

Life at the Top Chapter 746

“As the only internet company that has managed to successfully rebrand itself and gain profits, what do you expect the shares for Sena to be priced at when it goes public?” Jasper asked.

However, Celine shook her head and said, “It’s too early to tell now. There are so many factors that would affect the share price.

“Of course, the most basic prerequisite would be the company’s competence and financial status.

“Next up would be how the company goes public. Colossal Investments will help you get in touch with a bunch of millionaires who make private placements before the share market opens. This will be a great plus for us when the news goes public.”

“I’m already doing that,” Jasper said as he gave Celine a meaningful smile.

“I’ve gotten in touch with the J. Langdons and the Law family in Harbor City. They’ve offered their full support.”

Jasper and Kayden had come up with that plan the last time they met.

News of multi-millionaire Half-the-Harbor Langdon making private placements in Sena would certainly benefit the company.

At first, Kayden had thought Jasper was only letting him make private placements so he would put in a good word for him at the trade settlement center. However, he had not expected Jasper to have more tricks up his sleeve.

They were merely harmless tricks, though.

Thus, Kayden had merely smiled and glossed over it after he learned about it.

Celine was surprised, but she did not probe for further details.

“Alright, it seems like Colossal Investments won’t be earning commissions from you, but that’s alright. Colossal Investments will take care of the entire listing process for Sena, including the promotional activities in America.

“How many shares are you willing to put up as shares outstanding?”

Shares that were bought, sold, and traded on the share market were known as shares outstanding. These shares would be diluted before a company went public.

As Sena’s only investor, Jasper had complete say in whether he wanted to put up 10% or 50%.

The higher the number of shares, the higher the number of stocks, and the lower the price per share. However, this had nothing to do with the company’s total market value after it was listed. Comment by Amber Lee:

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Just like how both one one-hundred dollar bill and ten ten-dollar bills would both total to a hundred dollars.

Jasper had already thought about this, so he immediately answered, “32% shares.”

Celine frowned slightly as she said tentatively, “Companies usually issue at least 40% of their shares as shares outstanding if they want to be listed on the Nasdaq Composite...”

“Listing Sena publicly is just one part of my business strategy. It’s not the entirety of the plan.

“Besides...

“Only I can control Sena! And by that, I mean I will hold absolute control over the remaining 67%. I won't allow anyone to become a shareholder or part of the board of directors and mock me!”

Jasper said without hesitation.

Celine said nonchalantly, “Alright. Your company, your call. Colossal Investments won't make any further comments if you've already decided on issuing 32% of your shares.”

“I'll have my team meet up with Sena and crosscheck figures with the accounting, financial, and general management department this afternoon before we come up with a final evaluation report this afternoon. This report will first be audited internally by Colossal Investments before it's passed to the Nasdaq Review Committee for its final deliberation,” Celine said.

“I'll put a word in with Sena and ensure they cooperate fully with your investigation,” Jasper said as he nodded.

Upon finishing their formal discussion, Jasper and Celine had lunch and enjoyed a pleasant time together.

After that, Jasper was stunned to hear that Celine had booked a room beside his room.

“I was too lazy to book another hotel. Are you not open to having me as your next-door neighbor?” Celine said as she smiled and waved her key card in front of Jasper.

“Of course, you're welcome,” Jasper said with an odd expression on his face. “It's better this way too. We can contact each other easily if there's anything that needs to be discussed.”

“I heard your game is super popular now. Why don’t we go try it out this afternoon?” Celine said invitingly.

“I have another meeting this afternoon...” Jasper was just about to refuse when he heard Celine say, “I can let you have the final say in regards to the amount of commission you’ll receive.”

“Alright, I’ll call on you this afternoon,” Jasper said as he smiled.

“Hah, men.” Celine turned and pranced back into her room after she glanced flirtatiously at Jasper.

Behind her, Miss Stone was gritting her teeth as she glared at Jasper. She said softly, “I’m warning you, don’t even think about laying a hand on her, or else you’ll be in deep trouble.”

Jasper glanced nonchalantly at Miss Stone whom he had never gotten along with. He said calmly, “Can’t you tell that your employer is the one who’s trying to seduce me? Why don’t you try saying something to her?”

Paying no attention to the stony expression on Miss Stone’s face, Jasper turned and walked back into his room.

When Miss Stone finally suppressed her anger and entered the room, she saw Celine sitting on the couch with a glass of red wine. She seemed to be waiting for her as she swirled the liquid in the glass nonchalantly.

“Miss Maynard,” Miss Stone said carefully.

“What did you tell him?” Celine asked with a blank expression on her face.

Miss Stone’s body stiffened as she hurriedly said, “No-Nothing. I just wanted to say goodbye to him.”

“Really?” Celine smiled. She obviously did not believe her words.

She gazed at the liquid that was swirling in the glass. The maroon-colored liquid crashed against the walls of the glass before slowly dripping back down. It was a lovely sight to behold.

“If my husband, who is also your employer, is allowed to have mistresses, why can’t I have a lover?”

“You can very well go tattling to him, but remember that I know about everything you’ve done. Don’t try to anger me, understand?”

Miss Stone’s entire body stiffened as she said shakily, “Yes, understood.”

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The next day, Celine’s team went to Sena’s headquarters at Swallow Capital as well as its branch office at Waterhoof City to conduct a comprehensive review of its accounts, just as they had planned.

Celine had a lot of time on her hands now that everything had been delegated to her subordinates. She dragged Jasper to accompany her to go sightseeing all around Waterhoof City. She was seemingly delighted to have found some time in her busy schedule to let off steam.

The two seemed almost like a couple as they strolled through every road and alley in Waterhoof City.

Although Celine was a woman with beautiful looks and a wonderful temperament, Jasper was not a lustful person. However, he needed to ensure he was on good terms with Celine during a critical time like this.

Thus, Jasper gifted Celine a wristwatch that was priced at six figures. Although Celine teased Jasper about openly bribing her, she later gifted him a tailored suit that was equally expensive.

On the evening of the third day, the two were sitting in a restaurant. Celine swirled her glass of red wine and said to Jasper, "I heard you're planning to construct the tallest tower in the world here in Waterhoof City?"

"Colossal Investments has a great source for insider news," Jasper replied.

Although the project had officially commenced and was about to begin construction, the news was only circulating among a very small circle. It had not been publicized yet.

Celine smiled as she said, "That depends on who the person is. You're one of my most important clients, so it's only natural that I would consolidate more information on you. I gather it's true judging from your reaction?"

"Of course, it is."

Jasper nodded. He did not plan to hide it from her. After all, even if he did not admit to it now, the news would have to be publicized for Waterhoof City's advertising needs in the future.

Since this news would be announced sooner or later, Jasper was willing to share the news with Celine.

Celine's eyes brightened slightly as she said to Jasper, "To be honest, I would be more than willing to assist your parent company in going public. Believe me, you would have secured the position as the richest man in Terra if that business deal went well."

Jasper shook his head, showing his apparent disinterest in gaining wealth through market inflation.

Frankly, he would never have considered putting Sena on the market if the tower project had not caused him to be strapped for cash.

Born into a family of farmers, Jasper had always taken the concept of 'ownership' very seriously. He would never allow the risk of his businesses being out of his control, which was why Jasper had ensured he had total ownership over Sena even as he allowed it to be listed publicly.

"What if Colossal Investments was interested in investing in your company?" Celine asked abruptly.

"The rewards are far greater than you can even imagine. I promise that you'll immediately earn more than ten billion Somer Dollars if you agree to sell 40% of your shares. Moreover, Colossal Investments will absolutely never interfere in your rights to operate and manage the company."

Jasper could not help but smile when he heard these familiar statements.

Had he not said the same thing to 'befuddle' Hudson Moore before?

Of course, all capitalists were equally corrupt.

"Oh? Wouldn't that be giving me money for nothing?" Jasper asked teasingly.

"Of course."

Celine propped her face up with a pale hand as she tilted her head and gazed at Jasper. This posture caused her to look a little less mature and slightly more playful and spunky.

"Colossal Investments would have to send over at least three people to sit on the board of directors. Of course, that can still be discussed..."

“Never mind,” Jasper said as he shook his head. “Miss Celine, I will never consider splitting the rights to my parent company. That’s my bottom line.”

“What a stingy person you are.”

Celine glared at Jasper as she rebuked, “You must understand that the reason so many companies are making it big now is because they’ve received help from the capitalists. How long would it take for a company looking to expand to reach a market price of 100 billion dollars if they do not receive aid from the capitalists? Or are you saying you’re satisfied with owning a company that’s only worth tens of billions of dollars?”

Jasper chuckled as he said, “I’m more of a backward thinker, and my poor background has made me particular about such things. The thing I despise most is people trying to leech benefits from me. Moreover, who’s to say I’ll only have several billion dollars to my name in a year?”

Celine was startled.

True. In her process of researching Jasper’s journey from rags to riches, she had nearly forgotten he had amassed his fortune within a year.

That was not just a shocking fact but a horrifying one.

“Alright, but please let me know if you ever change your mind. Both I and Colossal Investments will always have our door open for you.” Celine smiled elegantly as she changed the topic wisely.

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After dinner, the two returned to their respective rooms. When Celine was done taking a shower, Miss Stone reminded her that the assessment team had completed their report.

Celine immediately sat down in front of her laptop and began reading the report that had just been written.

The team from Colossal Investments always produced detailed, professional reports which an ordinary person might not be able to understand. However, Celine merely needed to skim her eyes through the report to capture the key information.

Sena's main role was in acting as a web portal. It was currently the largest portal within Somerland, and in terms of web traffic, it was ranked first in Somerland, third in Terra, and sixth globally.

Every day, tens of millions of people used the portal to read the news and search for the information they were interested in.

The evaluation showed it had large traffic, a strong base, and a bright future. However, the problem was it was difficult to liquidate and make a profit from it, which was why it was making losses now.

Its secondary role was in online games.

United Legends had already completely taken over the gaming community within the country.

No matter if you were in the gaming industry, the internet industry, or not in either, everyone was surprised at the popularity United Legends had gained.

Within a month of the opening of servers, it had reached a peak of 2.4 million users simultaneously with an average of 2.1 million users online at any one time.

These statistics were what other online games could only dream about.

The steady popularity of the game had caused some who were observing from a distance to become jealous.

According to official announcements regarding payment details that had been put out by United Legends, the game would launch a charging system using point cards the week after the first wave of beta testing was over.

Players would begin being charged 50 cents an hour for every player that surpassed level seven.

If calculations were made based on the assumption a player would be online for four hours a day and that there were two million players in total who had surpassed level seven, then United Legends would bring Sena four million dollars worth of earnings by simply using the points cards charging system!

As for the costs?

The net profit would be 3.58 million dollars after deducting costs such as manpower and server bandwidth.

These were the most professional statistics provided by the assessment team.

Earning 3.58 million dollars a day was a shockingly huge amount in the year 2001.

Even Celine, who had been exposed to such things before, was also shocked at how much money one could make off online games.

As United Legends continued gaining popularity, new servers would gradually be opened to the public as well. This number could only increase and not decrease within the next two years.

Unless the developers fell ill or got themselves into a mess that would ruin the game.

However, based on Celine's understanding of Jasper, there was no way such accidents would happen.

It was not rare for a company to earn 3.58 million dollars a day. At least, Celine knew of several large corporations that could do so.

However, the problem was that this was an internet company. While countless internet companies across the world fretted over how they could cut their losses, Jasper was leading Sena to a point where they could make several million dollars a day.

That was great news to Sena when they were going to be listed publicly.

At the very end of the report, a grade of S+ had been given.

According to Colossal Investment's rubrics, this was only given to companies that had the most potential to expand and grow even further in the future.

Celine had worked in Colossal Investments for a long time, but this was the first time she had ever seen the S+ grade awarded.

Miss Stone, who was beside Celine, also saw the report she was reading. She stared at the contents in shock and muttered to herself, "These statistics are horrifying. Could there have been a mistake?"

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“If you’re doubting the abilities of my team, in which there are three chief appraisers with at least 20 years of experience under their belts, you may file a complaint to internal affairs and request for a reassessment saying you do not trust the results of this report. But don’t bring me into this,” Celine said coldly.

Miss Stone said hurriedly, “Miss Maynard, I didn’t mean it that way.”

“I know you didn’t mean it that way.” Celine sighed. “To be honest, I was shocked too.”

Compared to Miss Stone, Celine had even more things on her mind.

Sena was just one of the many companies Jasper had control over. The other ones did not even need mentioning.

His real estate company was about to begin work constructing the tallest skyscraper in the world.

Terizone Inc held rights to the number one instant messaging software, a blue ocean market anyone would drool over. Although it was still difficult to make profits from it now, Celine had a feeling it would not pose a problem to Jasper.

According to Celine’s informants, Jasper seemed to be supporting Terizone in creating an online payment system. Celine’s instincts told her the words ‘online payment’ would be a mighty thing that would shock everyone.

Even his newly established electronics company had managed to dominate 80% of Somerland’s domestic marketplace by upgrading the MP3 to a MP4.

Apparently, several foreign merchants had gotten in touch with the electronics company in hopes they could sell the product overseas.

This MP4 product, which was developed based on patented MP3 technology, had attracted the attention of various western capitalists.

Who would have thought a tiny box could bring Jasper earnings of a million Somer Dollars a day?

This was when the market had not been fully utilized yet. If the product were sold overseas and brought about a ripple effect in the future, Jasper's electronics company was well on the way to having a net worth of at least three billion dollars!

Moreover, both the electronics company and Somerland's officials were highly supportive of the idea of selling the product overseas.

After all, it would benefit both the country and its people when a local product was exported overseas.

All these had been accomplished by Jasper alone.

If that was the case, how much money was Jasper's parent company worth?

This was the first time Celine realized she did not dare to even imagine the number.

With a jolt, she realized that both her past self and Colossal Investments had underestimated Jasper's power.

While no one was paying any attention, a tiny business group rooted in Somerland had quietly taken form and would soon expand to become a dominant force in the marketplace. Perhaps... it would even become a financial group in the future!

Could financial groups be formed in Somerland?

Celine shook her head and dispelled all her jumbled thoughts from her mind as she said to Miss Stone, "Contact the headquarters through the encrypted channel. I want to speak directly to President Paulson."

Miss Stone said hesitantly, "But Miss Maynard, if you take the time difference into account, the president might have just woken up..."

"Yvonne Stone." Celine's eyes glinted coldly as she stared at Miss Stone and called her by her full name.

"You seem to be getting more and more ideas lately. Do you think you're in charge of me now?"

"I'll have it done right now!" Surprised, Miss Stone hurried off to fulfill Celine's orders.

The call went through a short while later. Celine entered the study to talk to Paulson, the president and chief executive officer of Colossal Investments. Meanwhile, Miss Stone left the study.

Even as a personal secretary, she had no right to listen to a conversation of such high importance.

As Yvonne left the study, she caught sight of the laptop that had not been turned off yet. The report caused a look of jealousy and hatred to appear in her eyes.

Jasper's appearance had caused Celine to dislike her more and more. Before this, they had a pretty good relationship.

However, Yvonne could now sense that Celine was becoming less trusting of her and was maybe even dissatisfied with her.

It was all Jasper's fault!

A resentful look clouded over Yvonne's eyes as she thought of that. After secretly taking two photos of the report with her phone, she hurried into her room and dialed a number.

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After she entered her room, Yvonne hid in the bathroom. Her call was soon answered.

The person on the other end of the line was a man who spoke in a lilting Somerish accent.

"It's William."

That's right, Yvonne had phoned Celine's direct competitor, William. He also happened to hate Jasper with all his might.

William had always been looking for a chance to attack Jasper, but he was always too far away to have any chance of launching an attack on him. Thus, he could only repress his hatred of being tricked the first time.

Now, Yvonne was handing William a sword.

The sword would also hurt Celine, but jealousy and hatred were enough to drive a woman to do crazy things.

"Mr. William, I believe you wouldn't know that Celine and Jasper are in contact right now. They're planning to list Sena publicly again." Yvonne did not bother beating around the bush.

The other end of the line remained silent for a while. Only the sound of William's breathing that was rapidly growing heavier was heard.

"Which means that Celine was lying to me when she told me two teams needed dispatching to make return visits to some of our old clients. She was actually going to work with Jasper in secret and go behind my back to help him list Sena publicly, is that right?" William's deep voice, which could be heard holding back anger, traveled across the line.

Having such things being done behind his back was already humiliating enough when he was the president, not to mention the fact that he and Celine shared a competitive relationship in their workspace. As for Jasper, the two had a grudge against the other. How could William not be furious when he learned the two were working together while keeping him in the dark?

"The assessment report is already out, and Celine is talking to President Paulson right now. I'll send you a screenshot of the assessment report later. You'll understand everything after you read it," Yvonne said calmly.

"You're Celine's secretary, aren't you?" William asked abruptly.

Yvonne did not confirm nor deny the fact.

"Haha, what a surprise. Celine's personal secretary has betrayed her," William said mockingly.

No matter where you were, you would be looked down on if you turned and joined the enemy.

Yvonne's face turned pale from anger, and she bit down on her lip as she said, "I didn't betray her. You and I just happen to share Jasper Laine as our common enemy. You wouldn't let him have his way, would you?"

William laughed coolly and said, "Sena can stop thinking about getting listed publicly so long as I'm here."

“You’re wrong if that’s what you’re thinking. Sena was awarded a grade of S+ in the assessment report, and Celine has already told President Paulson that. The board of directors at the company’s headquarters will be receiving this report soon. Do you think that you, the president of Terra regional branch, will be able to go against the board of directors’ wishes?”

Yvonne’s cold words caused William to be utterly shocked.

“S+!? How is that possible!?”

“I’ll send you screenshots of the report. I don’t have any reason to lie about this, so if you really want to stop them, you must begin doing so before the board of directors at the headquarters have an official meeting.”

Yvonne hung up the phone after she finished speaking.

Then, she used her phone to send the screenshots of the report she had taken earlier to William’s email. She deleted her call history and the photographs from her phone immediately after that.

Yvonne heaved a sigh of relief after she completed all these actions in fluid movements. She sneered coldly at her reflection in the mirror as she looked at her crazed expression.

‘Jasper Laine, let’s see how cocky you’ll be after this!’

...

The next morning, Jasper stretched lazily as he walked out of his bedroom. When he saw Celine, who was smiling coyly at him as she sat on his couch, his first reaction was to pull his half-open robe tightly around himself.