

Life at the Top Chapter 161

“Mr. Laine, you’ve been really close to the Laws recently. You guys must be planning something together. No matter what you are planning, you have to count me in as well!”

Jasper raised his brow at Michael’s words.

Logically, the first thought that came into Jasper’s mind was that Zachary Law must have told Michael something.

However, Jasper immediately snuffed out the possibility of something like that happening.

From a business perspective, Zachary had a position that ranked higher than everyone present here. Even if he had a good personal relationship with Michael and wanted him to join his side, he would not just disregard Jasper and tell Michael everything.

For now, the fact that he was working together with the Laws was absolutely confidential.

It was impossible for Zachary not to understand the risks of involving more people in their plans. If something like that were to be exposed to the outside world, especially by someone from the Law family, it would definitely bring forth consequential impacts to the finances of Harbor City.

Therefore, as long as Zachary did not do anything foolish, it was impossible for the outside world to know anything about their plan.

“Don’t overthink. It was easy for me to guess. You made your fortune in the stock market, and everything that you have recently done in Harbor City revolved

around the stock market. At the same time, Zachary has been rather active nowadays. It is obvious that a major event is about to take place.

“These aren’t secrets. Those who are observant can easily realize this if they pay a little attention. However, they lack the core contextual information, so they don’t understand the common goal that underlies your individual actions.

“In the beginning, I didn’t get it as well. However, after hearing what you said just now, I immediately understood. The downfall of the Internet economic bubble is a disaster for most, but if you managed to predict it and made arrangements beforehand, it would be a celebration of wealth and capital.

“You have the abilities, and Zachary has the funds. That’s enough to create an impact in the capital sector of Harbor City.”

Jasper nodded after Michael finished speaking.

Sure enough, someone who had managed to make a name for himself in a place full of powerful, influential people like Harbor City was not simple-minded at all.

Since Michael had already seen through their facade, there was no need for Jasper to continue hiding it from him.

“This condition is acceptable, but there’s something that you must do, Mr. Lane. Otherwise, there’s nothing more for us to discuss,” Jasper said.

“Say it,” Michael said with a grin. He was overcome with relief after Jasper agreed to his proposition.

“I don’t care about how much funds you intend to contribute, but you must hand it over to me to ensure everything operates in unison. Also, since you’ve decided to get in this car that I’m driving, you must follow my command in everything, from the speed, to the direction that the car is going.”

Michael smiled at his words. "Of course, I'm just taking the opportunity to score a bargain deal. I definitely wouldn't try to overthrow you. I'll listen to whatever you ask me to do when the time comes," he said.

Jasper raised his glass with a chuckle. "Let's make a toast to our successful collaboration. Cheers."

"Cheers."

This toast signaled the commencement of a 1.5-billion-dollar entertainment film package sale plan, and future financial plans involving at least tens of billions of dollars' worth of funds.

Michael was evidently in a pretty good mood. He chatted and joked around with Jasper for a while before coming up with an excuse to leave.

After he left, Jasper said, "It seems like there are a lot of smart people out there in the world."

Zachary laughed. "In truth, this deal guarantees a win for both parties in the transaction. You saved 500 million dollars in the takeover of Gladness Entertainment, and he can rely on you to earn more in the future. There are no losses for you," he said.

"More importantly, after this incident, Gladness International Corporation will naturally form an alliance with you. This is extremely beneficial for you in the future."

Jasper nodded at his words. He replied, "Actually, having one more person on board does not affect how we earn money. With him, we won't make a penny less, and without him, we won't make a penny more either. The thing is, is this person reliable?"

“He’s trustworthy. I’ve known him for a few decades now. He’s a person who doesn’t easily show his true intentions. He’s good at scheming, but he may appear rather selfish at times just because he’s too good at it.

“Honestly, nobody’s perfect. Other than that, he’s perfectly reliable.”

Jasper nodded at Michael’s words.

Since it was a charity auction gala function, the main attraction of the gala would be the auction.

In reality, these were all formalities. All the rich men simply had to take out some of the items they did not need and put them up for an auction. No matter how much the items got auctioned for, the money would be donated to charity.

Moreover, there was a high probability that these items would not even pass through the actual auction. This was simply a matter of price.

All the rich and powerful people who came to the function would also make a bid for one or two items each to join in the fun of the occasion.

This money meant nothing to them. They were only doing so to make a good reputation for themselves.

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The auction commenced not long after. Jasper and Wendy had already returned to the banquet hall.

A big boss like Zachary Law no doubt had a custom seat for himself. Meanwhile, the younger ones like Jasper and Anna gathered in the hall while waiting for the auction to begin.

This occasion was a gathering of the stars. Everyone shone in all of their extravagance.

Even the air was filled with the lingering scent of wealth and fame.

Being as meticulous as always, Jasper also noticed that Mitch Langdon and Zane Lancaster were seated together. The two of them were peering at him as subtly as they could.

It was evident that having a common enemy allowed them to achieve a certain degree of understanding with each other.

“How did the both of them get together?” Anna asked, furrowing her brow.

Based on logical reasoning, Zane only had his father, Bob Lancaster. Nonetheless, Mitch was different. His father was Kennedy Langdon, whereas his grandfather was Wallace Langdon. They were both top bosses in their own leagues.

With Wallace Langdon around, the Langdons would easily take the throne among the top four families of Harbor City.

Therefore, based on such reasoning, Zane had no right to sit next to Mitch.

“Both of them are equally bad. It should be easy for them to find a common topic among themselves,” Jasper said. He did not mind at all.

Since he attended the function with Anna, Jasper sat in a seat designated for the Laws. It was located right at the front of the hall.

The first four rows were reserved for the Laws, the Boyles, the Langdons, and the Lennons.

The remaining seats were allocated for the other prominent and wealthy families of Harbor City. The seats extended backward in order of wealth and status.

There were close to a hundred tables.

This showcased the number of wealthy people in Harbor City.

Over here, those with assets worth a billion dollars or less were considered poor.

Meeting Henry once again, Jasper realized that there was a beautiful female celebrity seated next to him.

Furthermore, Jasper knew her well. Thanks to Mr. Collins, Jasper had enjoyed viewing a fair few of her gorgeous photographs.

Cindy Jung.

Stage name, Sherry.

She would be debuting in a group with another female celebrity this year after signing a contract with Golden Entertainment. She would become really popular in the future.

However, after the incident with the camera, she was utterly ruined.

Jasper had even lamented over it in his past life.

“Here’s my date. Not bad, huh?” Henry remarked proudly.

He did not really like famous female celebrities. If he wanted any of them, they would be queueing up in front of him in no time. However, he generally found them dirty.

Therefore, Henry preferred fresh faces that have only just made their debut. He found them pleasant and fresh-looking.

Cindy was rather nervous as well. She greeted Anna and Jasper respectfully.

If Henry had not brought her here, never in her life would she have the right to sit in this seat.

Anna was unfazed. Something like this was extremely normal in a wealthy family.

However, Jasper knew that Cindy had a pretty messy private life despite her innocent looks. He grinned and said, "It's good as long as you think it's good."

Henry always felt that Jasper was trying to hint at something with his curious choice of words. Nevertheless, he could not seem to figure out what Jasper meant. Therefore, he felt extremely uncomfortable about this.

Jasper had just sat down when Zane's sinister voice rang out from the table beside them.

"Oh, look over here. It's a country bumpkin from the Mainland. Do you think that you're our equal now that you've found a wealthy person to back you up? The fact that you're pretty pleased about it all is terribly disgusting."

His voice was not loud, but it was enough for everyone from the four top families, who were seated not too far away, to hear clearly.

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His words attracted the attention of many people.

Most of them were here just to watch the scene unfolding before them and join in on the fun.

Alas, Jasper was not a slice of delectable pie. It was impossible for him to make everyone like him.

If he were to consider the top four families alone, many of them felt a strong animosity toward him due to him being an outsider's sudden appearance in their family affairs.

Everyone was simply maintaining a facade of harmony on the surface.

Mitch Langdon, for example, was on the verge of becoming his lifelong archenemy.

Now that Zane had voiced out, a lot of people were waiting for Jasper to embarrass himself. Many of the gazes directed at him were dripping with contempt.

Henry arched his brows. He thought of Jasper as a respected mentor that would guide him on the path of becoming bigger and better. Furthermore, the Laws had invited Jasper to sit at their table. Thus, he represented the Laws as well.

By shaming Jasper Laine, it meant that he was putting the Laws to shame as well.

How could Henry stand this?

Just as Henry was about to say something, Jasper voiced out.

“You have it wrong. Being your equal is an insult to me.”

A lot of people could not resist bursting out into laughter at Jasper’s words.

Zane was fuming with anger. He glared at Jasper after being humiliated by him and sneered, “Why are you being so rash? Harbor City isn’t the Mainland. You can’t act as arrogant as you wish to over here. You won’t even know the cause of your death later on.”

“Aren’t you tired of repeating the same things over and over again?” Jasper asked impatiently.

“Even if you want to threaten me, do it differently. Please enlighten me on how you wish to end my life.”

Henry was amused while listening to their exchange. Jasper had such a smart and sharp way with words. Looking at the helplessness and blunt rage in Zane’s gaze, it was clear to everyone just how powerful Jasper’s stance was.

Zane, who did not manage to humiliate Jasper but got humiliated himself instead, was so vexed that he began gritting his teeth. Just as he was about to say something, Mitch, who was seated beside him, raised his voice.

He glanced at Jasper indifferently. “Zane, stop talking. What good can come out of having a sharp tongue with someone like that?” He asked nonchalantly.

“He’s just like a dog at home. It won’t understand if you scold it. Just beat it up. When it hurts, it’ll learn its place. Dogs are dogs, it’s impossible for them to surpass their owners.

“Are you just afraid that you won’t have the chance to teach the dog a lesson?”

A light-hearted expression formed on Zane's face after listening to Mitch's words. He chuckled. "You're perfectly right, Mitch. I can't bite back at a dog if it bites me, right? I'll teach it a lesson when the opportunity arises. It'll understand when it hurts after getting beaten up," he said.

Right then, the host walked onto the stage. Everyone fell silent immediately.

Although the host was a hotshot within the entertainment industry, he did not dare to showcase his wits in front of all the wealthy families of Harbor City.

After a brief opening remark, the host reiterated the charity theme underlying the auction event. After sending waves of praise to the wealthy families, the auction immediately began.

Since the items being auctioned were all personal belongings of these wealthy and powerful people, they were not half bad. Therefore, many of them began bidding right after the first item was presented.

Nevertheless, the atmosphere was extremely harmonious. Everyone was here to support the occasion. They could just act their part. Nobody would cause an uproar during an occasion like this.

Even the bosses from Zachary Law's social circle made a few bids and purchased a few items.

"Everybody, the auction item that will appear next is very special. It was specially handed over to us by the late famous philanthropist Ms. Shannon White. She had specially requested for us to display the collector's item at this auction."

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“This collector’s item is known as the Angel’s Heart. It is a jewelry piece that Ms. Shannon White brought back from New Zealand more than a decade ago.

“According to Ms. Shannon White, there’s a secret within this collector’s item. However, she doesn’t know what that secret is either. She didn’t manage to find out even after analyzing it thoroughly for more than a decade.”

“Before Ms. Shannon passed away, she wanted to put this collector’s item up for auction. All the proceedings will be donated to the Leukemia Research Foundation. The starting price is 1 Harbor Dollar.”

This jewelry piece selling at starting price of 1 Harbor Dollar looked like a very simple and ordinary pendant. The pendant itself was molded in the shape of an angel holding a heart. Based on its material and appearance, it looked like it was worth 100000 Harbor Dollars at most.

However, Shannon White was one of the most famous philanthropists in Harbor City. Her death, which had been caused by leukemia, caused quite a huge uproar back then.

Hence, the Angel’s Heart, which had a mere starting price of 1 Harbor Dollar and a so-called “secret” within it, attracted the attention of many people as soon as it appeared.

As for that so-called secret, many of them did not take it seriously. They just laughed it off.

Most people thought it was simply a gimmick created by the auctioneer. Shannon White had analyzed the piece for more than ten years without making any discoveries. Therefore, they could conclude that this ‘secret’ was a mere sham.

Meanwhile, Jasper's interest was piqued when he set his eyes upon the Angel's Heart.

Going through his memories of the future, he clearly remembered that this Angel's Heart really had a secret... A huge secret that was worth more than 100 million dollars.

People eventually discovered the secret around the year 2012. It had been the hottest topic for a significant period of time.

"500000 Harbor Dollars."

During the few minutes that Jasper had been immersed in thought, the price of the Angel's Heart had already been elevated to a number far beyond its original value.

The people in the audience were some of the wealthiest people in Harbor City. To them, 500000 Harbor Dollars and 50000 Harbor Dollars were no different.

As the late philanthropist Shannon White had commissioned for the auction of this jewelry piece herself, this was indeed an item of notable prestige. Hence, many people intended to purchase it.

"800000 Harbor Dollars." Jasper joined in the bidding without a moment's hesitation.

Given Jasper's current net worth, he did not really have a liking for such things anymore. This included the secret, which was worth more than 100 million Harbor Dollars.

However, people like Jasper thought that it was a loss not to earn anything on a daily basis. After all, only b*stards did not love a good bargain.

Someone from one of the tables of the four top families made a bid. After that, the other wealthy people sitting behind understandably stopped matching the bid.

Although the item was good, it would not be wise to offend someone from the four top families over it.

Noticing Jasper join in on the bid, Zane, who did not have much interest in the Angel's Heart, sneered. After meeting eyes with Mitch Langdon, he slowly raised his hand.

"1000000 Harbor Dollars."

The moment had arrived. A lot of people watched on eagerly.

Since ancient times, battles for riches between wealthy families had always been an interesting sight. Many of them were beyond thrilled to watch Zane and Jasper go against each other.

"1.5 million Harbor Dollars." Jasper did not disappoint the interested audience. He added 500000 Harbor Dollars to the bidding price immediately.

"Oh, it seems like the country bumpkin wants to gain some fame from purchasing the Angel's Heart from Ms. Shannon White? Well, that's too bad. I won't let you do as you wish. 2 million Harbor Dollars," Zane said with a grin on his face. He crossed his legs and side-eyed Jasper snobbishly.

"Listen to my advice. Don't embarrass yourself in the high society circle of Harbor City with just those few steel bars in your pocket. Even if you force yourself into the community, you're still a country bumpkin.

"If you really wanted to be famous, why don't you make a bid for the renaissance painting worth more than 10 million Harbor Dollars just now? Just accept the fact that you're poor. Aren't you ashamed of bidding for an item that had a starting bid of 1 Harbor Dollar? You can't give up the money, but you still want fame? What a joke."

Zane scratched at his ear nonchalantly. He then laughed maniacally. "Continue following the bid if you can! I want to see just how much money you can spare to play this game with me!"

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Those who were listening to Zane thought that he made perfect sense as well.

At this point in time, most people from Harbor City were still extremely xenophobic. They looked down on all outsiders, especially Mainlanders.

They felt that the Mainland was a land of barren hills and turbulent rivers where savages lived. It was a barbaric place.

In their eyes, Jasper's actions showed that he was chasing for clout while being reluctant to spend his money.

Seeing that many people agreed with him, Zane stared at Jasper contemptuously. "Did I get it right? Shut up and stay by the side quietly, you dog. Aren't you ashamed of yourself?" He drawled confidently.

Zane's expression turned stony as he spoke. "I can't even stand your dog-like stench when I'm seated in the same room as you. You stink," he growled in anger.

"Mr. Zane Lancaster bid 2 million Harbor Dollars. 2 million Harbor Dollars going once. Does anyone think that this Angel's Heart is worth a higher price?"

The host did not want to join in the fight raging on between the two wealthy men. However, he had to carry out his responsibilities. Thus, he had no choice but to bite the bullet and shout out into the microphone.

Right then, Zane smirked at Jasper. He was absolutely certain that he would defeat Jasper tonight.

“Follow the bid! Why don’t you follow the bid? Aren’t you extremely capable of doing so?”

Jasper’s silence fueled Zane’s satisfaction. Jasper must have used up all the tricks he had up his sleeves. Zane guffawed loudly. “If you don’t have the money, you can always borrow some from the Laws. Anyways, you’re just a dog that the Laws brought home,” he said.

“Or do you mean to say that the Laws won’t bother to lend that much money to a dog like you? Right, you’re just a dog. Who’d want to spend money on someone like you? Hahahaha!”

As Zane laughed maniacally, everyone stared at Jasper while anticipating what would happen next. They could not wait to see if he would rise up against Zane’s attack or accept his defeat.

Even the group of big bosses were paying attention to the development of the situation in an interested manner.

“Mr. Law, it seems like this young man that you look so highly upon is nothing special.”

Bob Lancaster had been displeased with Jasper for some time now. Upon seeing his own son deal Jasper a harsh blow, he laughed out loud and joked to Zachary Law.

Zane smirked. “It’s not over yet. Don’t jump to conclusions,” he said.

“Oh, I think the result is already out.”

Kennedy Langdon was the one who spoke out. He voiced out calmly in front of all the bosses. “Mr. Lancaster, your son made a pretty powerful move. If Jasper

Laine continues following the bid, it would show that he's calculative, impetuous, and easily irritated. However, if he doesn't do so, it would mean that he's admitting to what your son said about him."

"This is a dilemma. Either way, it seems that Jasper has lost the first exchange."

"2 million dollars, going twice." "

The host gulped and stared at Jasper, who appeared calm and collected. There was no sign of anger or humiliation on his face.

"100 million Harbor Dollars."

Jasper's clear voice rang out just after the host finished speaking. His firm and strong voice resonated throughout the entire function hall.

"Beep!"

All the wealthy people who took pride in having a good upbringing and education could not resist causing an uproar in the hall.

Plenty of them were beyond shocked. They all stared at Jasper in disbelief after registering the price of his bid.

Even a few of the bosses within the group of big bosses had dumbfounded looks on their faces.

Just as Kennedy Langdon had said.

If Jasper continued following the bid, it would show that he was angered by Zane. It would be shallow and simple-minded of him to get tricked by a scheme like that.

If he did not follow the bid, it meant that he was recognizing his defeat.

It was a tough situation for him either way.

However, this tough dilemma got resolved by his 100 million Harbor Dollar bid.

The bidding price had to be considered as well. If Jasper called a bid for 3 million or even 5 million Harbor Dollars, people would just think of him as a silly fool.

However, following a 2 million Harbor Dollar bid with a bid of 100 million Harbor Dollars was not a foolish move at all. It was a show of power!

Kennedy Langdon's squinted his eyes and pinned Jasper with a scorching gaze. It was impossible to read his thoughts.

Zachary Law sipped at his glass of whisky cheerily. The scene unfolding before him did not seem to shock him at all.