

Life at The Top – Chapter 1161

Roy's expression paled when he heard this.

Standing beside him, Gerry immediately understood that Jasper's words were actually directed at himself. After all, he had been in working in the industry for a long time.

His expression changed and Gerry smiled wryly at Jasper. "Mr. Laine, this restaurant has quite a few shareholders and Roy is one of them. I may hold more shares than him, but it wouldn't be right to just fire him."

"Hmm. You're right. There's no such thing as firing a shareholder." Jasper nodded understandingly.

Roy let out an internal sigh of relief when he heard Jasper's reply. At the same time, he also lost a bit of respect for the man. 'Looks like Mr. Laine isn't all that great. His identity's just slightly more formidable, but not unimaginably so.'

'See? Isn't Jasper also admitting that there's nothing he can do?'

'I'll just need to treat him to a meal after this to apologize. Then, we can all move on from this.'

With that thought, Roy could not help but feel gleeful again.

He looked at Tiffany secretly and his chest burned with desire.

'Turns out, this Mr. Laine isn't even that powerful. I'll give him room to back off then I'll secretly make this woman mine. There's nothing he can possibly do anyway once I've had a taste of her.'

Roy felt extremely excited when he thought of that, and he felt the urge to pull Tiffany into his arms.

Yet, he did not know that Jasper was aware of every minute change in his expression and gaze.

Scoffing, Jasper said, "Since you can't fire a shareholder, then you'll just have to close the restaurant down."

Roy was stunned when he heard Jasper as he looked at the man confusedly. He wondered if he had imagined the man's words.

Gerry's expression turned disgruntled, but he could not refute Jasper.

“Aren’t you going too far, Mr. Laine?” Roy grit his teeth and asked.

“A good number of shareholders invested a total of tens of millions to open this restaurant. What right do you have to close it down just like that?”

“The fact that I own the lot your restaurant currently rents,” Jasper replied calmly.

“No way!” Roy was in disbelief.

“F*cking dumb *ss!” Gerry glared at Roy and scolded, “Forget this shop lot, more than half of Gold Pedestrian Street is Mr. Laine’s property. Who the f*ck do you think you are? Do you know what trouble you’re getting yourself into?”

Jasper ignored the scolding Gerry was giving Roy and continued, “I’ll pass along my instructions later, after which, the JW Real Estate staff in charge of Gold Pedestrian Street’s property will come and terminate the contract with you.”

“We’re not leasing this lot to you anymore, so please close your doors and move out within three days.”

Roy was stricken and he stood dumbly in place. He shouted raspily, “No, no way! We signed a contract!”

Jasper looked at Roy's desperate expression and answered calmly, "Everything will be in accordance with the contract. I'll just pay you the compensation for breaching it."

"No, no. Don't!" Gerry was terrified. He did not dare to take this money from Jasper. "We'll close the restaurant immediately. There's no need to bring up the compensation fee at all, Mr. Laine. I'll talk to the other shareholders, we can't possibly take that compensation from you."

"We're at fault for this, and I promise that we'll give you a satisfactory response."

Gerry glared darkly at Roy as he said this. It was evident that Roy would have to come up with compensation for the shareholder's losses.

Roy understood what Gerry had in mind and he shuddered. Fear engulfed him.

He was just a businessman with a bit of extra money. There was no comparing him with Gerry and the others. He would go bankrupt in the blink of an eye if he had to compensate them for their losses!

At that thought, Roy exclaimed in terror, "Mr. Laine! Please forgive me, I'm really sorry!"

Life at The Top – Chapter 1162

Roy's tragic pleading did not evoke Jasper's compassion.

If it were any other person, Roy might bully them badly such that no one would pity them. At the end of the day, people like Roy would only take advantage of others' kindness.

Hence, it would benefit society to get rid of these people early.

"Enough! Stop shouting!"

Seeing that Jasper remained unaffected by Roy's pleas, Gerry did not dare to let the man continue. He glared and shouted at Roy, "What're you still here for? Get lost! There's no place for you to talk here!"

Roy did not dare to leave. Staying meant he still had a shred of hope, but his life would be over if he left.

Gerry saw through Roy's intentions and said coldly, "I'll give you a chance to leave, which you'll take if you're smart. Mr. Laine isn't the kind to kill you off."

“But if you choose to continue and anger Mr. Laine, then don’t blame me for turning against you, Pearce!” Gerry was truly frantic.

Only he knew the fear he felt toward Jasper.

Getting rid of the Haddock’s Chamber of Commerce’s Waterhoof City branch was one thing, but what terrified Gerry the most was the news he had received.

Norman and his daughter had sold all their property this morning and had taken the earliest flight out of the country.

Others might now know about this, but Gerry was well aware of this piece of information.

He also knew that Norman had contacted the little prince, and the Royal family, to protect his property.

The little prince had stood up for Norman as well. Despite this, Norman had been forced to leave

overnight.

The implications behind this terrified Gerry.

It meant that Jasper had met the little prince and the two had come to a compromise.

There was no way Gerry would know of the exact contents of the meeting, but he could clearly see that Norman did not get the protection he wanted.

Norman and his daughter might not have died, but Jasper had never intended to take their lives in the first place.

Therefore, from what Gerry could see, he believed that Jasper had forcibly made the little prince give in to him.

The terror Gerry felt when he found out that the little prince had stepped aside to give Jasper access to Norman was no less than the respect he had for Jasper.

If Roy continued to yap on and cause Jasper to divert his anger to himself, then Gerry would truly take Roy's life.

Roy shuddered when he saw the furious glare Gerry gave him. He clenched his jaw and remained quiet. Roy knew that he would not be allowed to live if he completely angered Gerry.

Utter regret filled Roy for being driven by sexual desires, as it had gotten him into real trouble now.

After the emotional rollercoaster he had gone through, Roy looked devastated as he kept his head down as he left.

Gerry turned to Jasper politely after Roy left and said, "This is all a misunderstanding, Mr. Laine. Really. How about this, since we've coincidentally met, how about I treat you to a meal, Mr. Laine?"

Jasper glanced at Tiffany and waved him off. "No need. I came here today to have dinner with my sister."

Gerry was a smart man and he immediately substituted 'sister' with 'lover'. He chuckled and turned to Tiffany, "What a pretty sister you have, Mr. Laine. I didn't prepare any meeting gift, but here, for you. I hope you like it."

With that, Gerry pulled out a diamond necklace from his breast pocket

From the exquisite packaging, one could tell that this might have been a gift Gerry had bought to win over a woman.

Tiffany had been in such a situation before, and shook her head with flushed cheeks. Then, she hid behind Jasper.

Jasper replied calmly, "You're too kind, Mr. Heron. Thank you for the thought, but there's no need for gifts."

Gerry let out a sigh of relief when he heard Jasper speak.

He was truly afraid that Jasper would hold today's events over his head. He would be in great trouble if that were the case.

He might have lost a bustling seafood restaurant today, but the restaurant was not completely his own. He had only invested a little bit of money in it, so he did not care much about the loss.

However, if Jasper made him an enemy, Gerry did not believe he would end up any better than Norman.

It was great that Jasper declined dinner since Gerry had come today to meet another distinguished guest. He would be troubled if Jasper decided to stay.

Gerry was about to say something when a group of people arrived.

These people were currently chatting happily among themselves.

In the middle of the crowd was a handsome man in his twenties, donning a sharp red jacket and wearing a silver shiny earring on his ear.

The group walked over, and Gerry's expression changed when he saw the young man. He quickly went over to greet him, "Mr. Chavez, you're here early."

'Mr. Chavez?'

Jasper was intrigued when he heard the rare surname, and turned to look at the group of people.

The young man by the title Mr. Chavez replied calmly, "Why? Do I have to tell you what time I arrive too?"

Gerry bowed slightly and quickly smiled. He replied, "Of course not. What I meant was that I could have met you downstairs if I knew the time of your grand arrival, Mr. Chavez."

At that moment, Mr. Chavez also spotted Jasper.

Despite being the first time the duo met, this Mr. Chavez seemed to recognize Jasper.

“Jasper Laine?” Mr. Chavez arched his brow and asked casually.

From Mr. Chavez’s reaction, Jasper knew that he had guessed the identity of this man correctly.

Prince Chavez, also known as the crown prince.

He was the heir, as well as the most important member, of Clear Seas, an extremely strong company among the country’s capitalist circle.

“Prince Chavez,” Jasper greeted calmly.

Prince chuckled and raised his hand to touch the earring on his left ear as he replied, “I much prefer being referred to as the crown prince.”

“Might as well use Your Highness, then,” Jasper commented.

“Haha,” Prince laughed out loud and said, “I have no qualms with that either.”

Prince’s arrogance could be seen in how he referred to himself.

“The last imperial dynasty ended long ago. There are no crown princes in the country anymore.”

Prince’s gaze turned sinisterly cold upon hearing Jasper’s remark.

“That depends on where we are. As long as I’m around, then there will be a crown prince!”

Jasper shrugged and replied, “This is a modern society where everyone has freedom of speech. You can call yourself a king if you want.

“Of course, but remember not to take it too seriously. It wouldn’t be worth it to get charged with the crime of dividing the country. You’re a law student, Tiff. What is the punishment for such a crime?”

Tiffany was familiar with her curriculum, and she immediately replied, “At least three years jail-time. If the circumstances are severe, the first offense can even be charged with life imprisonment.”

Prince's smile began to fade upon witnessing Jasper and Tiffany's coordination. His expression turned sinister as well.

Life at The Top – Chapter 1163

Prince stared at Jasper expressionlessly and said coldly, "Looks like rumors were right, Jasper. You are indeed very arrogant."

"There are many rumors about me but I always thought of myself as humble and cautious. I don't know when the word 'arrogant' began to be associated with me, but perhaps it's because people don't know me very well. I'm sure that once they get to know me, they'd find that I'm a really easy person to get along with."

Prince harrumphed at Jasper's claim and said, "Cut the nonsense with me. It's useless."

"Since you know who I am, Jasper, then I'm sure you know about the situation there too. So, stop playing dumb."

"I'll tell you straight up. I have my eyes on the online payment industry."

Then, Prince smiled and stepped out of his small crowd toward Jasper. Once he got close, Prince grinned wretchedly and said slowly, "You, get lost!"

Beside them, Julian narrowed his eyes at Prince's taunting words.

All he needed was a glance from Jasper, and Julian would crush Prince's head without hesitation, crown prince or king.

As far as Julian was concerned, no one was allowed to provoke Jasper.

Yet, Jasper only looked at Prince calmly.

Ever since he started his business, Jasper had been faced with countless enemies.

As he began to climb the ranks, the enemies he had to fight against also gradually grew stronger.

His enemy Fabian had already caused him a multitude of problems even though they had yet to meet.

His so-called ally, the little prince, posed a danger that surpassed anyone he met.

Prince, who stood before him now, was not an easy opponent to deal with either.

Jasper could tell there was a scheming man beneath all his arrogance.

Not that it mattered.

“We shall see, then,” Was all Jasper calmly replied.

Prince laughed out loud, yet his gaze was exceptionally dark.

“No one’s ever dared to steal what I wanted ever since I was a child. I’ve already got my eyes on the online payment industry, so there’s no way I’d let anyone else touch it. There are plenty of people vying to go against you, Jasper, but I’m not going to sink to their level just to get rid of you together.”

“Still, be smart and back out of the online payment industry. I have nothing against doing something many other people would like to see.”

Prince stared and sneered at Jasper after he finished speaking, then he turned his head away. "Let's go. It's dinner time."

With that, he left arrogantly.

Jasper narrowed his eyes as he watched Prince leave. A spark flickered in his eyes.

"Mr... Mr. Laine?"

Gerry's cautious tone caused Jasper to look over.

"Not going to serve Prince?" Jasper asked.

Gerry's expression was dark.

He had used all kinds of contacts and methods to finally seem of slight importance in front of Prince. The man was the distinguished guest he was supposed to be treating to a meal today.

However, after what had just happened, even an idiot could tell that Jasper and Prince were at each other's throats.

Gerry immediately felt as if he was being grilled over high heat. He did not know which side to join.

He was afraid that Jasper would direct his anger onto him, and terrified that Prince would be able to tell that he and Jasper were acquainted. The latter would get him into grave trouble.

Life at The Top – Chapter 1164

PART PROGRESS

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“Go ahead. What you choose to invest in is your own business.”

Jasper said calmly, then he ignored Gerry and left with Tiffany and Julian in tow.

Gerry stomped his foot as he watched Jasper leave. He felt the urge to slap himself.

Of all the times, it had to happen now. What a coincidence.

Prince and Jasper just had to become enemies, and the day he decided to treat Prince to dinner, Jasper just had to be there to find out.

Jasper who had no idea of Gerry's internal turmoil as he soon arrived downstairs.

"Jasper, did I end up causing you trouble again?" Tiffany saw Jasper's stern expression and asked softly.

Jasper snapped back to reality and smiled. "Not at all. There was some other issue, but it wasn't your fault... Are you hungry? What do you want to eat?"

"But we agreed that I would treat you," Tiffany whispered, "But we can do it next time if you're busy, Jasper."

"There's no rush. Work can wait, but we can't drag on the celebration for your first part-time paycheck. How about this, let's eat somewhere else." Jasper smiled.

Tiffany felt conflicted when she saw a gentle smile grace Jasper's features again.

"Alright."

All the words she wanted to say were condensed into one.

She was not an idiot. She could tell that the man from just now would pose great trouble for Jasper.

Still, Jasper had chosen to eat with her.

Tiffany told herself internally that this would be the first and last time she acted on a whim.

Julian followed the duo as they shopped around Gold Pedestrian Street, then went to a restaurant on the beach with a nice view and atmosphere.

It was not a cheap place to dine in. The three were frugal, yet they had ended up spending more than 400 Somer Dollars altogether.

Jasper had a small smile on his face as he watched Tiffany pull out money for the bill excitedly. Being considerate of the girl's self-esteem, Jasper did not try to help her pay for it.

The dinner came as a product of her desire to thank him, and it meant more than 400 Somer Dollars to her. Hence, Jasper did not do anything to kill the mood.

After dinner, Jasper had Julian drive Tiffany back to school. Jasper sent her to the entrance of her dorm before he walked out of Hoofmorn University.

Once he got into the car, Jasper's smile instantly vanished and he immediately called Hudson and Wayne.

Jasper did not say much and only told them one thing over the phone.

He had to pack their luggage and make their way to the airport immediately, where his private plane would bring them over to Waterhoof City overnight.

After that, the first private Gulfstream airplane parked in Nauritus City International Airport immediately departed upon receiving Jasper's instruction.

Its first stop was to pick Hudson up from the further distanced Cavern City, then it went to Hervey City to pick Wayne up. It was already two-thirty in the morning by the time the airplane arrived at Waterhoof City International Airport.

After that, Hudson and Wayne rushed over to the hotel from the airport, looking exhausted from the flight. It was three-fifty in the morning when they arrived.

On the other hand, Jasper was still wide awake.

In the study of Jasper's hotel room, he shook Wayne and Hudson's hands before everyone took their seats.

Jasper smiled and said, "Sorry for troubling you two into coming overnight."

Hudson had known Jasper longer, and he replied with a smile, "It wasn't much trouble, Mr. Laine. But I have to say, that airplane of yours is quite the vehicle. It wasn't too tiring coming all the way here."

Wayne, who was currently in his start-up stage, was more realistic and he went asked straightforwardly, "Is something wrong, Mr. Laine? Why did you call us over so suddenly?"

Jasper knocked on the table with his finger and replied, "Since you asked, then I might as well get straight to the point. This is a matter of life and death for Terizone and Abbylon."

Life at The Top – Chapter 1165

Both Hudson's and Wayne's expressions changed slightly upon hearing this.

Both of them knew that, considering his character, Jasper would not make a joke about something like this. Not to mention that he had flown both of them over from different cities with his private plane. It would be ridiculous for him to go so far just to make a joke.

Hence, Jasper's words had to hold significant meaning. Jasper exhaled softly and continued, "It's to do with payment."

Payment!

Wayne and Hudson frowned at the mention of this.

Payment methods were the most important aspect of online shopping platforms, so Wayne was no stranger to online payments. He also knew that he could not make his platform into something big no matter how good it was if they did not find a good solution for this problem.

"As things stand, the government has plans to standardize online payment; it will be implemented through policies soon. They'll most likely try to increase accessibility and standardize market behavior."

"This implies that the government is aware of the huge effect that online payment may bring, which is why they're setting a standard in advance."

“This involves many parties, and we’ve already got competition. If we’re not careful, our opponent will completely seize control of the online payment market. We’ll be in trouble if that happens.”

Hudson seemed fine when he heard Jasper explain this, but Wayne’s expression changed completely.

The main point of an online shopping platform was to have a huge number of products and a quick and convenient shopping method. From signing up on the website to choosing goods to communicating with suppliers, everything came down to paying for the goods.

If someone else were to dominate online payment, then he might as well close his online shopping platform.

“Don’t worry. Since we have the first-mover advantage, it won’t be that easy for competition to get rid of us,” Jasper consoled Wayne.

“But we don’t have much time now, so we have to take control of the online payment industry before the direction of the future has been decided.”

“I’ve thought about this before. We’ll take the online payment technology platform that Terizone Inc and Sena partnered to create, then integrate it with Abbylon’s shopping platform.”

“Then I’ll separate this segment and establish a whole new subsidiary for it. This subsidiary company will only take care of online payments, and it will be the most important company that will connect all of JW’s dot-com enterprises.”

Jasper’s words were not complicated, and since both Wayne and Hudson were experienced businessmen, they immediately understood what he meant.

This meant that all Internet companies under JW in the future would have business with this online payment company.

This company’s importance had instantly outshone any other.

It immediately became JW’s new core.

“JW Capital will own 70% of the new payment company’s shares. For the remaining 30%, I’m planning to split it between Terizone and Abbylon equally. JW Capital will maintain ownership and be the majority shareholder, but I plan to hand management rights over to both of you.”

Wayne and Hudson’s eyes lit up brightly when they heard this.

“I’ve thought about the specifics of management too, and I’ve decided to go with a co-CEO model.”

This co-CEO model meant that two presidents would hold the same level of authority in the company. Both presidents would be in charge of operating and managing the entire company together.

“For this co-CEO model, I’ve taken into account both your own positions and work. Unfortunately, it’s against my principles to allow you two to assume the role of CEO of this new company yourselves. However, the two of you can hand me your recommendations and I’ll personally assign them to the role.”

Jasper glanced at the two men and continued immediately, almost as if he knew what they were thinking.

If Terizone and Abbylon wanted to compete, it had to be through positive and friendly competition. Fighting internally would only result in friction and a waste of JW’s resources. There was no way Jasper would allow both conquerors like Hudson and Wayne to share the same chair.

That was a recipe for trouble.

Things would be much easier to deal with if the duo recommended their own men.

“I... don’t see why not.”

Wayne and Hudson shared a look before nodding and saying. They saw the effort Jasper had put into solving this issue.

This was indeed the best way to avoid conflict

There would of course still be arguments over authority within the new company for a co-CEO model, but that did not matter anymore.

The company’s ultimate authority still laid in Jasper’s hand, while the duo were not unreasonable rookies but rather people who knew their priorities. Conflicts over authority would still exist in the new company, but Jasper’s plan ensured that it would be limited to an acceptable level.

“As I said before, Abbylon and Terizone may both be subsidiaries of JW as its still the majority shareholder, but they are completely different companies. Needless to say, the two of you have completely different interests and demands. You can put your own interests first, but do not strain your relationship too much.”

Jasper was essentially setting a limit to the scale of conflict Abbylon and Terizone’s could have more than a decade into the future when two of them would be giants of the industry.

They could fight, only so long as it was within his pre-determined limits.

“Next, let’s talk about the specific technology bylaws and modus operandi. We have to come up with a realistic and implementable proposal tonight. We never know, I might have to hand this proposal up to the government for reference very soon.”

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Jasper knew that if the government wanted to devise a better access policy for online payment, that they would definitely ask for his opinion.

After all, he was the only person in the country who was operating an online payment company.

However, he did not expect everything to happen so soon.

The following day, Jasper had not managed to sleep for long after pulling an all-nighter when Vita’s phone call woke him up.