

Life at the Top Chapter 671

Noticing conflicted look on Chad's face, Jasper could basically guess what had happened.

"Mr. Wright, there is still plenty of empty land in Reed City. Why is it only the plot of land that I wanted to buy so high in demand right now? Furthermore, the other party only showed intentions of buying the land after they found out that I wanted to buy it as well. Is he trying to become my sworn enemy?"

Chad's expression changed drastically. "Please don't say that, Mr. Wright. It's hard for us to come to a decision on this issue as well. After all, you haven't bought that plot of land yet, Mr. Laine. Since it doesn't belong to anyone, we have no choice but to consider their request to purchase it as well."

"It seems like that person is out to end me," Jasper said in an even tone.

Chad laughed bitterly. "Mr. Laine, there are some words that only you can say. Deep down, we all know how these things are. This company is renowned within Reed City. It is also quite notorious, as they have taken out several of our previous investors," he said.

"They're snatching this plot of land away from me after discovering that I had intentions to buy it. After that, they will resell it to me at a higher price. Methods like this are indeed beyond the capabilities of ordinary people," Jasper added.

An awkward expression formed on Chad's face. "Why don't you choose another plot of land, Mr. Laine?" He asked.

Jasper shook his head, rejecting Chad's suggestion.

The plot of land that Jasper had chosen would end up becoming the most valuable part of Reed City in the future. The 1500-acre plot of land would also be enough to fully sustain the future development of the factory.

“If I have to choose another plot of land, I’d pull my investment out of Reed City altogether. After all, since they’ve taken that plot of land from me, it means they’re perfectly capable of snatching other things away from me too.”

Jasper’s words caused a troubled expression to flash across Chad’s face. He sighed heavily and said, “Mr. Laine, I really wish that I could help you on this, but I don’t have the abilities to do so. However, if you want to discuss things with the other party, I can help you contact them.”

“There’s nothing for us to discuss.”

Jasper had a calm expression on his face.

“They’re doing this with the intention to thwart me. If I discuss things with them, they’ll just ask me for money. Money didn’t just fall onto my lap, so I won’t hand it over to them just because they ask for it.”

As Jasper spoke, he walked out of the office.

Chad led Jasper downstairs awkwardly. He continued explaining and apologizing as they walked. Nevertheless, Jasper did not blame him for the matter either. As they walked, he was already considering the possibility of setting up the factory in Nauritus City.

After all, nobody could pose a threat to him over there, right?

Just as Jasper was about to get in the car upon arriving downstairs, a black Mercedes drove up to them.

The car window rolled down to reveal the face of a young man. “You’re that investor from out of town, right? It must have taken you some time to come here.

Why are you in such a rush to leave? You are yet to experience the burning passion of those from Reed City,” he said in a mocking tone.

Upon catching sight of the man, Chad, who was standing beside Jasper, immediately lowered his voice. “Mr. Laine, he’s the person in charge of that company. His name is Marcus Coine. I have no idea how he learned of your arrival,” he whispered.

After hearing Chad’s explanation, Jasper spoke to Marcus in a calm tone, “I’ve gone through a rather profound experience.”

Marcus opened the car door and got out. He chuckled in response. “You sound like you aren’t too happy about things. Why is that? Are you not investing in Reed City anymore, Big Boss?” He asked.

“Since there are people that won’t let me in, I have no choice but to leave,” Jasper replied.

Marcus scoffed loudly. “What an exaggeration. It’s just a plot of land, isn’t it? I heard that you intend to buy the 1500-acre plot of land for 200 million dollars. It isn’t much, but it isn’t a sum of money to scoff at either. Why don’t you pay a little more? You should treat poor people like us to some good food while you’re at it,” he said.

“That’s just the way it works. People that are overly stingy cannot survive in Reed City, Big Boss. You can offend anyone here but me. If you do something that I don’t like, I’ll send you back to where you came from. Do you understand?”

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Marcus Coine’s words reflected his extreme arrogance.

Even Chad frowned after listening to what he had said.

“Mr. Wright, I’ve changed my mind.”

Jasper turned around and told Chad.

Just as Chad’s expression morphed into one of confusion, Jasper spoke in a calm and collected tone, “JW Electronics would like purchase the plot of land as soon as possible. If someone wants to snatch it from us then let’s have auction to decide who gets to keep it,” he said

Jasper suddenly understood something from Marcus Coine’s proud and arrogant attitude.

At this point in time, there were still plenty of people like him in the country.

Most of them relied on their parents’ connections to build up sizeable influence in their localities. However, they chose not to follow the same paths as their parents.

The only way for people like these to make it big was through running businesses. After all, most of them were already used to being a dominant force within the local district due to their parents’ influence.

Marcus Coine thought of Reed City as his territory. Hence, anyone who wanted to enter the city had to show their respect to him by providing him with some benefits.

Reed City had Marcus Coine, but it was very likely that there were people like Marcus in other districts as well.

Because of this, Jasper could not just keep giving in to them.

He needed to do something so that those who viewed JW as an easy target would learn to take a good look at themselves before acting out of order!

As soon as Jasper finished speaking, Marcus burst out into laughter. Chad was yet to even come up with a response.

“Hahaha, nobody has dared to go against me in Reed City for many years. It seems like someone who isn’t afraid of death is here today.”

Marcus cast a sideways glance at Jasper. His gaze was dripping with sarcasm and mockery. “I know you’re from the Southeast Province, Laine. How do I describe that place? Although there are a few presentable families over there, they are still nothing compared to the families here,” he drawled.

“If you think that you are capable of going against me just because you’re a somebody over there, you’ll die a painful death.

“Listen to my advice. You can either go back to where you came from, or pay some respect to me till I’m satisfied with your performance. All you need is a nod of my head, and you won’t face any trouble even if you tear down half of Reed City.”

Jasper looked at Marcus with an unchanging expression. “In that case, how much respect will you need to be satisfied, Mr. Coine?” He asked.

Marcus rubbed his thumb against his index and middle fingers nonchalantly. He chuckled and said, “I won’t ask for a lot. I’ll make it simple. You just need to prepare a sum equal to the amount that you spent on buying that plot of land.”

“Is 200 million dollars enough?” Jasper asked knowingly.

“We’re all grown men. You don’t have to say things so forwardly,” Marcus said.

“Your planning is simply immaculate, Mr. Coine. You simply wagged your fingers three times, and now you intend to take 200 million dollars from my pocket. You earn money at a rate that far surpasses me,” Jasper said.

Marcus guffawed loudly. “You have your ways, and I do too. Just consider it a toll fee, but it’s not like you’ll walk away with nothing either. As long as you pay me this sum of money, I’ll look after your factory in the future. No one from Reed City will dare cause you any trouble,” he said.

“So, you mean to say that if I don’t pay you this sum of money, this factory will have nothing to do with you, and people will come to wreak havoc on my property every day. Am I right?” Jasper asked.

Marcus cackled. “Not bad at all. It’s no wonder that you own so many assets at such a young age. You pick up things quickly. You seem like a smart person as well, so I suppose that you know what decision to make. It’s better to ward off a disaster by making a payment instead of begging for mercy in front of me after going through a ton of hardship, right?”

“That sounds very reasonable,” Jasper said.

Joy flashed across Marcus’s face. He was just about to say something when Jasper spoke again.

“Forget 200 million dollars, I won’t even give you two cents.”

Jasper’s expression remained impassive. It seemed like he did not notice the disgruntled look on Marcus’s face. “If you want money, earn it through your own efforts. Of course, it doesn’t matter to me if you prefer to do shady activities, as everyone still needs to earn a living. However, don’t try your filthy tricks on me. I will never compromise on any attempts at extortion. Understood?”

Marcus’s expression darkened. He stared at Jasper coldly and blurted out, “Were you mocking me just now?”

“I just wanted to gain a thorough understand of the type of person that you are,” Jasper said calmly.

“Haha!” Marcus let out a bark of angry laughter. He raised his finger and pointed at the tip of Jasper’s nose. “Well, since you’re so adamant on going against me, let’s just wait and see what’ll happen next,” he said.

“Let me give you a reminder, Laine. You’re just an outsider here. You want to go against me? Why don’t you take a good look at yourself first? Do you really think that you’re invincible just because you have some money?”

Jasper shrugged and said, “You’re right, there’s nothing impressive about having money. However, you’re angry at me because you’re ashamed that you can’t get your hands on my money. Isn’t that even more pathetic?”

Marcus gritted his teeth angrily. At that moment, he realized what a smooth talker the young man standing before him was.

Even so, Marcus suppressed his rage and said, “Little b*stard, a sharp tongue is nothing to be proud of. I’ve said what I wanted to say today. If you manage to purchase that 1500-acre plot of land, I’ll adopt your last name!

“Just wait and see!”

Marcus blurted out in anger. After that, he turned around and left.

After watching the Mercedes fade into the distance, Jasper turned around to face Cha, who was smiling at him bitterly. “Mr. Wright, I would like you to pay extra attention to the auction. Please resolve it as soon as possible,” he said.

“An auction is a very simple affair as I’ll simply report to my higher-ups. I don’t think there’ll be any problems on that regards. It can even be held tomorrow. However, Marcus Coine is a tough one to handle, Mr. Laine,” Chad explained immediately.

After making sure that there was no one around them, Chad lowered his voice as he spoke to Jasper. “Marcus Coine’s grandfather is a respected senior from the older generation that has lived through the war. He retired a few years ago.

“Although that old man is now in his twilight years, he has been managing Reed City for decades. He has the ultimate say when it comes to everything that happens in Reed City.”

Chad was an official from the city government, so it was risky for him to reveal so much insider information to Jasper since his job was at stake.

Jasper nodded solemnly. “Mr. Wright, thank you for your good-hearted warning. However, I don’t intend to concede to him. I don’t believe that people will stir up trouble for me just for running a legal business in Reed City. How could that be the case?” He questioned.

“That old man has lived through difficult times. He shouldn’t want to see his grandson behave in such a manner.”

Chad sighed in exasperation as it seemed impossible to convince Jasper otherwise. Thus, he did not say anything more.

He felt that Jasper was being way too naive.

Not everyone in the world was followed such ideal principles.

When people grow old, isn’t it their only wish for their children and grandchildren to live safely and prosperously?

“Alright, we’ll hold the auction tomorrow,” Chad said.

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On the way back to the hotel, Julian turned to look at Jasper. He asked while waiting for the traffic light to turn green, “Should we ask Henry for help on this, Jasper?”

Jasper was stunned. “Why would I do that? He’s busy working on the amusement park project every day. The fact that he’s actually putting his mind to work is rare enough, so I don’t want him to lose focus.”

Julian scratched his head. “I just think it’s best to have a trust-fund child deal with other trust-fund children like Marcus. I’m sure Henry’s got a repertoire of methods to deal with him.”

Jasper smiled. “Why bother? Afraid that I’d lose to him?”

Julian smiled dumbly, “Of course not, Jasper, there’s no way you’d lose. I just don’t like Marcus’ attitude, and I thought that Henry would have a lot of fun stepping over him.”

“Henry won’t be to do anything even if he did come over. After all, Marcus’ family has been doing business in Reed City for decades, their influence here has already surpassed that of any other family.

“This is something that we’ve actually got to deal with ourselves.”

Julian was slightly confused as to what Jasper meant by this, but he did not think too deep much about it. “I don’t understand things like this, but if they’re going to play dirty tricks, I’ll give them a good beating.”

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Members of Reed City's upper-class did not seem to care about the fact that Jasper had come to invest in the City.

After all, Jasper's fame was mainly centered around the Southeast Province, and Reed City was thousands of kilometers away. It was unlikely that stories of Jasper's exploits had made their way here.

Even so, the fact that someone dared to oppose Marcus had indeed spread like wildfire throughout the city.

Reed City could be considered as Marcus' territory, and almost no one dared to offend him. People would pay others to keep their mouths shut if it meant that Marcus would not look in their direction.

This was the first time in many years that someone had dared to stand up against Marcus.

This news had caused an uproar among Reed City's upper-class.

After some investigation, they discovered that Jasper was a businessman from the Southeast Province and had come to Reed City to invest in a plot of land so he could build a factory.

When it came to the conflict between Marcus and Jasper, no one bothered placing bets on the latter.

At that moment, Jasper had received Chad's office notice at the hotel.

The auction would begin at eight tomorrow morning in the City Hall's meeting room.

It was natural that the City Government did not want to make the reality of the situation so blatant, so they also called in two other real estate companies to join the bid, for formality's sake.

Despite this, everyone knew that the main competition was between Jasper's JW Electronics and Marcus' Fortune Co., Ltd.

At the same time, in a hotel's deluxe suite, Marcus was busy smoking and playing poker with a few of his friends when he received the notice.

Smoke crept around the room and Marcus squinted as the smoke irritated his eyes. He took a look at his cards and folded upon seeing that he had a bad hand. Marcus growled, "Sigh. Seriously guys, it's almost like my name doesn't hold the same power here in Reed City anymore."

The three other young men playing with him had were also trust-fund children like Marcus. Their fathers and grandfathers were friends with Marcus' and they were also business partners that had worked together for years.

Their relationship was an extension of their elders and came purely from personal connections. It was a tight-knit group made out of people who shared a common interest.

The man sitting opposite Marcus was around one hundred and ninety centimeters tall, a broad and sturdy man who went by the name Ned Adkins. Ned snickered, causing a fierce smile to appear on his tanned and firm face.

Ned lazily folded his cards next. "It's not like this is the first time we're dealing with stupid outsiders. Just tell us if you need money, or tell us how we can help.

"All of us have shares in your company. Your problem is our problem too."

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Marcus's expression finally brightened, and he glanced at Ned before reprimanding him jokingly, "Stop fooling around. I've done some background checks on this Jasper, he's not like other outsiders. He's got quite a name over in the Southeast Province.

"Not to mention, he did come here legally to invest our land. He's registered with the officials in the City Government too. He's not like the other outsiders who came here for small business. I'm going to have to explain to the City Government if something happens to him."

Ned pursed his lips disdainfully. His family was in the pawning industry, and his pawning company was currently the largest in all of Reed City. In this city, the other businessmen tended to treat this strong man with respect.

As far as he was concerned, there was nothing in the world that his fists could not settle. If such a thing existed, then a machete would suffice.

Even bones turned soft upon contact with a blade.

"I've got to go to the auction tomorrow. I have to at least try to get a feel of how this Jasper guy is. Come with me tomorrow, Ned."

A new round was dealt as Marcus folded again.

"A Royal Flush, I win. Thanks for folding, Mr. Coine. Hahaha."

"F*ck!"

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It was seven-fifty the following morning when Jasper arrived at the City Hall's meeting room with Julian in tow.

Chad was the host of this meeting, but he courteously introduced Jasper to a middle-aged and sharp-looking man.

"Mr. Laine, this is Mr. Powers. Our City Government's best secretary."

When Chad introduced them, Jasper and Mr. Powers shook hands.

"Nice to meet you, Mr. Powers."

Mr. Powers smiled in a friendly manner and replied, "Nice to meet you too, Mr. Laine. I'm here on behalf of the City Government to oversee this auction."

"It sure isn't easy investing in Reed City, Mr. Powers," Jasper commented intently.

Mr. Powers chuckled. "The higher-ups told me before I came here that good things come to those who persevere. People tend to have their own personal view on how important certain events are."

Jasper did not seem too elated at Mr. Powers' stance and he merely replied, "We can only hope that this is the case."

Mr. Powers did not prompt him any further upon seeing that Jasper was unwilling to continue the conversation. After all, they were smart people, and Jasper could easily tell that the City Government was trying to use Jasper to attack Marcus and his group of friends.

Jasper's position on this was clear as well. 'You can use me, but it will come with a price. I, Mr. Laine, am not an idiot. What makes you think I'd come all the way to Reed City just so you can use me?'

“Oh, and Mr. Powers?”

Jasper suddenly remembered something and turned around to call out just before they entered the meeting room together.

Mr. Powers stopped walking and turned to look at Jasper.

Smiling, Jasper stated, “I plan to build an electronics factory on this 1500 acres of land. I’m planning to invest a total of 500-700 million in it. I’ve already contacted the shipping companies, and the infrastructure is on its way over. It should arrive in ten to fifteen days.”

“For a factory that spans 1500 acres of land, a total investment of 500-700 million would amount to at least 200 million in tax a year, and would also result in local revenue of around 3 billion Somer Dollars.”

“The Southeast Province has filed quite a few complaints about this, claiming that I’m helping outsiders instead of benefitting my homeland. In other words, I don’t care as much about Reed City as you people think.”

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Mr. Powers’ expression changed greatly at Jasper’s carefree words.

Jasper had only said that he wanted to buy an industrial plot of land, but he never said anything about building a factory.

The government of Reed City had also done a background check on Jasper.

They knew that Jasper mainly did real estate and financial trades. He had never once taken part in any construction of industrial factories.

That was why the city government believed that Jasper had come to buy an industrial plot of land just to wait for its value to appreciate or something else. They never expected that it was to build a factory.

While the government of Reed City did value the amount Jasper was willing to invest, it had now become a business transaction of 200 million Somer Dollars. Reed City needed funds to further develop as well.

They just did not expect such a large amount.

To have Jasper provide such news out of the blue, Mr. Powers knew that he had to make the proper preparations now.

He was well aware that if Jasper's words came true, then a total investment of at least 700 million on a plot of land and an electronics factory in Reed City would be an extremely important business.

Ignoring the annual tax received, the most important part of this transaction would be the increased quota for jobs, and in extension, the increased businesses in surrounding areas.

It was normal to have 5,000 to 6,000 workers per factory.

Open positions for 5,000 to 6,000 workers also meant an exponential increase in profits of the food and beverage, transportation, and shopping industries around the area.

Not to mention that with such a huge factory, one would always need to buy components. That meant that the upstream and downstream companies would also shift closer to their core clients to decrease shipping and production costs.

The chain reaction caused by Jasper's factory would easily turn it into an important weight that would greatly affect Reed City's future developments.

“Mr. Laine, this is something we had no prior knowledge of. Please wait for a moment, I’ll immediately report this to them,” Mr. Powers spoke sternly.

Jasper waved him off with a smile. “Go ahead, Mr. Powers. I’m still discussing it with a few other cities as well, so take your time.”

Despite knowing that Jasper was trying to raise the price, Mr. Powers had no other choice but to smile. “There’s no reason to search anywhere else, Mr. Laine, since you’re already here and you like this plot of land. Just give me a bit of time. I promise to give you a satisfactory reply.’

Jasper smiled and glanced at the meeting room. “Then could you pass a word for me too, Mr. Powers?”

“Do tell, Mr. Laine,” Mr. Powers spoke politely.

“I came to Reed City to invest, and while I did come to make money, I’m also very willing to help move the economic development along. I came to make legal money through legal means, not to be treated unjustly and forced to deal with someone else’s attitude.”

With that, Jasper then smiled at Mr. Powers who looked rather embarrassed. “Don’t let me bother you further, Mr. Powers. I’ll be going in now.”

With that, Jasper turned and walked carefreely with Julian in tow.

Mr. Powers felt despondent as he watched Jasper leave.

Chad was terrified that Mr. Powers would end up disliking Jasper because of this and spoke carefully, “About that, Mr. Powers, I was there when Marcus sought him out yesterday. To be honest, I’d have left long ago if I were in his shoes. It’s understandable why he’s angry.”

Mr. Powers nodded slowly. "Alright. I'll report this to the higher-ups first while you go and talk to him. Keep him here and interested. The higher-ups will be very interested in this."

Marcus had yet to arrive when Jasper did, but the two other real estate companies called over for formality's sake had already sent their representatives over. These representatives were the ones currently glaring at Jasper.

As far as they were concerned, Jasper was just an outsider Marcus was bound to kick out of Reed City. He was not worth their time to socialize and acquaint themselves with.