

Losing Money to Become a Tycoon: Starting with Games

Chapter 512: The Secret Police's First Regular Meeting

Rui Yuchen casually picked up a pair of chopsticks and took a piece of pan-seared basa fillet from Fitness Meal 2.0, placing it into his mouth.

Next came bite-sized pieces of dragon fruit, egg, cherry tomatoes, corn kernels, purple sweet potato, shrimp, shredded kelp, and more.

Every time he stirred the salad slightly, he discovered another pleasant surprise.

After tasting it, Rui Yuchen realized that these ingredients hadn't simply been chopped and thrown together—they had all been specially prepared.

Take the shrimp, for example. The healthiest way to cook shrimp is usually to boil it in lightly salted water or stir-fry it with just a little oil. But the shrimp here had clearly been marinated beforehand, carrying a subtle, refreshing aroma.

The eggs were the same. They weren't just plain boiled eggs—they carried a faint fragrance of tea, yet weren't nearly as strongly flavored as ordinary tea eggs.

Street vendors who sell tea eggs usually reuse the same tea leaves over and over and add large amounts of soy sauce, making them far less healthy. But the Food Laboratory had clearly taken this into account. They had only lightly infused the eggs with flavor instead of soaking them for a long time.

After carefully preparing every ingredient before assembling the salad, the result was indeed a tremendous improvement in taste over Fitness Meal 1.0.

Before long, Rui Yuchen had finished everything on his plate.

The waiter cautiously asked, "Manager Rui, how was the taste?"

Rui Yuchen nodded.

"It's pretty good."

The waiter continued, "Then... can we start promoting it as Fitness Meal 2.0 across all our stores?"

Launching a new dish meant every branch's chefs would have to master its preparation and produce nearly identical results.

On one hand, they'd need to precisely control ingredient proportions and cooking times. On the other, each chef would need plenty of practice before they could consistently reproduce it.

Even after the recipe was distributed to every branch, it would still take some time before Fitness Meal 2.0 could officially be introduced at all the gyms.

Rui Yuchen set down his chopsticks.

"No."

The waiter froze.

After all, Rui Yuchen had finished the entire serving, which clearly meant he thought it tasted good.

Since it had already satisfied the requirement of being a delicious Fitness Meal, why was it still rejected?

Rui Yuchen didn't elaborate.

"This dish can be added to our regular menu."

"But as for what Fitness Meal 2.0 should really be..."

"I need to think about it some more."

He turned and left, leaving the waiter standing there in confusion as he cleaned up the dishes.

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After leaving Moyu Delivery's Store No. 1, Rui Yuchen wandered aimlessly down the street, passing one restaurant after another.

The aroma of freshly cooked food drifted out from the restaurants.

Although he was already about half full, the smells still tempted him.

"Fitness Meal has definitely become much tastier..."

"But somehow... it still isn't enough."

"Eating it once in a while would be fine."

"But eating it over a long period of time... I just don't think people can keep it up."

"No matter how delicious it becomes."

"Why?"

"It's not because it doesn't taste good."

"It's because... salad simply doesn't fit Chinese eating habits."

"And more importantly, it isn't something people feel they need."

"So what exactly are Chinese eating habits?"

"First, the food has to be hot. It needs warmth. Salad is cold, so people instinctively don't see it as a proper meal."

"Second, it has to be well seasoned. Bland flavors naturally trigger resistance and rejection."

"And finally..."

"There has to be plenty of meat."

"Most healthy salads satisfy none of these conditions."

"So although people constantly say they want to lose weight and live healthier, expecting them to eat healthy meals every single day as a way to slim down... 99% of them will eventually give up."

"Even if the healthy food tastes good, they still won't be able to stick with it because it goes completely against their natural eating instincts."

"Hmm..."

"This is a serious problem."

"A very serious one!"

"It might even affect President Pei's entire strategic plan!"

Rui Yuchen suddenly became alert.

From the moment he had accepted this assignment, he had already guessed President Pei's true intentions.

President Pei had been aggressively expanding Moyu Delivery because he wanted to guide consumers toward a healthier lifestyle, starting with their daily diet. At the same time, Tengda Group could use this opportunity to position itself early and lay a solid foundation for the future development of its various businesses.

Understanding this was exactly why Rui Yuchen had boldly opened stores at a frantic pace and constantly asked President Pei for more funding.

Because he knew that President Pei would fully support this strategy.

President Pei had also arranged for Moyu Delivery to provide Fitness Meals and bundle them together with Managed Fitness memberships, clearly intending to help customers achieve better fitness results.

Originally, Rui Yuchen thought the problem with Fitness Meals would be easy to solve. Couldn't the Food Laboratory simply make them taste better?

But today, he suddenly realized that improving the flavor alone wasn't enough!

If he hadn't recognized today that Chinese eating habits simply don't accept salad, and had gone ahead with rolling out Fitness Meal 2.0 to all the gyms, it could have led to very serious consequences.

Instead of helping the gyms, Fitness Meals might actually drive customers away.

The meals were certainly healthy, but they fundamentally went against the eating habits of most people. As a result, only those with exceptionally strong willpower could stick with them over the long term.

If the meals weren't bundled with gym memberships, it wouldn't be much of a problem. Once customers got tired of them, they could simply eat something else without affecting their fitness routine.

But because Managed Fitness memberships were directly bundled with Fitness Meals, customers who grew tired of the meals had no alternative. That would discourage many people from continuing their memberships.

As far as Rui Yuchen knew, a number of Managed Fitness members had already been "refunded" and left the program. How many of those departures were caused by the Fitness Meals, he had no way of knowing.

In other words, if he failed to recognize this issue and allowed the current Fitness Meal policy to continue, Managed Fitness might never become profitable, and President Pei's entire strategic plan could be seriously delayed.

Of course, that wasn't President Pei's fault.

President Pei was incredibly busy. How could he possibly micromanage every detail of what a Fitness Meal should look like?

Rui Yuchen felt that solving this problem was clearly his own responsibility.

"That was close... really close."

"I almost caused a major mistake at work because of this oversight!"

"If Managed Fitness ended up failing because of the Fitness Meals, wouldn't I become the one responsible? That would completely betray President Pei's expectations!"

Rui Yuchen immediately quickened his pace toward his office.

He planned to spend the next two days carefully organizing a proposal and correcting this mistake in the healthy meal program as quickly as possible.

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Saturday, May 7.

The gentle sound of ocean waves echoed beside Pei Qian's ears, gradually waking him.

It was part of the smart home system designed by Liang Qingfan. Compared to the harsh ringing of a traditional alarm clock, it was much softer and far less jarring.

Pei Qian originally wanted to keep sleeping.

Then he suddenly remembered that today was the day for the regular meeting with the management trainees.

Reluctantly, he reached over and tapped the transparent control panel beside his bed.

The floor-to-ceiling windows turned transparent, allowing soft morning light to pour into the room and fill it with a warm glow.

Pei Qian sat up, yawned, and glanced at the bedside mirror, which also functioned as a control panel.

There were faint dark circles under his eyes.

It had been two days since he moved into his new home, and he was extremely satisfied with it. In fact, he hadn't experienced the slightest discomfort adjusting to the new place.

The dark circles weren't because he had slept poorly.

They were because he had stayed up too late playing video games the night before.

It couldn't be helped.

The giant television was simply too irresistible.

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Shenhua Prestige, 16th Floor Conference Room.

Pei Qian swept his gaze across Tang Yishu and the other seventeen management trainees.

A strange sense of satisfaction welled up inside him, almost as though he were secretly doing something mischievous without anyone finding out.

It felt just like secretly skipping class in high school to spend the day at an internet café.

‘Could this be how my employees feel whenever they secretly work overtime?’

The thought suddenly crossed Pei Qian's mind.

‘Yeah... it's entirely possible.’

‘Otherwise, why would they be so obsessed with working overtime?’

Meanwhile, the management trainees looked at the dark circles beneath President Pei's eyes and silently concluded that he must have been working incredibly hard recently.

Pei Qian glanced at Tang Yishu.

Little Tang immediately understood and said, "Let's begin the reports."

The seventeen management trainees had already been assigned to different departments throughout Tengda Group.

They began reporting one after another according to the order of their seats.

Of course, where they were seated was completely random. Since everyone had to report eventually, it didn't matter who went first.

Pei Qian listened quietly, prepared to interrupt at any moment and ask questions.

However, just before the report from the fifth department—Managed Fitness—began, Pei Qian raised a hand and stopped the speaker.

"All four of your departments have established large-scale spending plans?"

"Including raising salaries, improving employee benefits, upgrading the work environment, and expanding or upgrading your businesses?"

Pei Qian looked at the four management trainees who had already finished their reports.

The four trainees each nodded.

Several of the others also spoke up.

"Senior, our department too."

"Dream Fulfillment Ventures as well."

"Terminal Chinese Web has similar plans."

Pei Qian froze, somewhat surprised.

When the first trainee had reported it, he hadn't thought much of it. Spending a little money here and there wasn't anything worth making a fuss over.

But so many departments all drawing up spending plans at the same time?

That was strange.

Pei Qian scanned the room and discovered that the only department without a similar plan was Against the Wind Logistics, headed by Lu Mingliang.

Why was that?

Had they all discussed it beforehand?

Against the Wind Logistics...

As Pei Qian pondered, his eyes suddenly lit up.

That's right!

The Tengda Group Cornerstone Award!

Previously, Against the Wind Logistics had received the Tengda Group Cornerstone Award, making every other department green with envy.

Clearly, the other departments had become jealous!

Could it be that they had finally understood the meaning behind the words engraved on the trophy? Had they finally realized that I was actually encouraging them to spend money?

Otherwise, why would they all independently come up with spending plans?

And these plans include things like completing the salary structure—that is, giving raises—as well as improving working conditions.

That means they've finally figured it out!

They must have felt dissatisfied.

They must have become competitive out of spite!

Excellent!

If these departments start competing over who can spend more money and lose more money, that's fantastic!

They deserve encouragement!

Pei Qian happily made a note of it.

He planned to introduce a new company policy on Monday to give them a helping hand, allowing them to burn through money even faster and reduce the burden on himself.

After finishing his notes, Pei Qian kept a straight face and simply motioned for the management trainee from Managed Fitness to continue.

Pei Qian had met him before and knew that he worked as a planner at Managed Fitness's flagship gym, where he had access to the gym's overall operating data.

"Senior, Managed Fitness is still operating at a continual loss."

"And this week, another four members received refunds."

Pei Qian couldn't help but rejoice inwardly.

Excellent news!

I knew Managed Fitness wouldn't disappoint me!

Keep it up! Try to persuade every single member to quit!

The trainee continued.

"Also, Coach Yaling recruited another sixteen members last week."

Pei Qian fell silent.

A question mark practically appeared over his head.

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Sixteen?

Another sixteen?

How many members had she recruited altogether now?

There was definitely something wrong with this person!

Pei Qian instantly became alert, though at the same time he couldn't help feeling secretly relieved.

If this had happened before, he would have remained completely in the dark, only realizing he'd been stabbed in the back after the consequences had already snowballed.

But things are different now.

President Pei had his Secret Police.

Every move you make...

Nothing escapes my eyes and ears anymore.

Pei Qian's gaze sharpened.

A troublemaker like this must be dealt with.