

## Losing Money to Become a Tycoon: Starting with Games

### Chapter 514: Moving the Studio to Jingzhou Was the Best Decision We Ever Made

As Pei Qian browsed through the forum posts, he couldn't help but fall into deep thought.

The players are seriously impressive.

Even if he was just copying ideas from other games, there was no guarantee he could outperform these players.

Although Pei Qian could recall many MOBA heroes from memory, every MOBA game's heroes were closely tied to that game's own mechanics.

For example, if you swapped heroes between DOTA, League of Legends, and Heroes of the Storm, many of their abilities simply wouldn't work because they conflicted with each game's underlying mechanics.

After numerous revisions, GOG had evolved into a MOBA unlike any Pei Qian remembered.

Simply transplanting heroes from other games wouldn't necessarily fit.

Moreover, all Pei Qian really remembered were the heroes' names, backgrounds, and general skill concepts.

The players' submissions, on the other hand, each had their own strengths.

Some came with gorgeous original artwork that immediately grabbed attention.

Some were based on Tengda Group employees or existing intellectual properties, making them especially appealing from a lore standpoint.

And even those that consisted of nothing but gameplay mechanics didn't seem any worse than the heroes Pei Qian intended to copy.

After thinking it over, Pei Qian decided:

I'll only submit one hero.

The players were so enthusiastic and invested.

They had clearly spent tremendous amounts of time designing these heroes.

Even though 99% of the submissions would never be accepted, they were still happily participating.

Since GOG had effectively become a crowdsourced game, it was better to let the players shape its future rather than turning it into another League of Legends.

That would be much more interesting.

If Pei Qian simply copied dozens of heroes into the game, only two outcomes were possible.

The first:

He would monopolize all the rewards, leaving nothing for the players.

That felt unfair to the community, who had supported the game so enthusiastically.

Granted, these players constantly gave him money—which was admittedly rather annoying—but he still couldn't bear to see all their hard work go to waste.

The second:

He copied a large number of heroes, but because they lacked proper artwork or didn't fit GOG's mechanics, they lost to player submissions anyway.

That would be even more embarrassing.

It also seemed rather disrespectful to the original designers of those heroes.

After weighing everything, Pei Qian concluded that he already had a comfortable life.

He could even earn hundreds of thousands of yuan simply by making the company lose money.

His circumstances were already far better than those of ordinary players.

It wasn't as though he couldn't afford food.

There was no need to greedily scoop up the entire 5% skin revenue share for himself.

Besides, the ongoing competition between GOG and IOI would also be affected.

If one wrong move prevented Lin Wan from ever returning to Dayak Corporation, that would become extremely awkward.

So Pei Qian stuck to his original decision.

He would only copy one hero.

As for which hero...

Of course—

The Happy Wind Man.

*(A tongue-in-cheek nickname among Chinese players for Yasuo.)*

Actually, the 5% skin revenue wasn't important at all.

He simply wanted everyone to experience what pure happiness felt like.

Yasuo's abilities were so familiar that Pei Qian could practically write them from memory.

After typing two lines, however, he paused, and deleted everything.

Yasuo's wandering swordsman image was simply too popular.

What if releasing him completely crushed IOI?

Then how would Lin Wan ever go home?

After careful consideration, Pei Qian realized that the early-stage 5% skin revenue probably wouldn't amount to much.

After all, GOG's skins were already inexpensive.

The first few skins were even being sold at 90% and 70% discounts.

Before GOG truly dominated the market, its player base wouldn't be particularly large, so that 5% wouldn't be worth much in the beginning.

However, a truly outstanding hero could dramatically improve GOG's reputation during its early days.

That could deal genuine damage to IOI.

So Pei Qian came up with an extremely crafty solution.

He would submit only the gameplay mechanics.

If the design team accepted them, they could come up with the hero's appearance themselves.

If they rejected the submission, only then would he consider copying over the hero's visual design as well.

With that decided, Pei Qian started typing again.

This time he omitted the hero's name and appearance entirely, writing only the complete set of gameplay mechanics.

"Done."

"Work finished."

"I wonder if the developers will accept it..."

"Whatever. I'll leave it to fate."

Pei Qian had his own GOG account, registered under his real identity.

However, unless the GOG development team deliberately investigated the account, they would never know that it actually belonged to him.

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Monday, May 9.

Pei Qian got up as usual and headed to Moyu Internet Café for breakfast.

He checked his phone.

The hero design post he had submitted still hadn't been accepted.

Of course, no other hero designs had been accepted either.

Pei Qian was pleased.

Because that meant the GOG development team hadn't worked overtime yesterday.

They would probably only see his submission after officially returning to work today.

There was no need to rush this anyway.

He could simply wait patiently.

After finishing breakfast, Pei Qian ordered a cup of coffee. As he leisurely sipped it while enjoying the midday sunshine, he couldn't help feeling content.

Life was truly comfortable.

*It would be even more comfortable if my employees could work harder at helping me lose more money.*

Just as he was enjoying his coffee, Ruan Guangjian pushed open the café door.

It was obviously his regular coffee-buying time again.

Seeing President Pei there, Ruan Guangjian looked a little surprised, but he quickly smiled and took a seat across from him.

"President Pei, what a rare sight."

He carefully studied Pei Qian's expression.

"It doesn't seem like President Pei has been affected too much by... that matter?"

Pei Qian looked puzzled.

"Which matter are you talking about?"

Ruan Guangjian observed him for a moment and confirmed that the confusion on President Pei's face was genuine, not an act.

"That makes sense. President Pei is so busy with work that you probably haven't had time to pay attention to this."

"I'm talking about A Better Tomorrow opening in overseas theaters last weekend."

The hand holding Pei Qian's coffee trembled.

It's over.

The inevitable has finally arrived.

First thing in the morning—No, first thing at noon—and he had to hear such terrible news.

The overseas release had taken quite a long time.

After all, releasing a movie internationally involved a complicated process.

So much time had passed that Pei Qian had almost subconsciously forgotten about it.

But with that single sentence from Ruan Guangjian, all the fear *A Better Tomorrow* had once inspired came flooding back.

He still remembered the night he attended the premiere.

That enormous bucket of popcorn had tasted like ashes in his mouth.

After his initial shock, Pei Qian became annoyed.

You really are bad luck, Ruan Guangjian! Every time I run into you, nothing good happens!

And what did the movie's overseas release have to do with him anyway?

If someone was going to stab him in the back, it should've been Huang Sibao or Zhu Xiaocao.

Who steals someone else's opportunity to backstab?

Just stick to drawing your artwork!

Why are you getting involved?

Suppressing his emotions, Pei Qian calmly asked,

"So... you're a fan of this movie too?"

Ruan Guangjian nodded vigorously.

"Of course! I'm a huge fan of A Better Tomorrow. I've watched it several times!"

"Besides, aren't many of the actors in Struggle the same extras who appeared in that movie?"

"In order to gather better reference material, I even bought the movie on a streaming site so I can rewatch it whenever I want."

Pei Qian fell silent.

You watched it multiple times in theaters... and then paid for it online too?

Are you afraid I won't die thoroughly enough?

He had nothing left to say.

He didn't even want to talk to this guy anymore.

Seeing President Pei looking dejected and completely uninterested, Ruan Guangjian was taken aback.

"Huh?"

"President Pei, didn't you say you didn't know A Better Tomorrow had opened overseas?"

"Then... judging by your reaction... how did you already know its overseas opening box office was disappointing?"

"Could it be... you guessed it?"

"You predicted this all along?"

The dullness instantly vanished from Pei Qian's eyes.

They lit up again.

"...Huh?"

A disappointing opening box office?

You mean foreign audiences didn't like the movie?

Wonderful!

What an unexpected blessing!

Ever since the overseas release had been announced, Pei Qian had been living in constant fear.

What if it made another tens of millions of dollar overseas?

What then?

But from what Ruan Guangjian had just said, it turned out he'd been worrying over nothing.

Apparently, Ruan Guangjian had been closely following the movie's overseas performance.

Knowing that the box office had been poor, he'd deliberately brought it up today because he wanted to comfort him.

*I misunderstood him.*

Pei Qian was overjoyed.

He immediately called over a waiter.

"Bring me a cocktail!"

"No—make that two!"

Good news like this absolutely deserved celebrating.

The two cocktails arrived quickly.

Pei Qian handed one to Ruan Guangjian.

Ruan Guangjian waved his hands.

"Uh... President Pei, I still have work this afternoon. I can't drink."

"That's fine. I'll drink them myself."

Pei Qian didn't mind in the slightest and placed both glasses in front of himself.

After hesitating for a moment, Ruan Guangjian finally picked one up.

"Forget it."

"I'll make an exception today."

"I'll have a drink with you, President Pei."

Watching President Pei force a smile despite his obvious disappointment, Ruan Guangjian suddenly felt a deep sense of empathy.

Because he understood that feeling all too well—

The pain of pouring your heart and soul into a work of art only for it to go unappreciated.

A Better Tomorrow was such a great film, with so much depth and meaning!

It had even been fully dubbed in English so that foreign audiences could enjoy a smooth viewing experience without having to read subtitles.

And yet, the movie wasn't particularly popular overseas.

Ruan Guangjian couldn't help feeling as though a priceless pearl had been cast before those unable to appreciate it.

After clinking glasses, the two of them each took a sip and set their cocktails down.

After a moment's thought, Ruan Guangjian spoke to comfort him.

"President Pei, I don't think you should take this too much to heart."

"Chinese films have always received very limited theatrical screenings overseas."

"Especially in recent years, the influence of Chinese movies in foreign markets has been declining year after year."

"And without the ability to launch massive overseas marketing campaigns, a low box office is only to be expected."

"At least, as far as I know, A Better Tomorrow has actually received good reviews from foreign audiences."

"So I don't think the problem lies with the film itself."

"It's probably just... some other external factors."

Pei Qian secretly rejoiced.

Who cares what the reason is?

As long as it isn't making money, everything's fine!

He had never expected Ruan Guangjian to bring him such wonderful news today.

Huang Sibao and Zhu Xiaocao were still undergoing their "shock therapy."

Who knew whether they were enjoying the "shock" or not?

They had probably already learned about the overseas box office as well.

But they hadn't reported it to him.

Well...

That was understandable.

After all, it wasn't exactly something worth bragging about.

After finishing his cocktail, Ruan Guangjian picked up the coffee the waiter had prepared for him and stood up.

"President Pei, I'm pretty busy with work, so I'll be heading back now."

Pei Qian nodded.

"Ah, alright."

"You've only just moved here, and you're already 'busy with work?'"

"It seems relocating the studio hasn't affected your work very much."

Pei Qian was in a good mood, so he casually made the remark.

Ruan Guangjian smiled knowingly.

"Oh, relocating the studio had a huge impact."

"Several companies in Shanghai that we used to work with have already stopped doing business with us because communication became inconvenient."

"But that's fine."

"President Pei, the projects you've given us are already enough to support our entire studio."

Pei Qian: ?

Still smiling, Ruan Guangjian continued, "We're responsible for the complete set of character illustrations for Struggle, as well as two new GOG heroes and numerous new skins every month."

"Our studio is now operating at full capacity."

"Thanks to you, President Pei, our rent and operating expenses have gone down significantly, while our workload has barely changed."

"And every single project we're working on now comes from Tengda Group—high-quality commissions."

"As a result, our studio's income has actually increased quite noticeably!"

"Moving our studio to Jingzhou was absolutely the best decision I've ever made!"