

Life at the Top Chapter 1016

Echo sneered at Jasper after Wayne finished speaking as if waiting for Jasper to make a fool out of himself.

Jasper's gaze was calm as he spoke without a script in his hand. "JW Capital intends to invest 1 billion Somer Dollars into Abbylon Inc, in return for 51% of Abbylon Inc's shares.

"That collection of shares comes with ownership and legal personality, meaning that if JW Capital successfully invests, it will also become Abbylon Inc's majority shareholder.

"However, JW Capital promises that it will not interfere in Abbylon Inc's day-to-day operations. JW Capital will only employ two permanent directors within Abbylon Inc and will only be involved in huge decisions.

"Moreover, JW Capital also promises not to interfere with Abbylon Inc's independence over their personnel. Hence, any changes or transfers in Abbylon Inc's internal personnel will be decided by Abbylon Inc's operating team.

"JW Capital will also have a one-vote veto or a one-vote pass for major issues regarding Abbylon Inc. Should Abbylon Inc decide to change its board of directors in the future, JW Capital will appoint the chairman of the board of directors. Abbylon Inc will have the freedom to decide everything else."

Jasper's words were simple and as everyone present was an elite in the business world, they all understood immediately.

This meant that the moment Abbylon accepted Jasper's investments, Jasper would then become Abbylon Inc's majority shareholder.

However, since Jasper would not interfere with Abbylon Inc's day-to-day operations, it meant that Abbylon had free reign to do whatever they wanted unless it was a major decision, which Jasper still had the final say on.

Wayne frowned when he heard Jasper say this.

He knew that a 1 billion investment and such favorable promises were rare and highly desirable for start-up companies.

However, he was slightly uncomfortable about the fact that Jasper still held the most important power in his hands.

To Wayne, it felt like there was a chain around his neck and he was at risk of being suffocated at anytime.

Jasper noticed Wayne's frown.

Thus, Jasper continued calmly, "In comparison to Softwin, Mr. Marlon, my conditions are already much more generous. I'm sure that you've investigated the other companies I've invested in as well.

"Up until now, I still harbor the utmost respect for the operations teams and I've never vetoed anything before. Rest assured that I will not interfere or disrupt Abbylon Inc in any way."

"Bullsh*t!"

Echo interrupted Jasper.

"Who're you lying to whilst trying to sound so dignified and ostentatious? You're investing 1 billion and not interfering with the business at all, but you left the position of highest authority to yourself. So what if you promise them this now? Who's to say what'll happen in the future?"

Echo stared at Jasper and sneered.

Jasper looked at Echo and replied, “So you mean to say that should invest 1 billion and then give up on all shareholder rights? If Softwin is also willing to do that, then I won’t fight you for Abbylon.”

Echo’s expression changed.

There were many investments where investors did not interfere in the company’s operations, like angel investments or commercial financing.

However, that did not mean the investors were just putting in their money and not caring about what happens afterward.

To protect their interests, investors would normally add many conditions to the investment contract to ensure that they had the right to kick out the operations team from the company at any given moment. To protect their authority, they would have the operations team become their employees such that they would not dare to overthrow them.

Investors would still guarantee their own interests first when it came to future financing, shares dilution, or even when it was time to sell the company.

Life at the Top Chapter 1017

They did not care about what happens to the operations team.

As an international investment bank, Softwin Investments imposed very similar conditions.

“Mr. Welch, now that I think about it, Softwin Investment’s conditions are much harsher than JW Capital’s,” Wayne spoke.

Wayne’s words caused Echo’s expression to darken further.

“He’s just lying to you guys now, stupid. The moment the contract is signed and the most important rights go to him, you founders and the operations team will be under his control!”

Echo sneered. “Moreover, 1 billion? According to my investigation of JW Capital, Jasper’s company doesn’t even have that much cash.

“Sena had indeed given him a inflow of cash when it went public, but it was only enough to slightly relieve the risk of a capital chain rupture, There’s no way he can take 1 billion out in one go now!

“He’s scamming you!

“As I said, his goal is to use Abbylon’s shares to bargain with me. Just wait, he’ll start negotiating with me the moment you agree.

“I already know what he’s going to say. You want me to stop the attacks on your real estate company, don’t you, Jasper? And you’re going breach the contract and give up on investing in Abbylon, right?

Wayne's expression turned stern at Echo's words and he looked to Jasper. "Mr. Laine, while I'm unwilling to believe him, I'd like to ask you to give me some confidence in this matter. Otherwise, I won't be able to explain it to the others."

Echo's words were accusatory in nature, and even Wayne had to admit that these risks were real.

Abbylon Inc was too small, they could not afford to suffer such an incident.

He did not dare to imagine how his eighteen friends would sever ties with him if Echo was right. Even if they did not, Wayne would be too ashamed to meet them.

If Echo was right, it would mean that Wayne had been played like a fool.

Being made a fool was still the least of his issues. If Jasper's promise to invest in them was a lie, then the most important issue would be that Abbylon would have horribly offended Softwin. In this situation, Abbylon would have nothing to defend itself against Softwin's anger.

Abbylon was nothing more than an ant in comparison to Softwin.

Echo looked at Jasper and barked, "What bullsh*t confidence can he give you? He can't even pull 100 million out, let alone 1 billion. He might even have to sell his house and businesses just to pay you!

"Hahaha. But let's be real, if you want, you could always mortgage your property and take a loan from Softwin. I'll be sure to give you a relatively favorable interest rate. Hahaha.

"Maybe I'll cut 1 million from your interest with every bark, hmm? I'm sure a huge bunch of Somer descents would fight for such an opportunity, no?

As he stood under Wayne and Jose's burning gazes as well as Echo's mocking clamor, Jasper did not speak as he reached into his breast pocket.

Slowly, Jasper pulled out a small white rectangular card made of unique material from the inner pocket of his jacket.

The thin card was placed on the conference table before Jasper lifted his hand to push it toward Wayne.

“A ICBS’ cashier’s check. There’s a verified asset mark on it and a sum of exactly 1 billion. It is effective for three months, meaning anyone can go to any bank to withdraw 1 billion dollars.

“With ICBS’ verification as my guarantor, it means that 1 billion dollars has been temporarily frozen in my account as pay margin. Therefore, there’s no need to worry about this becoming a dishonored check.

“Will this inspire enough confidence?”

Life at the Top Chapter 1018

The words 'ICBS Somerland' were written clearly on this small card made of unique material that prevented it from being forged.

ICBS Somerland's Waterhoof City branch was clearly stated as the payment bank.

This meant that this check was verified and filled out by the Waterhoof City branch.

On the most important column specifying the value were the numbers 1000000000.00 in Somer Dollars.

With the words One Billion Only written clearly next to it.

Besides the written words and Arabic numerals, the piece of paper also had the Waterhoof City branch's verified electronic seal signifying the authenticity of this slip of paper.

This small white paper carried wealth that dazzled people's eyes and caused their breathing to quicken.

Ordinary people could never accumulate such wealth in ten lifetimes.

This was the year 2000. According to the domestic exchange rate for gold, where 1 gram cost around 100 Somer Dollars, 1 billion would be equal to 10 thousand kilograms of gold!

It would not be wrong to describe this sum as a mountain of gold.

Even Wayne and Jose, who had much more money than ordinary people, felt the corner of their eyes twitch.

This was 1 billion.

With this amount, Abbylon would never have to worry about funding again. At the same time, accepting these funds would immediately turn Abbylon into a large enterprise within the country without them doing anything.

There were few enterprises in the country with more than 1 billion in funds.

Despite Wayne's personality and Jose's wealthy familial background, the two still felt their heartrate quicken as they looked at Jasper whilst sharing the same thought. 'Having money sure is f*cking great!'

Producing a 1 billion Somer Dollar check as if it was nothing.

Not to mention that it was verified too.

There was no refuting it.

This meant that Jasper had already anticipated Echo's accusation, and thus made preparations to counter it.

'You claim that I can't even save myself because you're holding a siege against my real estate company? That my investment company is short on cash and can't afford to buy any shares? That I'm trying to scam them?'

'Sure.

'Then I'll pull out a 1 billion bank-certified check that can't possibly be dishonored.

'What can you say now?'

Wayne finally understood why Jasper could be so calm in the face of Echo's provocations and clamor. From Jasper's point of view, Echo must have looked like a clown performing by himself. He was not worth explaining to at all.

This reestablished Wayne's understanding of Jasper's tricks, the complexity of his thoughts, and how strong the man was.

Jasper had already predicted every last detail of Echo's plan since the conference began and had prepared accordingly. There was just no winning against Jasper.

Wayne could not help but glance at Echo when he thought of this.

As expected, he saw a horrifyingly dark expression and the corner of the man's eyes twitching crazily.

The man did not seem to believe what he saw.

"No way!"

Echo suddenly roared.

He glared at Jasper and shouted, "How can you still have 1 billion?"

"This money, this check! Something's wrong with it!"

Both Wayne and Jose shook their heads slightly at Echo's claim. The man had lost his mind.

Jasper would never forge a 1 billion Somer Dollar check with a verification seal even if he was crazy. Such forgery would be punished with a lifetime in prison.

“I could plop a mountain of gold in front of people like you and you’d still claim that I dyed brinks to look like the real thing.” Jasper looked at Echo with a glint in his eyes that the latter did not understand.

It looked like... pity. The kind of pity a hunter would look at his prey that was caught in his trap with.

Echo was going mad under that gaze.

“What kind of look is that?!”

“Who do you think you are? You lowly Somer hybrid! The lowest race of them all! How dare you look at me like that?!”

Wayne’s expression immediately changed at that. Even Jose looked at Echo in disbelief.

Jose was a Nawaiter. Even though he had grown up abroad, it could not change the fact that he was of Somer descent.

No Somer descent could let the matter go after hearing such a thing.

Jasper’s expression grew cold and he replied, “Did you just call Somer descents lowly?”

Echo also realized that he had said something inappropriate and immediately replied in a cold tone, “Don’t change the subject! Where’d you get the money from?!”

“I don’t need to explain the source of my money.” Jasper’s tone was frigidly cold.

“Mr. Laine, he’s not worth being calculative over,” Wayne replied.

“Since Mr. Laine’s already shown proof, then there’s no point in further hesitation. Let’s begin voting on the agenda of JW Capital investment of 1 billion Somer Dollars in Abbylon Inc in return for 51% of the shares.”

With a cold look on his face, Wayne raised his hand and continued, “I vote with 59% of the shares in agreement.”

Wayne then looked at Echo, who had an utterly dark expression on his face and said, “There’s already more than 51% support in favor of the motion, so your opinion isn’t needed anymore.

“But I’ll still ask anyway. Do you agree, disagree, or forfeit your vote?”

Echo slammed his palm on the table and roared, “You two vile and shameless Somer dogs! You did this on purpose!”

Echo then glared at Wayne and growled icily, “Did you forget what you promised Mr. Shon, Wayne? You kick us out right after we invested in you. Aren’t you afraid of Mr. Shon’s revenge?”

With that, Echo then turned to Jasper and warned, his words dripping with resentment, “So you’re really going to challenge Softwin to a full-on fight huh, Jasper?”

“Abbylon is the Somer enterprise Mr. Shon values most. Interfering with Abbylon means interfering with Mr. Shon and Softwin’s core interests here in Somerland! Trust me, you are not strong enough to bear Softwin’s true anger!

“It’s still not too late to turn back now!”

Jasper chuckled at Echo’s threat and got up from his seat.

Jasper’s actions had reminded Echo of particular unhappy memories, and the man took an instinctive step backward.

It immediately occurred to Echo how embarrassing this action was, so he took a step forward to return to his original position.

This back and front was quite a hilarious sight.

Jasper stood in front of Echo, and due to the difference in heights, the latter was forced to look up to meet Jasper's gaze.

“Go back and tell your master, Sunrizer. We've got time to slowly play this out ...”

Life at the Top Chapter 1019

“You... idiot! Let’s go!”

Echo knew that staying would only lead to him humiliating himself further, and understood that the current situation had already gone beyond what he can solve. Thus, he had to return and report it straight away.

Jasper gave a small smile as he watched Echo leave. Then he extended a hand to Wayne, “I look forward to working with you, Mr. Marlon!”

“And I you...” Wayne spoke, shaking Jasper’s hand.

“Gentlemen, I have to say that we still have a huge problem in front of us,” Jose continued with a frown, “We’ve badly offended Softwin now, so we have to consider how Softwin will react to today’s shareholder meeting.

“Once we’ve accepted your investment, Mr. Laine, my, Mr. Marlon, and Softwin’s percentage of shares will all have diluted. Softwin currently holds 20.5% of Abbylon’s shares after financing. What are your plans for this, Mr. Laine?”

Jasper fell silent for a moment before he smiled and replied.

“I’ll talk to Softwin’s headquarters about this. I’ll contact you when it comes to the specifics. After all, I’ll still need your absolute support in the follow-up for this matter.

Wayne and Jose exchanged a look and nodded.

Regardless of whether they wanted to admit it or not, the two of them had to understand that they were already affiliated with Jasper.

Jasper investing in Abbylon would definitely evoke Myles' fury, and Softwin would certainly target more than just Jasper in their upcoming revenge. There was simply no way Wayne and Jose could ignore this.

This was especially true for Jose, who looked very conflicted.

"If that's the case, Mr. Laine, then I should return right away. There's much I need to discuss with the others in the company," Wayne told Jasper.

Jasper nodded. "Alright. I'll find time and take a trip there too so I can meet everyone formally. Still, as I said, Abbylon is your company and I will not interfere. As far as I'm concerned, your capabilities are worth more than Abbylon itself."

Jasper was not lying.

Rather than investing in Abbylon, it would be more accurate to say that Jasper had invested the 1 billion in Wayne.

The man was worth the price.

Wayne smiled and replied, "Then I shall await your arrival in Harvey City."

"Alright," Jasper replied with a chuckle.

The duo soon left, leaving Jasper to stand by the conference hall doors as he watched the scene downstairs quietly. Jose told Wayne something as they walked out of the hotel before the two got into the car and left.

Jasper then pondered over how he was to treat Abbylon in the future.

Abbylon was unlike the other subsidiaries under him. Naturally, this was because Wayne himself was different.

Both their surnames started with 'M', yet Wayne and Hudson were completely different people. Hence, Jasper had to treat them differently as well.

People like Wayne would never agree to be someone else's subordinate, so Jasper had to treat him like a partner right from the get-go. The same applied to Hudson.

However, Wayne needed more autonomy than Hudson did.

Abbylon was going to be a company that would cost more of Jasper's money and effort.

Softwin's Myles Shon alone was a tough nut to crack.

Jasper had made it sound easy in front of Wayne and Jose, but he knew that this would be an extremely difficult feat to perform.

"Slowly, then. At least I've already got a good start." Jasper let out a soft exhale.

He knew that the old man in Sunrise Land would be notified very soon. His fight with Jasper would also begin to surface.

JW and Softwin still had a long, bloody war to fight over Abbylon.

Everyone saw how he had acquired Abbylon, Terizone, and Sena. However, only Jasper himself knew that Google, all the way across the Pacific Ocean, was just as important.

Google's rise would be JW's main support as it expanded out of the country.

Just as Jasper was deep in thought, his phone rang.

"Where are you, Jasper? I've already arrived at Nauritus City."

Jasper's eyes lit up when he heard the voice come through the speakers and he smiled. "I've been waiting for you for ages. I'll come pick you up."

An hour later, in the office in Southface River Tower. Greg looked around the brightly lit office and the floor-to-ceiling windows that displayed the superb and astonishing river view. He exclaimed.

"I only knew that you were rich and had a huge business, but it never felt like anything to me. It's only today after I arrived at your company that I realized that you've already walked further than most people will throughout their entire life."

Greg stood beside him and the two watched the quiet flow of the Southface River below them. Jasper smiled and replied, "You're just seeing a small portion of this. The whole company's moving to Waterhoof City in two more years.

"That's when the letters JW will resound all over Somerland."

Jasper was, of course, referring to the first skyscraper to be built in Waterhoof City.

Greg did not know too much about this, and he gasped, "But this building is still new, isn't it? Are you going to give it up so soon?"

Jasper smiled. "I'm just moving the company. I can still lease this office to other companies, you know?"

Greg looked at Jasper and answered. "As we promised, I come here today in hopes to start my own business."

Jasper nodded and said, "I know what you're capable of and that you have extraordinary talent when it comes to the managerial ranks. Go ahead, tell me what kind of work you want to do."

While Jasper and Greg had initially agreed to have the latter start from a clerk-level position, Jasper had changed his mind over the past few days.

He believed that starting from the bottom was too much a waste of Greg's talents.

Jasper knew Greg too well, thanks to experiences from his past and present life with this man. It was this profound understanding Jasper had of Greg's personality that made the man so trustworthy to Jasper.

As Jasper's property grew, so did his employee-base. There were tons of capable people under him.

However, a person's capability was one thing. Their trustworthiness was another thing altogether.

Life at the Top Chapter 1020

Winthin JW Capital and its subsidiaries, there were only a few people Jasper could trust. Wendy was one of them, of course; Malcolm and Jack too perhaps, but that was all.

Now that Greg was here, there was one more person that he could mostly trust.

Hence, Jasper decided to give Greg a special mission.

Greg replied determinedly, "I want to start from scratch. Regarding what kind of work, I'll accept whatever you assign me."

"But what if it's difficult and filled with obstacles?" Jasper's gaze burned into Greg as he asked.

"To be frank with you, I'm planning to assign you to somewhere completely new. It'll be a huge challenge for you once you go there.

"This is because it's going to be a completely new environment and industry. I can give you start-up capital, but you're going to have to start from the bottom for everything else.

"The chance of failure is extremely high and the road to success will be long and arduous. Therefore, I'll respect whatever decision you make.

"If you still wish to stay in the Southeast Province, then you can choose any position within the province and I will get you that job, no problem."

Greg was stunned for a moment. This was different from what they had discussed in the beginning.

Frowning slightly, he asked, "Can I ask what kind of work you're arranging for me?"

Jasper raised his hand and patted Greg's shoulder before pulling his phone out. He said, "Look at this, this is Nokia's newest mobile phone. Equipped with the Symbian operating system, this phone has many strong features and is really useful."

Greg nodded dumbly and asked, "I know, but what does this have to do with my job?"

Jasper placed the phone on the table and pointed at it as he explained to Greg, "If I told you, that this small gimmick will one day become an important tool that people cannot part with, and will also represent the prime application of future science and technology, would you believe me?"

Greg looked at the insignificant mobile phone on the table and answered instinctively, "Are you kidding me?"

"Someone said that computers would change the way people lived a decade ago. No one believed them, but look at the it now."

Jasper continued softly, "I dare say that mobile phones will change the way humans live in the next ten years."

"So you want me to manufacture phones?" Greg asked in shock.

"Bingo. Counterfeit mobile phones are everywhere within the country, but only a few are actually manufacturing their own brand. I want to enter this field, but I've got too much on my hands right now. I have too few capable people by my side, so you're the only one I can ask.

"I can give you a start-up capital of 200 million, but you'll have to find your own technicians, equipment, and employees. And I'll need results within the year."

Jasper reminded Greg, “Think about it carefully before you decide. Don’t force yourself either, as there will be no hard feelings regardless of your decision.”

Greg stared at Jasper and asked, “You’re going to trust me with 200 million just like that?”

“You’re worth the price,” Jasper smiled.

“Then what more do I have to worry about?” Greg shrugged. “If you’re not afraid that I’ll lose this 200 million, then I have no reason to be afraid of trying. Still... Where do you want me to start?”

“Cavern City!”

“Cavern City? Seems like a good place to start, considering it’s a Special Economic Zone,” Greg spoke.

Jasper chuckled and said, “That’s not the only thing. Being adjacent to Harbor City, Cavern City has the advantage of being by the harbor, which naturally makes transportation extremely convenient. In comparison to Waterhoof City, Cavern City also has a much thinner foundation, which means there’s more room for development.

“Waterhoof City is a special zone too. In fact, it’s even a municipality. But unfortunately, its foundations are too thick. Moreover, Waterhoof City’s already registered as the country’s financial center, so it wouldn’t be suitable to set up factories there.”

“Indeed,” Greg nodded and agreed, “I also heard that an equivalent area of land in Waterhoof City is five times more expensive than in Cavern City. Not to mention that it’s also more expensive to employ people there. I agree that it would be better to set up factories in Cavern City.”

“Go,” Jasper clapped Greg’s shoulder and spoke, “Create a whole new world.”

“Alright!” Greg nodded seriously, “I won’t let you down.”

Just like that, Greg took the 200 million Jasper gave him and made his way to Cavern City.

Neither of them knew when they would meet next and in what setting.

On the way back, Wendy was told about Jasper’s plans for Greg.

“Greg? He used to be our ex-classmate, right? We didn’t talk much before, but his story sure seems like a touching one from what you’ve told me.”

“It’s good to see him doing well now,” Jasper spoke.

Wendy looked at him and asked, “You trust him with the 200 million?”

“I wouldn’t ask him if I didn’t trust him. He knows what to do,” Jasper spoke calmly, “I wouldn’t just give him 200 million if I didn’t have my own contingency plans, though I do hope I’ll never have to resort to them.”

At this, Wendy changed the subject and asked, “Why the sudden desire to manufacture mobile phones, though?”

“Mobile phones are going to be an important electronic device in the future. The MP4s and MP5s we’re making now are nothing more than small fry to people in the electronics industry.

“The battlefield of mobile phones is going to be where the king of the industry is decided. Therefore, we have to enter the industry and start setting up in advance!” Jasper replied.

“If that’s the case, don’t we already have an electronics company? Why would you still ask Greg for help?” Wendy asked confusedly.

Jasper chuckled and replied, "Having both a well-known and a secret company is very befitting of our current situation.

"We might have to invest a little bit more in the beginning, but if it succeeds, 1+1 will equal more than just 2. We'd be reaping 3 or even 4."

Wendy shook her head and replied in exasperation, "Nevermind. I won't be able to understand your thoughts when it comes to business."

"Oh, right. Let's go to the county tomorrow," Wendy suggested.

"What for?" Jasper asked.

"Do you still remember Ms. Tiana?"

When she mentioned this name, Jasper's mind immediately filled with the mental image of an average-looking middle-aged woman with gentle features.

Ms. Tiana was Jasper and Wendy's homeroom teacher back in senior high school. She could be considered a truly nice teacher who had her students' best interests in mind.

"My familial conditions were horrible during senior high, and Ms. Tiana used to call me over to her office to eat lunch that she had brought from home. She even brought me straight to her house for dinner sometimes.

"But for the sake of my self-esteem, she did all that under the guise of tuition. How could I forget her?" Jasper answered softly.