

Life at the Top Chapter 461

“This is getting interesting.”

Norman said coldly, breaking the silence. He got angrier the more he thought about it.

“You’re not paying, but you’re deciding on the address. You have nothing to lose, yet we are still supposed to listen to you? What kind of logic is this?”

After hearing what he said, Jasper replied matter-of-factly, “Well, you guys want to build this bridge in front of the South Bank, yet I’m still supposed to welcome you guys happily? What kind of logic is that?”

Norman flared up in rage as his expression morphed into one of anger. “Jasper Laine, don’t be an ungrateful wretch. The construction of the Southface River Bridge has been approved by the city government due to the benefits it’ll bring to the people. Does it not hurt your conscience to reject this project because of your own personal interests?” He questioned.

“I don’t understand what you mean,” Jasper said calmly. “The construction of the Southface River Bridge is a good thing. I expressed my support for it as well. However, I suggested a location that’s more suitable for the construction. Am I going against my conscience by doing so?” He asked.

“Alright, if that’s the case, then don’t mention the construction of the Southface River Bridge in front of me ever again. Even if you are going to build it, don’t even think of touching a piece my land on the South Bank. Do you think that you can construct this bridge without my approval?” He added.

Norman’s expression darkened. “Jasper Laine, you’re just making things harder than they need to be. Do you want me to force you to do so?” He spat angrily.

“Do you think that you’re capable of forcing me to do such a thing?”

The expressions on both Norman and Ian’s faces changed after registering his words.

Ian smiled and said, “We are all associates. There’s no need to ruin our relationship over a small issue like this. Why don’t we forget about the construction of Southface River Bridge for the time being? We can proceed after you guys settle on a set of conditions that everyone agrees on.”

“There’s no need to discuss things any further. Don’t think that you can monopolize everything here, Jasper Laine. Don’t assume that I will find it impossible to destroy your project in the South Bank,” Norman said in infuriation.

“So, you want to destroy my project?”

Jasper narrowed his eyes at Norman and said in a controlled voice, “In that case, show me your capabilities. I really want to see what other tricks you can come up with other than the shady business that you’re currently involved in.”

“Jasper Laine,” Ian called out. “Young people like you shouldn’t be so hot-tempered. No matter the circumstances, Norman is still a few decades older than you. You should be more courteous toward him. Otherwise, it’d make you seem like an overbearing person,” he advised.

“You’re right, Mr. Hull.”

A faint smile tugged at Jasper’s lips as he said, “However, I’m afraid that some people might have lived their few decades in vain. He seems to think that he’s the smartest person out there, so why should I bother with courtesy?”

His words caused Ian’s expression to darken as well.

On the surface, Jasper’s words were directed at Norman. However, he was chiding Ian implicitly as well.

Beyond angered, Ian smiled. "Alright, let's meet again then. I believe that the chance to meet will arise very soon. The project in South Bank will commence tomorrow. We will become neighbors!" He said in a frigid tone.

"In that case, I wish you prosperity," Jasper told the both of them.

Ian and Norman snorted and left in distaste.

After they left, the person in charge of the project from the neritic zone city government smiled bitterly at Jasper. "Mr. Laine, we are in a difficult position between both parties. Please understand that our jobs aren't easy either," he said.

Jasper smiled and spoke to him with utmost courtesy. "Of course I do. The higher ups are in a tough position as well. All that we can do is try our best to share some of their burden," he said.

"How about this? I'll go back and look into it. The construction of a pedestrian greenway along the south bank of Southface River in conjunction with the government's greening project would be a good thing for the environment and image of the provincial government. JW Real Estates will assume full responsibility on this project."

The person in charge's gaze lit up as he stared at Jasper in admiration.

He had seen many capable young people. However, it was his first time seeing a young man like Jasper who did things with a certain degree of constancy and pride, but not to the extent of arrogance.

He thought that Jasper would completely disregard him due to the prominence of the project on the South Bank. He could even refute some of the things the city government had decided on during his relatively hostile interaction with Ian Hull and Norman Gardner.

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However, Jasper did not do so.

He knew how to grasp the overall situation well and pinpoint exactly what the city government wanted.

A person like this was a true talent.

“Alright, I’ll tell everyone the good news at once. It’s getting late, so I won’t take up any more of your time.”

Jasper smiled. “Work is the priority. I’ll arrange for someone to drive you back,” he said.

Without the need for further instruction, Sean Tucker immediately gestured at a few of his smart-looking subordinates, and someone accompanied the person in charge out at once.

After the person in charge left, Sean told Jasper courteously, “Mr. Laine, you have such powerful methods of handling things. Take that person in charge for instance, I thought that you wouldn’t treat him nicely even if you chose not to point out that they were being greedy by trying to gain all the benefits without offending us.”

“They’re just doing it because it’s their job. He plays a minor role—the higher-ups are the ones who made the decision. Besides, the higher-ups tend to consider things from a holistic perspective, so they naturally wouldn’t care much about our benefits. It’ll be alright as long as we’re clear about what we can and cannot concede,” Jasper replied in an even tone.

“But Ian Hull and Norman Gardner were clearly targeting us this time around. Despite this, the city government still decided to give them the right to develop the north bank. I can’t help but get pissed off!” Sean complained angrily.

Jasper narrowed his eyes and looked at the undulating slopes of the north bank opposite the river. He suddenly smiled and said, “That may not be a bad thing.”

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Inside the hotel.

Crash!

Norman Gardner smashed a wine glass against the ground. His face was flushed red due to his extreme rage.

“F*ck it! Jasper Laine, that b*stard! Does he really think that he’s that important?!

“What did he mean by that? I lived a few decades in vain? How can an immature b*stard in his twenties say something like that?!”

Ian Hull looked at Norman, who was beyond agitated, and spoke calmly, “That’s enough, Norman. Being angry serves no purpose. Jasper Laine’s move was indeed something that we didn’t consider. Your anger won’t change the fact that we lost to him in today’s exchange.”

Norman unbuttoned the top button of his shirt. He took a few breaths before saying, “That’s why I’m mad about it. This b*stard is way too sly!”

“It’s alright. He just used some small tricks. We had never expected that he would agree to the construction of the bridge in the first place.”

Ian sneered, his gaze cold and hard. "We should just carry on with the original plan. Commence the development of the north bank immediately. On the other hand, find a way to mess with the South Bank!" He said.

"What about the person that I asked you to contact?"

Norman's anger seemed to reside as he thought of something. A smile formed on his lips. "I looked into it. Hero Company, which is owned by Mr. Cook, is JW Real Estates' cement provider, whereas Stellar Company is their steel provider. Meanwhile, they obtain other masonry and building materials from distributor companies in Andros," he announced.

"Stellar Company's steel and Hero Company's cement are both top brands within the industry. Jasper Laine is really willing to splurge on his project."

Ian chuckled. "Mr. Cook is from Haddock as well. I'll talk to him later on. As for Stellar Company, I recall that the vice president there is one of your associates, right? Can you talk to him?"

"We are as close as brothers. I can convince him easily!" Norman snickered.

"That's great. We should talk to all the other distributors in Andros as well," Ian said in satisfaction.

"I'll take away all of Jasper Laine's construction materials this time. Even if he gets his hands on something, they'll all be defective goods. Let's see how he intends to carry on with the construction after that!"

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“In Swallow Capital, Jasper Laine relies on the Laws’ support to show off in front of us. Let’s see how he intends to do so in the province! Without the Laws, there is no way that that b*stard and Dawson Schuler, that old scoundrel, is able to beat us!”

A hint of coldness flashed in Ian’s gaze as the corners of his mouth lifted slightly to reveal a devious smile.

“That’s right. This time, we must let Jasper Laine know that no matter how powerful he is, there’s always someone greater than him. Besides, he must pay several times over for everything that he’s done to us!” Norman responded.

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Meanwhile, Jasper met up with Dawson to tell him about the order of events that took place today after returning from the construction site.

“This is interesting,” Dawson said with a smile. He made a cup of tea for Jasper.

“My thoughts are the same as yours regarding the construction of this bridge. At best, this was just one of their tests. They never expected for us to agree to it in the first place.

“Besides, it’s impossible for the construction to take place without our agreement. They just wanted the Nauritus City Government to form a bad impression of us.”

Jasper replied calmly, “That’s why I proposed building a pedestrian greenway. The budget of the entire project should be around 10 million dollars. We can spend this money to get on the city government’s good side. After all, Nauritus

City is the provincial capital. We can't break off our relationship with the Nauritus City Government.

"Furthermore, this will effectively enhance the attractiveness of the entire project."

Dawson nodded and said, "That's right. You considered everything thoroughly. However, there's no need to pay it too much heed. After all, business is business. Anyone with a discerning eye can clearly tell that there is no reason to condemn us even if we disagree to it."

"I'm considering their backup plan," Jasper said while taking a sip of his tea. "They won't let this go so easily," he added.

"It's better to lay low for now.

"Although they're taking action now, we have a larger chance of winning. They should be more anxious than we are. It would be the best if we didn't do anything right now," Dawson suggested.

"After the construction ends in a few months, it'll be too late for them to do anything."

Jasper nodded. Dawson's thoughts coincided with his.

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In the Province General Hospital, Wendy brought some fruits into the intensive care unit ward.

Julian, who was looking after Cathy, got up once Wendy entered the room. "Ms. Schuler, why are you here?" He asked.

Wendy chuckled. "I was busy during Cathy's surgery, so I didn't have time to visit then. I came over to visit her now that her surgery is over," she said.

Wendy put down the fruits and took a seat on the chair that Julian had pulled out. Cathay opened her eyes weakly to look at her. "How are you? Are you feeling alright?" She asked Cathy.

A bone marrow transplant was a major operation. Cathay had just woken up not too long ago. She still could not speak, so she could only nod her head slightly or use her gaze to express her intentions.

"The doctor told us that the operation was a success. She can be discharged from the hospital after being hospitalized for observation for around half a month," Julian explained to Wendy.

Julian's eyes were red-rimmed. He bowed deeply to Wendy. "Ms. Schuler, you and Jasper are our saviors. Nothing we do will ever be enough to repay your kindness," he said.

"Don't say something like that. Jasp and I both truly admire your capabilities, Julian. I still need you to take good care of Jasp on my behalf," Wendy said, implying that there was no need for Julian to act so courteously.

"Furthermore, Cathy has been helping out in the company all this while. I'm well aware of her capabilities. Her work efficiency was simply affected due to her health problems. After Cathy gets discharged, she can officially join the company. I've already prepared a position for her," Wendy said.

Julian nodded gratefully. Although he was full of gratitude, he did not know how to express it due to his introverted nature. He then caught sight of the apple beside him. "Ms. Schuler, wait for a minute. I'll wash an apple for you," he said immediately.

Just as Wendy was about to say that it was not necessary, Julian picked up the apple and ran out of the ward.

Wendy smiled and shook her head. She knew that this was Julian's way of expressing his gratitude. If he rejected him, he may feel hurt.

Soon after, Julian returned empty-handed. His expression was slightly solemn.

“Ms. Schuler, did you offend anyone lately?”

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Stupefied, Wendy responded, “No, I’m always either at the company or at home. My life revolves around these two places. How could I offend someone? What happened?”

Julian’s expression became more serious. However, he was a smart man. He knew what he could tell Wendy, and what he could not. He smiled and responded, “It’s nothing. I was just asking. I dirtied the apple just now, so I’ll take another one. Wait for a moment.”

Julian picked up another apple. He then turned around and left the ward.

Wendy’s mind wandered as she watched Julian’s silhouette.

After walking out of the ward, Julian pulled out his phone and called Jasper immediately.

“Jasper, it’s me, Julian.

“Ms. Schuler came over to the hospital to visit my sister...Yes, her surgery is over...Yep, it was a major success. Thank you for your concern, Jasper...

“Jasper, I discovered that someone was stalking Ms. Schuler just now. That person was extremely alert. He ran away once he noticed me. I was worried that they had something else up their sleeves, so I didn’t go after him and came back to ensure Ms. Schuler’s safety.”

Jasper had just bid Dawson goodbye when he received Julian's call. He was on the way home at the time.

After listening to what Julian said, Jasper asked the driver to head over to the Province General Hospital immediately. "You made the right choice. Don't do anything for now. I'll head over right away. Let's talk after I arrive," he told Julian.

When Jasper arrived at the hospital, Julian was guarding Wendy closely in the ward.

"Jasper," Julian called out as he walked in front of him.

Jasper nodded as he patted Julian on the shoulder. He turned around to smile at Wendy and then walked in front of Cathy.

"Don't say anything. Just lie down and rest," Jasper said. He leaned down to press her back onto the bed after seeing her struggle to say something.

"You don't need to think of anything else. Julian is working by my side now. We have a pretty close relationship. Wendy told me that you have quite the talent in management as well. After you recover, I intend to let you lead the company's logistics department.

"This position comes with grueling responsibilities, so you must get well soon."

Jasper told her this in a joking manner. He then turned around to face Wendy. "Why are you here?" He asked.

"I should be asking you that, right?" Wendy asked as she cast a glance at Julian. Julian must have discovered something. He must have hid it from her and told Jasper instead.

"I just stopped by on the way to pay someone a visit," Jasper said with a smile.

“You’ve been so busy these past few days. I was afraid you’d forget, so I came over to pay Cathy a visit on behalf of the both of us,” Wendy explained.

Jasper nodded and said, “Wait for me here. Julian, let’s go out for a smoke.”

After speaking, Jasper attempted to walk out of the ward.

“Stand right there,” Wendy said, wrapping her arms around him. She looked Jasper in the eye and said, “You rarely smoke. If there’s something, you should just tell me face to face. Am I not allowed to know about this?”

Jasper smiled at her bitterly. He knew that there was no way he could hide something from the brilliant Wendy Schuler.

Although Wendy rarely expressed her opinions in front of Jasper, she was the one who made most of the company decisions when he was not around.

She was skilled in business management. Since she was capable of running a large company well, it went without saying that she was not someone that could be fooled easily.

After flashing a meaningful glance at Julian, Jasper took his place by Wendy’s side. They were not going to talk outside anymore.

“Ms. Schuler, I just found out that someone was stalking you. There were at least three people. They exhibited a high degree of professionalism, and they seemed to be imbued with a strong sense of purpose,” Julian said.

“They exhibited a high degree of professionalism?”

Jasper’s brows knitted together once he heard what Julian said. He replied in a low voice, “Tell me exactly what happened.”

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In a hotel within the province.

Ben Hull was resting on the bed in a suite that had been converted into a temporary ward.

His complexion was terrible after undergoing two operations. However, his gaze was even more terrifying.

Lisa Gardner and a man in his thirties, who looked a lot like Ben, were in the room as well.

This man was Hans Hull. He was Ben's uncle.

Hans' parents bore him at a relatively older age, so he had been spoilt since he was young. He had started looking for women when he was a teenager, and now that he was in his thirties, he had achieved nothing except for establishing himself as a renowned playboy.

Hans' complexion was pale due to his constant indulgence in debauchery all year long. His body had long been a hollow shell that was dominated by women. His gaze shone as he stared at the photographs of Wendy Schuler in his hand with a lustful gaze.

"Are you all rubbish?" Ben yelled at a man standing by the door.

"The Hulls spend so much to keep the lot of you alive. If it weren't for the Hulls, you would all have died from hunger on the streets. However, you can't even manage to follow a normal woman. You even got discovered by them. Why are you so useless?!"

Ben started coughing violently after yelling at the man due to his overwhelming rage. He had a hideous scowl etched on his face.

Lisa sighed. "Don't get all worked up, Benny. The doctor said that you have to control your emotions now," she said.

A spiteful and vicious expression formed on Ben's face. "This bunch of rubbish can't even follow a mere woman around. How could I not be angry?" He asked.

The man standing by the door looked extremely guilty. "Sorry, Young Master. We didn't expect a professional to appear in the ward. That person is really skilled. He saw through my disguise almost immediately. I had to leave first in order to not alert them," he explained.

"Aaron, you've been with the Hulls for a decade, right?"

Just then, Hans finally lifted his gaze away from the photograph of Wendy Schuler in his hand unwillingly. He raised his head to speak to the man standing by the door.

Aaron nodded and replied, "Yes, Second Master, it's been exactly ten years."

Hans snickered. "You know me. I can't let them get away with bullying my nephew. Moreover, I really like the woman of the man that bullied my nephew," he said.

"That's why I don't want to listen to any of your excuses or explanations. I'll give you one more chance. I want to see this woman lying on my bed in three days' time. Can you do that?"

The horrifying image of Julian flashed across Aaron's mind. Although the two of them had never gone against each other before, he knew a master when he saw one.

Aaron could tell that Julian was definitely a powerful fighter just from his physique and gaze.

He knew that he could not win against a master like him if he went against him alone.

However, Hans' frigid gaze caused Aaron to grit his teeth harshly. "Don't worry, Second Master. This time, I definitely won't make any mistakes!" He exclaimed.

Hans nodded after getting a satisfactory response from Aaron. "That's a good attitude. I don't care about the method, I only care about the results. You'd better not disappoint me," he said.

After speaking, Hans sneered coldly and gestured for Aaron to leave the room.

Hans stared at the photograph in his hands after Aaron left the room. "Ian and Lisa, the both of you have bestowed a huge gift upon me this time around. The moment I saw her, I felt like I had fallen in love," he said.

Lisa cast a disgusted glance at Hans. Any woman with a decent mind would stay as far as possible as they could from a man like Hans Hull.

Nevertheless, in name, Hans Hull was still her "distant relative". Therefore, she could only bite the bullet and tell him, "As long as you like it, Uncle."

Hans guffawed loudly. "I like it! I like it way too much! I've had my way with so many women that I'd thought that no woman would be able to shock me anymore. However, the first time I set my eyes on her, I felt that all the women that I've had in the past were all garbage!" He remarked.

Ben smiled. He did not seem to mind at all.