

Life at the Top Chapter 641

Julian said awkwardly, "Jasper, I haven't even thought about these things."

Jasper noticed Julian's somewhat embarrassed response and said with a smile, "How about this, I'll give you a commercial property on Gold Pedestrian Street when you get married in the future?"

"Gold Pedestrian Street? What kind of place is it?" Julian asked with some confusion.

Jasper laughed and said, "Waterhoof City has built a demonstration site for the national pedestrian street early last year. It's still not that famous now, but from how I see it, it'll one day become a famous pedestrian street known throughout the country, even becoming one of the landmarks of Waterhoof City.

"If we buy it now, it'll bring in steady profits without any losses. Plus, I've always thought about being a landlord."

Judging from his words now, the shopping that Jasper had mentioned to Julian earlier was naturally not one that entailed shopping for clothes or luxury items. Those things were, at best, something to spend his pocket money on and not even considered a serious purchase.

What he really wanted was ownership of the commercial properties on Gold Pedestrian Street.

Jasper had only remembered about this business opportunity when he was counting the Hanks family's assets.

There had been a letter of intent written in Sirius's third uncle's name for the purchase of ten commercial properties on Gold Pedestrian Street and this triggered Jasper's memory.

Gold Pedestrian Street was but one of three top pedestrian streets in the country. It had now just been completed and was still many years away from becoming popular.

The disposable income per capita would increase when the national economy rose in the future. Simply put, when people had more money in their wallets, they would start to travel and spend. Only then would the potential of the pedestrian street really burst forth.

Jasper's trip to Waterhoof City this time was so that he could purchase Gold Pedestrian Street from Waterhoof City Hall. He had been here more than once in his past life, and back then, he had imagined that if he had a commercial property in a place like this, repaying credit card debt would not have been a problem.

He could even just relax and enjoy the rest of his life.

Now that he had power as well as a great opportunity in front of him, he would eventually follow through on his unfulfilled dream from his past life of becoming a landlord.

What was more, in terms of investment value, Gold Pedestrian Street was also, at present, the real estate project with the highest investment value.

Two and a half hours later, Jasper and Julian arrived at Wonderland Hotel in Waterhoof City.

They checked into the room they had already booked a long time ago. Given his title of vice president of Haddock Chamber of Commerce's Waterhoof City branch, Jasper wasted no time and met with the head of Waterhoof City's Investment Promotion Department in the hotel suite.

Victor Gul was a powerful individual.

“Pleased to meet you, Mr. Gul,” Jasper shook Victor’s hand and greeted.

“Mr. Laine, I’ve been looking forward to meeting you for a long time.”

Seeing as Victor Gul was able to secure his position as head of an important department, he was naturally a smooth and slick individual. He had thoroughly gone through information on Jasper earlier, and his eyes were scrutinizing Jasper as though he was looking at the God of Wealth.

Nowadays, attracting investments was the number one objective for any city in the country, and everything else had to be pushed aside. Someone like Jasper, a God of Wealth, was therefore a welcome guest of local city governments everywhere.

“The turmoil from the earlier Skyward Aluminum incident has not completely passed. Even a regular man like myself has heard plenty about Mr. Laine’s operations in the stock market. Many colleagues in my department also trade in stocks and have earned quite a bit by following you. I would like to thank you on their behalf.”

Victor said with a hearty laugh.

Jasper invited Victor to take a seat on the sofa and smiled. “Mr. Gul, it seems you know quite a bit about me.”

After flattering one other, Jasper explained his intentions.

“Mr. Gul, in all honesty, I’m here this time mainly to buy up all the commercial properties on Gold Pedestrian Street.”

As soon as he said this, even Victor Gul, who was not unused to witnessing great storms, could not help the change in his expression.

Life at the Top Chapter 642

Gold Pedestrian Street was a project of great importance even in the esteemed Waterhoof City.

One could imagine the importance attached to the project as it was under the direct supervision of the relevant divisions in Swallow City.

With the money Jasper was throwing in, Victor was shocked by his generosity and could not help himself from saying, “Mr. Laine, how much do you know of the current situation with Gold Pedestrian Street?”

Jasper replied with a smile, “The pedestrian street is connected to the Bund and is a total length of 1,033 meters. It was expected to be completed by the end of 1999 and would be officially opened at the start of the millennium. Apart from the few shops on both sides of the street that have already been reserved by some large companies, there’s still a remainder of 266 shops that are not for sale but only open for rent, isn’t that right?”

Victor laughed bitterly. “Mr. Laine, it seems you’ve come rather prepared. However, if you already know that the city hall is only looking to rent the remaining stores and not sell them, aren’t you putting me in a difficult spot by making such a request?”

Jasper was smiling as he said, “There’s no rush. I’m a businessman, and from a businessman’s perspective, there’s no request that can’t be discussed.”

“Mr. Laine, you may be a businessman, but the city hall and I aren’t. This sort of thing is a matter of principle. I’m sure you understand what I mean,” Victor hinted.

Jasper waved his hand as he replied, "Please don't be in a rush to decline, Mr. Gul. What if I say I want to build a 630-meter-tall building, worth a total investment of more than 16 billion next to Pearl Tower?"

Hearing this, Victor stood up abruptly and exclaimed, "Really?"

What was the domestic city hall lacking at present?

It was lacking in funds and political achievements.

In this era, a vanity project was the best way to boost their political achievements.

If it were other cities, this construction project that Jasper suggested was like him asking for the stars; and those city halls would find a way to retrieve them for him.

However, it was also a big enough project for Waterhoof City that the city hall would be shaken up.

"At present, the tallest building in the world is the Petra Tower in Marshmeet and it's only 451 meters. Although the 110 building that is still under construction is slated to be the next tallest building in the world, it's also only 509 meters.

"This building I'm proposing, however, is designed to reach a height of 630 meters. It'll be the tallest building in the world for at least ten years once it's completed. It will also hold the record for being the tallest building in the Mainland for at least 20 years."

Jasper was not just spewing empty words as they were all real data from his previous life.

The record for the tallest building in the world had only been snatched away by the Dubai Tower in 2010.

“I’m personally not that interested in the reputation that comes with having the tallest building in the world, but I think the city hall would be, am I right?”

The words that Jasper was saying with a light chuckle had pierced right into Victor’s mind.

He knew that the current deputy mayor of the city hall had come from Swallow City years ago and that he was desperately in need of achievements to prove his capability.

Would he not immediately become a close confidant if such a huge project was delivered to the deputy mayor on a platter?

Thinking of this, Victor, who was in his 40s, flushed red.

Jasper took a sip of tea. He knew that ordinary people could rent the property rights to the pedestrian street, but buying it was very difficult. There were, after all, many talented individuals in the country and he was not the only one with an eye for business. The number of people after such an opportunity could fill up the sea.

The city hall would not possibly agree without being promised adequate benefits.

Thus, this skyscraper project was Jasper’s bargaining chip with the city hall to exchange interests.

Jasper had no need for the title of the world’s tallest building, but the same could not be said for the city hall and Swallow City.

After so many years, there were already some promising results. Now, Swallow City was in urgent need of major events to boost its national confidence as well as increase its international influence.

That was why the Olympics had been so grand.

Jasper's plan for the world's tallest building would certainly impress the Waterhoof City Hall.

Life at the Top Chapter 643

"Mr. Laine, do you mean what you said? It's not a joking matter once I report it," Victor asked as he tried to hold back his excitement.

Jasper shrugged and replied, "I'm not a renowned individual but I do, at the very least, possess some assets and credibility. I wouldn't gamble away my future. What good will it bring me to trick you?"

"A businessman never does things that aren't profitable."

After hearing Jasper's words, there was a little more credibility to his plans even though there was no guarantee.

Victor nodded and said, "Alright then. I'll inform the deputy mayor in charge of this immediately. Could you lend me a quiet space, Mr. Laine?"

Jasper smiled and pointed toward the study. "It's quiet over there."

Victor went ahead, and when he returned in front of Jasper again after three to five minutes, the look he gave Jasper had softened incomparably.

"Mr. Laine, the deputy mayor has invited you to pay him a visit now. He has rescheduled his meeting and is waiting for you in his office."

Jasper stood up and said, "Let us go, then. We shouldn't keep the old man waiting."

...

Jasper remained in the office at the highest floor of Waterhoof City Hall since the early evening for negotiations that lasted about five or six hours. He had even taken his lunch with the 60-year-old deputy mayor in the city hall cafeteria.

However, Jasper had also gained impressive rewards from those five to six hours.

He landed an investment of at least 16 billion and had to complete the project proposal within a month. This was, of course, just a demonstration of his intentions as Waterhoof City would then give him the green light and offer full support in expediting the approval of the project.

The design draft had to be submitted within three months and the construction of the building had to begin within six months.

The above were the requirements made by Waterhoof City and Jasper had wholly agreed to them.

In exchange, Jasper would receive the contract for the transfer of ownership of the remaining 266 commercial properties on Gold Pedestrian Street.

In terms of price, Jasper had once again taken advantage of Waterhoof City. He had pretended to be hard of money and expressed that the 16 billion investment was not enough.

“Jasper, 266 commercial properties and each of them cost 20 million? That’s daylight robbery! And you still agreed to that? They must have taken you for a fool!”

Julian was extremely dissatisfied. Since he had now fully considered himself as one of Jasper’s subordinates, Jasper’s loss was more distressing than him losing his own money.

Jasper replied with a huff, “You have to look at it in the long run. In your opinion, 20 million is too expensive for a commercial property, yes?”

“It’s completely outrageous! A commercial property in the busiest part of Nauritus City in the capital of our Southeast Province is only worth 30 million!” argued Julian.

“Oh? You knew about this?” Jasper asked in awe.

He patted Julian’s shoulder and continued, “Would you still find it a loss if I told you that the annual rent for each of these 266 commercial properties that have an average area of 30 square meters will be more than three million dollars in the future?”

Jasper smiled as he noticed Julian’s eyes widening in disbelief. The man no longer dared to refute and offered no more explanations.

A 30 square meter commercial property with an annual rent of 30 million? Was it not too much of an exaggeration?

However, this was the power of a first-rate pedestrian street in the country.

By then, the commercial properties here would only be for rent. They would not have a selling price because no one would sell their golden geese. It would be a move more stupid than killing chickens to get their eggs.

“These 266 commercial properties have a combined price tag of 5.3 billion. Waterhoof City Hall has also allowed us to make the payment across 20 years. The rent will skyrocket up to three million annually in just five years, let alone ten years. By then, the annual rent for each of these 266 commercial properties will be 800 million dollars and in seven years, we will be able to recover the 5.3 billion. Where else could we find such a deal?”

Jasper rubbed his chin, thinking that the reserved and kind deputy mayor was a deity in disguise.

“Let’s go. Before we head back, let’s go take a look at our 266 golden geese.”

Life at the Top Chapter 644

While Gold Pedestrian Street was, at present, not as crowded and lively as it would be in the future, it was still popular.

It was way busier than any other city in the country.

As he walked along the bustling pedestrian street, Jasper thought of his past life. He had been here a few times, and one time, it was during a holiday. One would not even need to walk if they were caught by the flow of people. Being sardined by the crowd, they could only be dragged along.

It was not at all an exaggeration to say this as Jasper had actually experienced it before.

It was funny, but at the same time, it proved the horrors and exaggerations made about this pedestrian street.

One could even sell rocks for a sky-high price on a street with such high popularity.

Jasper looked at the distinctive buildings that lined both sides of the pedestrian street with his hands clasped behind his back, feeling very pleased.

Although he had not obtained concrete details on the list and location of the 266 commercial properties, given there were 300 to 400 properties along the entire length of the pedestrian street, he already owned more than half of it.

Right now, he felt as good as when he made billions on the stock market.

After all, a long-cherished wish of his from his previous life was to own a commercial property on Gold Pedestrian Street and to be someone who only needed to wait for the money to come rolling in.

Maybe he could become an internet celebrity blogger in a few more years after one of his short videos went viral. Others might create content about beauty, luxury cars, and big houses but he could easily share the deeds to the 266 commercial properties he owned on Gold Pedestrian Street. That would feel so good.

Although it had not even been a year since the pedestrian street opened for business, Waterhoof City had already spent great efforts on this project. All the big shots in Swallow City were watching, and they would not allow the commercial properties to remain empty.

That was why all of the shops were already open for business by now and many of them were opened by the relatives of those in the city hall.

On the one hand, those who were smart knew that this pedestrian street had the support of the city hall and thus, would undoubtedly be developed. As such, they seized the opportunity to leverage their connections and power to offer benefits to their relatives while the competition was still not as fierce.

On the other hand, Waterhoof City was also turning a blind eye to what was happening as they were just happy that the pedestrian street could become a bustling venue.

However, now that Jasper had bought over the remaining commercial properties, their smooth sailing days were about to come to an end.

“When the time comes, they will have to pay rent according to the current market value or clear themselves out. They will definitely not be allowed to continue having unfair advantages,” murmured Jasper.

After patrolling around his territory, Jasper was satisfied.

Feeling a little hungry, Jasper looked up and saw a restaurant not far away that served local specialties of Waterhoof City. Jasper then brought Julian along to the restaurant.

Food was the people's priority, and there would definitely be restaurants regardless of where one went.

It was even livelier at the restaurants along the pedestrian street.

Although it was already past dinner hours, there were still a lot of patrons at the restaurant. It was also obvious that many of them were tourists who had come to experience the local delicacies of Waterhoof City.

Jasper and Julian got a table after waiting for a good ten minutes.

"Jasper, there are so many people here," Julian lamented to Jasper.

He now somewhat believed Jasper when he said that the rent here would rise to three million per year in the future.

"There are two floors to this restaurant, so its rent will cost up to six million in the future. No, at least eight million!" Julian exclaimed excitedly.

Jasper smiled and said, "Do you like it? I did say before that I'll give you one of the shops when you get married. You can take your pick. This shop is rather small, though. The one I'll give you will definitely be the biggest one."

Julian scratched his head and replied, "There's no need for that, Jasper. The salary you're giving me is already enough for me to live a good life. I don't even need to worry about being able to put food on the table or clothes on my body."

"You might not need it, but your wife and children in the future definitely would," said Jasper casually as he gestured for the waiter to take their orders.

Life at the Top Chapter 645

Jasper decided to order only three dishes and one stew since it was just two of them. He also picked common dishes that were comparatively cheaper.

It was not that Jasper was frugal. It was just that food and drinks were the one thing he would not compromise on. In his opinion, one did not get rich by saving but rather by earning. However, being wasteful was not condoned either.

The waiter who was serving them was not too happy with this, though.

“This is all two large-sized men are eating when they come to Waterhoof City? These are all cheap dishes that don’t even amount to 200 Somer Dollars. How stingy.”

The waiter had a strong accent belonging to residents of Waterhoof City. Coupled with their sarcastic tone, it immediately caused those listening to feel uncomfortable.

“The two of us can’t eat that much in one go. Please just serve what I ordered,” Jasper said calmly.

“Foreigners,” the waiter muttered irritably to themselves before they turned and walked away.

“Jasper, that waiter has such a bad attitude,” Julian frowned as he spoke to Jasper.

Ever since becoming one of Jasper’s men, Julian had been to his fair share of extravagant events. He might be a bodyguard, but the servers would serve him enthusiastically all the same. The fancier the venue, the higher quality of service

that was provided. He would rarely get looked down upon, unlike what was often written in novels.

Thus, Julian had grown used to such treatment and became dissatisfied when he was suddenly confronted with the waiter's attitude.

Jasper smiled as he said, "Isn't this what usually happens in the country? There's no need to hold a grudge against her. We're just here to grab a bite."

The higher Jasper's standing in society, the better his temper became. He could not be bothered, nor did he even have the time to deal with those who were entire levels beneath him.

They might all be humans, but their time was valued differently.

Jasper earned, at the very minimum, a million dollars a day, while these waiters received a salary of fewer than 2,000 dollars a month. What was more, they worked in Waterhoof City. How could they be compared to each other?

Since Jasper had already made such a statement, Julian merely shrugged and did not say anything else.

However, Julian's patience gradually began wearing out when he realized that none of Jasper's dishes had been served even though those who had arrived after them had already finished their meals, paid their bills, and left.

The two of them seemed to have been given the cold shoulder. No one paid any attention to them for the whole hour.

No one said a thing, but Jasper knew it must have been done by the waiter who thought they had ordered too little food.

Jasper frowned.

He could ignore these people, but their attitude would destroy Golden Pedestrian Street's reputation, which would in turn affect his earnings.

"Julian," Jasper said calmly.

"Bring the owner over here."

Julian, who had long ago been unable to stand it, stood abruptly and walked down the stairs.

Soon, a commotion sounded downstairs. Then, Julian walked up the stairs with a man in his 30s. The man's snobbishness and impatience were evident on his face as he walked over.

"Are you the owner here?" Jasper asked.

"Spit it out." The owner had an impatient look on his face.

"Firstly, you have an extremely problematic attitude. Secondly, we arrived first, but why hasn't our food been served after more than an hour while those who arrived after us have already finished their meals and left? What's your explanation for that?" Jasper asked calmly.

"The two of you only ordered four dishes. F*cking hell, don't come to eat at Golden Pedestrian Street if you're poor. Who are you putting on a show for? Stupid foreigners, I ordered them not to serve you. Do you want to eat? Sure, you'll have to wait for two hours. Get the f*ck out if you don't have the patience!"