, I was driving normally. But the car behind us kept following us and kept honking its horn. Maybe our trunk door was not closed properly. I stopped to check." Mhok explained, preparing to pull over. Before Mhok could get out of the car, Day's car window was suddenly knocked, and someone shouted his name outside. Day's mood suddenly became very confusing and heavy, and he heard his name, and he would never forget that sound.

"Gee!"

Day opened the car window and couldn't believe that he would meet his good friend Gee again under such circumstances.

"Have you come back from the United States? I called you, but you didn't answer, and you didn't reply to my messages." Gee was a little emotional.

"I'm sorry, Gee. I have something else to do, I'm leaving first." Day tried to close the car window and escape.

"Day...what happened to you? Why didn't you tell me? Do you still consider me a friend?"

The word "friend" came out of Gee's mouth, causing the young man sitting in the car to stop. This word gave him a big shock. Day changed his mind and rolled down the window, trying to make eye contact with Gee as much as possible.

"Gee...I'm going blind."

This sentence instantly destroyed the barrier built between the two friends over the past year. Gee canceled her Grab order and took a car with Day to the university. During this time, the two friends had a chance to talk openly while Mhok listened quietly.

Day first experienced vision loss when he was competing in the men's badminton doubles match for the Singapore national team when his vision suddenly became blurred until it went completely black. He was later diagnosed with chronic keratitis and never returned to society.

"So how are you doing now?" Gee asked, reaching out to take Day's hand.

"There's nothing wrong with me. Even if I feel particularly painful, I still have to accept the reality. Life doesn't give me many choices." Day said in an almost self-deprecating tone.

"How can I help you?" Gee asked.

"Just don't be angry with me." The young man said from the bottom of his heart. He knows that escaping is not good, even his closest friends will be disappointed, but everyone has a time when they can't get out. Gee didn't answer but just held Day's hand tightly. That was probably the best answer between them.

"Does anyone else in the university know about this? What about August, your partner? Have you told him?" Gee asked when the car stopped at the university.

"He didn't know, I didn't tell anyone."

The young man stated that he did not want anyone to know about it except his family and doctors. And maybe Mhok, who's sitting here right now. His good friend Gee sighed, probably wondering who Mhok was, but didn't have the courage to ask.

"Do you want to go to the university together? They are cleaning the badminton club now, and the coach is asking the athletes to take their medals and trophies home. Do you want to go and see them? Your cabinet is full of awards."

A good friend of his and a teammate of his badminton team extended the invitation. Day thought quietly for a long time. Returning to college might mean running into a lot of familiar faces and his secrets will no longer be secrets. But thinking from another angle, he can't live in this dark world forever.

"Well, I miss the club a lot too."

Gee walks ahead and becomes Day's tour guide back in time. I don't know whether it's good or bad, but today is Sunday. There are very few people in the university and no one shows up. Moreover, the badminton club also sent people to participate in charity matches. His best friend expertly led the way, Mhok following behind. After walking for a while, Mhok went to the bathroom, while Gee and Day waited quietly in the corner of the school building. J asked quietly while laughing.

"Have you ever taken a closer look at what he looks like?"

"Gee, are you kidding? I can barely see anything with my eyes." Day laughed.

"You said before that you can still see it if you're close," Gee retorted.

"Then what do you want me to do? Get close to his face and look at it?"

The young man argued that he remembered only the outline of Mhok, like the sketch of a painting. He relied on his imagination to fill in the rest of the story to prevent him from feeling embarrassed when he recalled it later. To him, Mhok looked like a rough-looking man he had seen in movies about urban evil.

"He's really handsome, you know?" Ke said softly, "What should I say? Your Mhok brother is really handsome. I think he must be more handsome than you think. From the beginning, I was Think about it, why would such a person come to be your caregiver! His appearance is really very high-end."

Day's good friend sighed. Mhok happened to come back at this time, so they had to end the conversation. They walked together to the sports ground leading to the badminton club. The smell of boxing oil, sweat, and hot, humid air hit my face. It was the same place as before, nothing had changed. Day smiled unconsciously. He has been with the badminton court since he can remember, and it seems to be his second home. He climbed all the way to the position of the national team, but the sudden failure made him fall from the top of the mountain, even though he was only a stone's throw away from victory. "I thought you said you were a badminton player and just played casually at home, but I didn't expect you to be so professional.

Mhok said as Gee left to answer the phone. The two of them stood in front of the club, where they were waiting for someone to collect their trophies and medals.

"Oh, brother, do you know who I am? I am Danaiyanat Koprannaphakun, a national member of the youth badminton team. Almost all the trophies and medals in this room have my name, and everyone calls me the prince of badminton." Day said , showing a bright smile.

"Young man, you can keep a low profile."

"The young badminton prince doesn't like to belittle himself. Just go in, brother, and I will prove to you that I am not exaggerating."

Day pushed Mhok into the club. As soon as he entered the familiar environment, even though his vision was blurred, memories emerged like ripples, as if he could see every detail with his eyes. The corner at the back of the closet where he likes to sleep, the equipment box where he often sneaks his rackets, and even the conference table where he and his friends often place a barbecue grill remain unchanged. He has been denying his identity since losing his sight, but in fact, he can never escape his past self.

Day walked towards the destination in his heart, even with his eyes closed. An old cabinet stood solemnly to one side, filled with trophies and medals. He stroked it proudly until he touched a trophy at the top of the cabinet. All that was left of that trophy was an ear, and he still remembered it. He put his face close to the trophy, probably no more than a foot away, which was as close as he could get a clear view. His name is engraved there as evidence that he once lived a life full of hope and victory.

"Who did Day play with before, was it Gee?" Mhok asked, probably because he saw someone else's name on the trophy.

"Another friend, his name is August."

The young man replied, feeling confused inside. He competed with August, and they made it to the professional tournament together. And his sudden disappearance was like breaking August's wings suddenly, making him farther and farther away from victory. If compared to all the people in the world, August was the person he least wanted to see.

"That's it." Mhok accepted the answer, but he didn't quite know the story.

"I'll just take this one back."

Day said, picking up the trophy with only one ear left. As for why there was only one ear, it was because when they took the trophy back to the university to take pictures after the victory, everyone fought for it. He and August grabbed it together, but the trophy fell and hit the floor, and the coach got angry because of it. But that gave that game a different memory than other games.

"Let's go back. I'll call Gee later."

Day held the trophy in one hand and grabbed Mhok's arm with the other, preparing to leave the club. But when he raised his head, he noticed the shadow of a person in front of the club room door. At first he thought it was Gee, but it didn't look like it from the outside. Mhok politely asked the other party to give way, but the other party remained silent. Day felt a surge of anger wash over him, and although he could remember what the other person looked like, deep down he still hoped he was wrong. He didn't want to be so unlucky to "hit the jackpot" after returning to college for the first time.

"Day..where did you disappear to!"

That was the last thing Day wanted to hear, and a chill ran through him from head to toe. Mhok turned to him and asked in a low voice if he needed help, but he replied that he didn't. No matter what, this day would come, but it came so quickly that he had no time to prepare mentally.

"August...do you remember when I fainted during the competition in Singapore?" He used this as his opening remarks to his partner whom he had not seen for a long time.

"I remember very clearly that you disappeared after that day." August's tone was full of complaints.

"I have severe keratitis and now my vision is only 40 percent. The doctor said that after a while, I may be completely blind.

The room in the badminton club suddenly became very quiet, as if everyone present had forgotten how to breathe. Day couldn't pick up the emotion directly on his past partner's face, but something told him intuitively that August was confused.

"Then why didn't you tell me? Why did you disappear suddenly? Didn't you say that the two of us were best friends? Why on earth? You left me here alone, - don't tell me anything, Day! You told Me, I have been waiting for you for six months without finding a new partner. In order to wait for you to come back, I have lost so many opportunities as a badminton player. Day... you answer me!"

August walked right over, grabbed Day's shoulders and shook him back and forth, causing the trophy with their names engraved on it to fall to the ground again. Once, one ear of the trophy was broken because of the victorious laughter of the two of them, but today, the other ear may be broken because of the irreparable gap between the two.

"Do you think that because you are blind, I should forgive you...Day!"