

Life at the Top Chapter 496

At most, the Southface River's North Bank project was an unexpected win for Jasper.

With it, he would attract more attention to the South Bank project, and the villa district in the North Bank would also be greatly anticipated in extension.

One could imagine that once the South Bank became the economic center of the province, the North Bank's villa district on the other side of the river would thus become a place where the top wealthy people in the area, or even the entire Southeast Province, would gather.

It was the same piece of land, yet it churned out completely different results in the Hull family's and Jasper's hands.

Not that the Hulls had not thought of turning the North Bank into a villa district. Since the Hulls had managed to make a name for themselves among Haddock's businesspeople and even found their footing in Waterhoof City, Jasper had never taken the Hulls to be idiots.

"The main thing is that both our families have different goals. The Hulls plan to develop the North Bank mainly to pick on our development in the South Bank. That's why they decided on a business center plan like the South Bank to compete with us. They were only trying to overwhelm our project in the south.

"But with the North Bank's development also up to us, we can have a business district in the south and a wealthy residential area in the north, so to shift the focus onto the Southface River. With developments on both left and right of the river, we'll create a high-end district within Southeast Province."

Jasper and Dawson came to a tacit agreement.

The North Bank project had thus fallen into JW Real Estate's pockets.

"But the most important thing right now is to completely destroy the Hull family," Jasper spoke calmly as he looked at the lush green land in the villa's backyard.

"I'm afraid that's something we can't do on our own."

Wendy had already retired for the night, and Jasper had sent Julian out on an errand. Dawson was the only one by his side.

Hearing Dawson, Jasper replied calmly, "Undoubtedly. After all, our power only goes as far within the Southeast Province, and our influence will only lessen once we're outside.

"To completely crush the Hulls, we'll need to get into Waterhoof City. That's where they've set up camp. They'll be the hosts there while we'll be their guests. It'll be much more difficult to follow out with our plan over there."

Dawson furrowed his brows. "With the information that we have now, the Hulls have completely given up their traditional business of tea-making within the country these two years and are focusing all their manpower into import and export trade."

"The economy of the country has been flourishing these years and there's a lot of goods with more demand than supply. They've earned a lot more from that, but there's still no increase in the supply of said goods. That guarantees the wealth of people working with import and export trade," Jasper spoke calmly.

That was the truth. According to his memory from his past life, the following eight years since the new millennium were classified as the golden eight years of the country's import and export trade.

As long as one had the connections to import goods from overseas, then even idiots could earn money without doing anything else.

Such a profitable business was then greatly sought out and its wave only receded when the Mainland started to use the real estate industry and railway-like foundational developments as its pillar to divert attention to domestic demand, bringing the country on a path of infrastructure frenzy.

“I don’t think there would be anything I could do if they’re making a fortune in a different industry, but I might have an idea if this is the import and export trade we’re talking about,” Jasper replied.

Dawson looked at Jasper in surprise but did not comment on it.

After a series of events, he knew that Jasper was no longer the humble stock genius he knew before.

The man now had his forces and secrets, and this was all the necessary development a business hero had to go through.

Even this fight with the Hull family was an experience he had to go through.

If it were not the Hulls, it would just be another family by another name. If it were not because of Wendy, then it would be due to some other reason of the sort.

No hero made a name for themselves with peace. The birth of a new force came with the downfall of a few, if not many, old forces.

“As long as you have a plan, then I won’t give too much input on it. Like I said, do what you think is right, and ask if you need it,” Dawson told Jasper.

Jasper nodded seriously. “Got it.”

Smiling, Dawson clapped Jasper’s shoulder and stood to leave.

Dawson had a change of heart after this incident for he realized that he did not have many opportunities to spend time with his daughter.

Perhaps it was to make up for it, or perhaps so that he could watch over Wendy as she recovered from her emotional trauma, but as long as he was free during these two days, he would spend time with Wendy.

By doing so, he had also managed to find time for Jasper.

Jasper was deep in thought for a moment after Dawson left. He decided to call Zachary who was far away in Harbor City.

With Zachary, there was no need for Jasper to speak too politely or apple-polish. He went straight to the point. "Uncle Law, would you be interested in doing a business in the Mainland that guarantees at least 500 million Somer Dollars per year?"

Dawson was right. They were not strong enough to completely destroy the Hull family themselves.

This was not called having an inferior complex but rather having a clear understanding of reality.

Not to mention that it was no easy feat to destroy the Hull family in such a short time while ensuring that the Hull family had no chance to fight back.

Jasper never had the plan to fight them alone with his bare hands.

It would be a shame not to use the resources the Law family could provide.

"What's the plan?" As expected, Zachary's interest was piqued by Jasper's proposal.

"As of right now, the Harbor City Group is fighting both openly and in secret with the local factions in Swallow Capital. It's going to be a long war, so there won't be any sign of wins or losses for a while.

“The part where Harbor City lacks the most is that they have no roots in the Mainland, so I’ve come to provide you a place where you can set foot in the import and export trade. Do you remember the Hull family, Uncle Law?”

Jasper smiled brightly and confidently.

Jasper alone was enough to pull the Law family into a partnership.

However, Jasper was still very aware that the Law family was not his. He could not take advantage of all the help they provided if he wanted to maintain this working partnership with them.

Everyone would only be satisfied and happy if both sides reaped benefits and rewards from the partnership.

Zachary smiled. “Of course, I do. What do you have in mind?”

“By getting rid of the Hull family, there’ll be an empty spot in the import and export trading market. The Law family can take all of that since I’m not interested in that industry. But I want all of the Hull family’s wealth!”

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Why was the import and export industry so profitable within the country now?

Firstly, it was because there was a lot of demand in the Mainland, and there was no worry that the imported goods would not be sold out.

Secondly, it was because of the unique policies stemming from unique national conditions.

Due to issues in the past, most of Harbor City's goods were duty-free. After the handover, the Mainland had then written Harbor City a very generous tariff treaty.

Thus, most businessmen in the Mainland who profited off import and export trade would have their goods shipped to Harbor City first and then sent into the Mainland as Harbor City goods."

By doing so, exploiting such a loophole of a righteous policy resulted in a 15-25% discount in taxes.

"The Hull family has placed most of their focus into the import and export trade, and the method they use is more or less what everyone else is doing too. They import the goods to Harbor City and then ship them to the Mainland. Doing this, they've managed to dominate the Mainland's market while paying an extremely low amount of taxes."

Jasper had known the inner working of the Hull family like the back of his hand.

"To get rid of the Hull family, attacking them from the Mainland would only give adverse results. The easiest way to do it would be to attack them in Harbor City, and I believe taking goods from a few ships in Harbor City shouldn't be too big a problem for the Law family, right?" Jasper smiled.

Pacing in his office, Zachary began to believe that Jasper's plan was doable.

"Not at all. But I'll have to look into how the Hulls deal with customs here in Harbor City before I can decide on a more solid course of action."

Jasper smiled. "It'd be nice if you could do it and give me an update as soon as possible. I'm ready to act anytime on my part. We should coordinate our attacks so that the Hull family are at loss as to who they're supposed to defend against."

Zachary fell silent for a moment. "What did the Hulls do to offend you, Jasper?"

Jasper replied calmly, "I won't stop until I've completely defeated this mortal nemesis of mine."

Zachary's footsteps came to a halt. Jasper had always been a gentle and humble man, so it was extremely rare to hear such ferocious words from him.

However, it helped Zachary understand Jasper's determination. In his mind, he increased the importance of this fight.

"Alright, I'll work with you on this. I'll update you right away once I've investigated things on my end. Oh, and I'll send Henry over to you as well, then. He should be done with his work over in Swallow Capital. It's best if you have one of us with you."

Jasper gave it some thought and replied, "Okay, then. I'll contact him directly after."

Zachary smiled. "You're not just representing yourself here, Jasper. You have the Law family behind you ready to move together. You can be a little braver, Jasper. Since us Laws have already invested in you, then there's no way we'd change our stand just like that."

Jasper smiled. "With your assurance, Uncle Law, then I see no need for me to worry about it anymore."

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Waterhoof City, in the Hull family's house.

Pungent smoke swirled within the study that was much larger than any bedroom with nowhere to go.

Ian's expression was livid as he sat in the study. There was a cigarette between his fingers, burnt halfway through.

The ashtray beside his hands was already filled to the brim with cigarette buds.

Sitting opposite him was Norman, who was also fuming with anger.

“That little brat! He has no respect for people at all!”

Norman slapped his hand against the study desk heavily, his expression dark and sinister.

“That’s a whole loss of one billion Somer Dollars! That’s a good few years of hard work even if we split the loss between both our families!”

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“There’s also been news from the Southeast Province this afternoon, saying that JW Real Estate has officially taken over the developmental rights in the North Bank from the city’s government!”

“He did what? Who the f*ck does he think he is?!”

“We spent so much money to take over it and we even did the groundwork but now you’re telling me we’re just going to give it to the f*cking brat for free?!”

Hearing Norman’s continuous complaints, Ian clenched his teeth and shouted, “Enough!”

“What, do you want me to watch Hans and Benny go to prison even though they’re mentally unstable and crippled now?!” Ian glared at Norman indifferently and questioned coldly.

“If this is about your 500 million loss, then I’ll just pay you back in the future!”

Norman was stunned. Seeing how Ian’s gaze was void and devouring, he immediately suppressed the ire within him. He pushed his displeasure away to speak, “You know that’s not what I meant.”

With a harrumph, Ian spoke, “I know that you’ve lost a lot of money, but there’s nothing we can do about this. He got ahold of Benny’s and Hans’ Achilles heel. Don’t forget that the Southeast Province is their base. Pulling out was our only option.”

“So we’re just going to forget it like that?!” Norman asked indignantly.

“No way! Ignoring my dignity and the money we lost, I’m still going to take revenge for what he did to Hans and Benny if it’s the last thing I do!” Ian clenched his teeth and stood up, extinguishing the bud of his cigarette harshly on the ashtray.

“What do you have in mind?” Norman asked.

Ian walked over to the window and opened it with one hand.

The fresh and cool wind blew into the study and immediately cleared the stuffy atmosphere inside.

“I’m using every single resource I have on hand, and I only have one objective—Jasper’s company. Then, I’m making a trip to Suesville.”

Ian’s words lifted Norman’s spirits.

Suesville was right beside Waterhoof City, and most importantly, it was where Haddock Chamber of Commerce’s spiritual leader, Old Master Hurlbutt, resided.

“Do we need Old Master Hurlbutt just to deal with Jasper?” Norman asked.

He thought that Ian had lost his mind. Old Master Hurlbutt was Haddock Chamber of Commerce's only remaining veteran. He was their true spiritual leader.

Not to mention that Old Master Hurlbutt was an old man who had retired long ago. There was no way Gale would help the Hull family deal with Jasper.

Ian scoffed. "Do you know why our plan to target Jasper failed?"

Norman frowned and replied hesitantly, "Because Hans and Benny... were too rash?"

Considering Ian's feelings, Norman did not dare to speak his true inner thoughts.

He could not say aloud that those two idiots were morons doomed for failure!

"No. Disregarding the two of them, do you remember how fast it took and how easy it was for Jasper to deal with us targeting his building materials? Since that moment, our plan had already failed," Ian replied darkly.

Norman pulled out a cigarette slowly and lit it, falling silent and into thought.

"I've been thinking about it over and over. I realized that the reason why our plan to target Jasper failed is that we had been taking him too lightly! We didn't expect Jasper to deal with our tricks so quickly, and Hans and Benny were just a fuse at most.

"Had we not taken him too lightly, we wouldn't have to retreat from the Southeast Province overnight even with what the two of them did. We wouldn't have had to lose one billion either.

"So the very base of our problem is that we had underestimated Jasper's strengths! All past events have shown us that he's way stronger than we expected!

“Which is why this time, we’re going to launch a precise attack and end him once and for all! We’ll kill that f*cking brat!”

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Norman was stricken by Ian’s words.

“I’ll admit that you have a point, but are you really going to ask Old Master Hurlbutt in Suesville for help just like this?”

“This is too unrealistic. Old Master Hurlbutt retired a long time ago. There’s no way he’d help you for such a small issue.”

At that, Ian scoffed. “Of course, there’s no way Old Master Hurlbutt is going to personally lend me a helping hand. What I need is the old master’s influence. I want to gather everyone from the Haddock Chamber of Commerce!”

Ian’s eyes shone as he looked up at Norman. “Under those circumstances, just how difficult could it be to crush Jasper?”

Norman’s expression changed. “Say Old Master Hurlbutt gives the green light and we manage to borrow most of Haddock Chamber of Commerce’s strengths, still... We’re owing too many favors here.”

Ian’s expression turned wretched as he roared, “So what? I don’t care about anything else! I can repay the favors I owe and I can give whatever benefits they want, but there’s no way in hell that I’m going to forgive Jasper without taking revenge!”

No longer recognizing the familiar partner he once knew, Norman sighed.

To be absolutely honest, Norman was beginning to feel afraid considering how Ian's actions now were detrimental to himself as well.

Sure, they were all businesspeople from Haddock, but Norman was too aware of how the others worked.

Even if Old Master Hurlbutt gave the green light, it was unlikely that the others would do anything unless they were certain of a win.

They were not the kind to do anything without benefits.

As such, it was destined for the Hull family to suffer greatly this time.

However, Ian was currently blinded by his hatred and cared for nothing else. All he wanted was to get rid of Jasper once and for all. He was willing to pay whatever price for it to happen.

As such, Norman made the rational move and remained silent.

At the same time, Norman could not help but admit internally that he wanted to see such a scene play out... After all, the one suffering losses would be Ian.

No matter how close their families were, the Hulls would still be the Hulls and the Gardners would still be the Gardners!

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The following day, Jasper appeared at the airport.

At the arrival hall, Jasper saw a tall and handsome man walk out casually from afar. He had a bounce in his steps, and there was a beautiful lady deeply immersed in a conversation with him by his side.

The two walked over to Jasper, and the girl bade Henry farewell before leaving with light steps when she saw Jasper.

“Bye, Mandy. I’ll call you.”

Henry waved the girl goodbye with a casual smile.

He then wrapped an arm around Jasper’s shoulder and boasted, “How’s that? I met the girl on the plane, a fourth-year student in Southeast Province Teaching Academy. She’ll be my source of entertainment while I’m here.”

Slapping Henry’s hand away, Jasper replied, “I’ll have to disappoint you then because you’re going to be busy very soon. Don’t think you’ll have the time to meet and have a relationship with that Mandy girl.”

Henry followed Jasper out of the airport and threw his backpack to the backseat of the car once he got close. He then stretched his body and laid on the Bentley’s passenger seat. With a grin, he asked, “My dad said you made enemies here. What happened?”

“I won’t stop until I’ve crushed them. Exciting, isn’t it?” Jasper spoke plainly as he drove.

Henry shuddered and sat up. “I thought my dad was kidding. How do smart and sly youths like you make enemies? I thought you were kind to everyone and don’t backstab people at all.

“Ah well, whatever. Just tell me where that f*cker is and we’ll go look for him right now. I’m going to kill that motherf*cker!”

Jasper glanced at Henry and smiled. “He’s in Waterhoof City, and he has his own forces. It’s likely that he has a lot of people helping him. Are you sure you want to go up to him and demand his death just like that? Just the two of us?”

Henry waved his hand dismissively. "So what? You remember Mitch Langdon? I fought that stupid f*cker seven, eight years ago. F*cking moron asked me to meet him at St. John's Road to negotiate and it was me against six to seven of them. I'm still right here, aren't I?"

"Why are you being so polite with me, man? We're closer than that. We'll just kill the f*cking idiot who thinks he's better than us! Helpers? Hah! I just need to make a call to Harbor City and I'll have trucks full of gangsters up here for you anytime."

Jasper smiled. "It's enough for me to know that you're willing to help. But I might actually need your help with a few things this time."

Henry grinned. "Finally, a time when you're the one asking me for help. Alright, just tell me what you need me to do. Who are we screwing over?"

"Ian Hull," Jasper replied.

Stunned, Henry gave it some thought. "Is this f*cking idiot related to the stupid f*cker, Ben Hull?"

"You've met him before. It's Ben's dad," Jasper replied.

"Good job, man. You're already targeting your elders now, huh? Hell yeah! That's my brother. I knew you wouldn't forget me when you're doing something like this. Though to be honest, I'm no longer interested in f*cking over those morons who are the same age as us," Henry chatted excitedly.

Jasper replied plainly, "I've already driven Ben crazy."

"..." Henry turned to look at Jasper in shock. "What the hell did you do? How do you even drive a person crazy?"

Jasper did not hold any details back as he told Henry what had happened.

Midway through retelling, Henry was already infuriated.

“F*cking hell! What f*cking brave idiots those two are! Is it so hard to follow the goddamn rules and not attack women? They’re even worse than me. They f*cking had it coming for them!”

“If anything, I’d say you went easy on them. I’d have killed those f*ckers and buried them in the mountains for good if I were you.”

Jasper replied, “What I want to demolish is the entire Hull family. That way, those two will also die with the rest of their relatives. What I did before was just collecting a little interest.”

Henry was excited. “Wonderful. So what next? I didn’t come all the way here to watch you f*ck people up. You’ve got to let me join you.”

“I still need to meet someone first and then we’ll head to Waterhoof City,” Jasper replied, his eyes slightly narrowed.

“Then you can make as much of a fuss when we get to Waterhoof City. You have the green light even if you want to wreak havoc.”

Henry’s eyes shone brightly as he started flushing in excitement.

“This is so f*cking up my alley. Who are you meeting tonight? Do you want me to come with you?”

“No, it’s okay. I’m just meeting an old friend, you don’t know him.” Jasper smiled.

The person he was meeting tonight was none other than John Jackson.

If history proved him right, then contacting John would provide Jasper with a trump card strong enough to rid the Hull family once and for all.

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That night, in a coffee house in the province, Jasper met with John after a long time.

“You’re finally back. I’ve called you to meet up so many times but you weren’t in the province.”

John laughed as he spoke, pulling Jasper into a hug when the two met.

Jasper chuckled. “I was working on something in Swallow Capital for a while, so it took me some time to get back... But I have to say that I was surprised to hear that you’re also in the province when I called. I thought you were still over in the towns.”

At that, John smiled. “Thanks to you, I got transferred to the city branch as their vice president in charge of the credit system. I just came back to the province to participate in the provincial ICBS presidential study meeting.”

“You got promoted? That’s got nothing to do with me. I’m pretty sure it’s all your hard work.” Jasper smiled.

John shook his head. “You know how it is with banks, we’re evaluated by deposit indexes. The accounts you opened with me alone already doubled, tripled our outlet’s indexes.

“Had it not been for such a great client like you, it’d be another five to six years before someone my age could ever be a vice president in charge of the credit system in the city branch.”

Jasper chuckled. “Tell me if you need to raise more deposits. I can easily get it done.”

Jasper's words were implicit, for he could indeed move at least ten billion worth of cash. Even if he had invested in something and it took up quite a bit of his funds, he still had Schuler Group which was a huge source of liquid funds.

With currently ten billion in his personal account, Jasper could easily meet the city branch's annual target.

John replied gleefully, "You've already done a lot for me and I don't want to bother you about this. Plus, you know how it is with target indexes, they change it every year. If we meet it this year, then they'll just raise it for the year after. I'd much rather it go slow and easy."

Jasper smiled. "Let's get back on topic. I came to look for you today because there's something I'd like to ask."

John immediately turned serious at that and replied, "How can I help you? Tell me and I'll do my best to help."

Having learned how the social system worked, John had long learned to speak according to the person he was talking to.

When it came to Jasper, John had no plans to hide anything.

If this was at the very beginning when the two were still using each other for mutual benefits, then the difference in their social standings and identities would now be miles apart with the rapid and continuous increase in Jasper's wealth.

However, Jasper had not once looked down on John even when the other was no longer useful to him. If anything, Jasper would still take the initiative to contact John every three to five days and catch up.

Plus, just as John said, Jasper had played a huge role in his promotion, though it was not by putting in good words for John. The bank's system worked by focusing on the deposits gathered.

Jasper's personal account had a few billion sitting inside, and John was well aware that with such a large deposit, there would definitely be other banks and other bankers trying to ask Jasper to deposit his money with them.

John might not even be able to provide the same amount of services those other banks could.

However, Jasper had never once withdrawn his money to deposit anywhere else. This was an achievement under John's name.

If anyone wondered what a favor was, then this was it.

Perhaps because he had seen enough of lies and deception, John exceptionally treasured his friendship with Jasper.

Jasper was not privy to the thoughts that ran through John's mind and smiled. "I remember you said something about having an old colleague who works as the office manager in ICBS' Waterhoof branch? I think it was during a dinner quite some time ago."

John was stunned and asked, "I do. Why are you asking now, though? Did something happen?"