

Life at the Top Chapter 936

Steven's words left Conrad speechless.

He had heard similar things from Jasper.

Hearing the same words from the mouths of his closest family member and his enemy, he started to wonder if this was actually his fault?

Conrad looked out the car window in a daze, looking as though his mind, body, and soul had been sucked out of him. Even his eyes had dulled.

At this moment, a broad hand was placed on his shoulder, followed by Steven's gentle voice.

"Conrad, losing isn't scary at all. No one can win forever. However, you need to know why you lost and improve yourself. Make yourself stronger and go back to find the glory that belongs to you. This is what I hope you'll do."

Listening to his father's gentle words of encouragement, Conrad felt a lump in his throat and choked out the words, "But I lost terribly for so many consecutive times. This time alone I've lost two billion and now we're having financial difficulties all because of me."

"These are all trivial things," Steven patted Conrad's shoulder and said in a soft voice, "I will solve these problems, but from now on, you need to concentrate fully on training yourself. Defeating Jasper isn't what you should be thinking about now. Instead, you should be thinking about how to arm yourself."

"You don't have to go to work from tomorrow onward. I'll handle the company's affairs and pass the role back to you once you can stand back up again."

“I’m sorry, Dad.”

“I told you, you’re my son. You don’t have to apologize.”

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Though dangerous, Henry’s injury was just a superficial injury. In just two days, this brat was already leaping up and down, chasing Jasper down to ask about the big gift.

“F*ck, I took a knife for you. You won’t be so despicable as to lie to me, right?”

In the brightly lit ward, Henry widened his eyes and stared at Jasper, looking extremely wary.

Jasper said lazily, “Why should I lie to you? If I say there’s a gift for you, then there’ll be a gift. However, this isn’t the time yet. When you’ve recovered from your injury, then it’ll be about time.

Henry waved his arms around and said, “I recovered a long time ago. If it weren’t for those stupid doctors, I would’ve been discharged long ago.”

“They’re doing it for your own good and you’re calling them stupid? People like you deserve to be thrown to the side of the road. No one will bother you there,” Jasper said grumpily.

Henry leaned back on the hospital bed, crossed his legs casually, and twitched his mouth, saying, “They’re doing it for my own good? They’re doing it for a living and I know that better than anyone else.”

“Whatever the reason, you still have to listen to the doctors. You’ll only be discharged when they allow you to be discharged.”

Jasper glanced at Henry. "Your father took the morning flight back to Harbor City today. He has already given me this task, so you have no choice."

Henry yawned and was about to speak when Jasper's phone started ringing, interrupting his series of complaints.

Jasper took a look at the unknown local number and chose to answer the call.

"Hello, this is Jasper."

"Hey, it's Steven."

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“Oh, it’s Old Master Monty. How can I help you?”

“Let’s meet up and talk! You won’t refuse, will you, Jasper?”

“Sure!”

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In front of a coffee shop without a signboard. Jasper raised his head and looked suspiciously at this oddly quiet place that was even a little deserted despite being located in a busy area.

If Steven had not told him about this place, he would not have known that an elegant and quiet coffee shop like this existed in the most bustling area of Nauritus City.

Who the hell would run a business without hanging up a signboard?

Just as Jasper pondered about whether to give Steven a call, the courtyard door creaked open.

An old man with gray hair walked out.

The old man was dressed in plain clothes and had an extremely kind face that could put anyone at ease. He looked just like a neighborhood grandpa.

“Mr. Laine?” the old man called out in a soft voice, sounding extremely polite.

“Yes. Mr. Monty invited me and I’m here for the appointment,” Jasper replied politely.

The old man let out a slight smile. He spared Jasper a second glance due to his refined bearing, stepped aside, and raised his hand to lead him into the courtyard, saying, “Old Master Monty has been waiting for a long time. Please come in with me, Mr. Laine.”

“Please lead the way, Mister,” Jasper said with a smile.

The old man nodded and led the way with a smile on his face. Jasper followed him into the courtyard.

As soon as he entered the courtyard, he felt as though he had stepped into a new world. The courtyard was filled with flowers and shaded by trees. As he walked along the ancient-looking corridor, he could hear the sound of clear streams gurgling under his feet.

Isolated from the hustle and bustle of the outside world, they had stepped in from a concrete jungle into paradise with green hills and clear streams.

After walking for two to three minutes, Jasper saw a tall and sturdy middle-aged man in a courtyard pavilion.

This man was dressed in casual clothes and looked at him with a smile.

That man was none other than Steven Monty, the true backbone of the Monty family and the previous head of the Monty family that had Dawson sighing in admiration at the mere mention of his name.

“Jasper Laine?”

“Mr. Steven Monty.”

They exchanged glances with a smile and could spot a trace of admiration on their faces for each other.

“Come, have a seat,” Steven invited Jasper to take a seat.

“This is a place that I designed and built privately. It’s a quiet place to relax when I’m busy. It isn’t open to the public, and you’re considered the first outsider to have visited this place. What do you think?”

After both of them sat down, Steven said to Jasper with a smile.

“This is a very unique place,” Jasper praised while looking at his surroundings.

It was no wonder this so-called coffee shop did not have a signboard. This was a place that the owner opened purely for his own enjoyment.

On the topic of extravagance, the older generations were much better at it.

Ordinary rich kids would buy a bunch of luxurious goods, a villa, a luxury car, or a yacht.

Steven, on the other hand, bought an entire courtyard downtown. As soon as the main doors closed, this place immediately transformed into a mini-secret garden.

Steven chuckled and said, “Humans often fight for money, career, and status in the beginning, and when they’ve attained a certain level of achievement, they’d use what they’ve gained to enjoy life. What’s the point of earning so much money and getting to a high position otherwise?”

“That’s truly wise, Mr. Monty. My sentiments exactly,” Jasper said with a grin.

At that moment, the old man who brought Jasper to Steven returned with a coffee set. After lighting up a scented candle, he started brewing coffee without a word.

“Oh, the way of coffee. There’s a reason why coffee is called the way of life.

“Coffee beans make coffee, and coffee will lead you to the truth. Jasper, try this cup of coffee.”

As Steven said those words, he suddenly picked up a cup of coffee and handed it to Jasper.

His actions raised the eyes of the old man who was brewing coffee. He glanced in astonishment at Steven, perhaps it was because of his astonishment that his calm and steady hands trembled a little.

He had worked with Steven for 30 years and even watched Conrad grow. His last name was Whitlock, and even Conrad addressed him as Grandpa Whitlock.

He had never seen Steven treat a person like that even after working for him for so long.

It was a young man in his early 20s too.

Jasper, however, did not know much about the inside story and simply thought that Steven was excessively humbling himself in front of him.

Jasper picked up the cup of coffee and took a sip. He closed his eyes slightly, feeling the strong and fragrant taste of coffee rolling in his mouth. He felt a lot more refreshed.

“This is good coffee.” Jasper opened his eyes and praised.

Steven laughed and said, “Have a few more cups if it’s good.”

When they were done drinking coffee, Steven pondered for a moment before saying slowly.

“Jasper, I’ll be in charge of Monty Group from now on. I might make a series of strategic adjustments, perhaps even bring up a few opportunities to partner up with JW. Do let me have the honor to partner up with you when the time comes.”

Jasper looked at Steven.

He knew that the highlight of today’s meeting was starting.

“What about Conrad?” Jasper asked.

“He’s too tired and needs a good rest.”

Steven said to Jasper with a smile, “He made some directional errors which resulted in tremendous losses. It’s okay, though. This can be made up and salvaged. Therefore, I decided to let him rest while I manage Monty Group in the meantime.”

Jasper said meaningfully, “I wonder how you’re planning to make up for and salvage the losses?”

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Steven laughed upon hearing Jasper's words. He pointed at the courtyard and asked, "What do you think about this courtyard? If you like it, I'll give it to you as a gift."

"This gift is worth at least ten million. You're too generous, Mr. Monty," Jasper said.

Although he said that the courtyard was worth a lot, he was actually expressing his veiled refusal.

Was this man trying to dispel enmity with a single courtyard? How could Jasper possibly allow that to happen?

Steven took the hint and said, "This is just a gift. Monty Group took some wrong turns when Conrad took over. It will now return to its right path.

"Diversification is not entirely impossible, but we can't give up on Monty Group's fundamentals in pursuit of diversification. Monty Group will only be involved in the mineral industry and will not venture into other fields anymore."

If the courtyard was only the lead-in that no one cared about, then what Steven just said was invaluable.

Monty Group would not venture into other industries for at least three years.

In Southeast Province today, there were only two and a half local companies that were capable of contending.

Jasper's JW Consortium counted as one.

Monty Group counted as one.

Schuler Group counted as half.

The Southeast Province market was huge, covering an area of 110,000 square kilometers with nine prefecture-level cities, 20 administrative counties, and 60 million people.

At the same time, it was quite small too. After all, there were only so few that could catch JW and Monty Group's eye. Moreover, only one leader was allowed in each industry.

Jasper laughed. "You understand the principles of right and wrong so well. It would be disrespectful of me as a junior if I continue to shilly-shally."

Hearing Jasper addressing himself as the junior now made Steven chuckle inwardly.

Steven stood up and stretched out his hand toward Jasper, saying, "Congratulations to the two of us, then."

"Congratulations on what?" Jasper took Steven's hand and asked curiously.

"On having a new friend and one less enemy."

Steven watched as Jasper entered the car and left. Standing at the door, Steven's smile faded gradually.

"He's not arrogant from success nor dismayed by failure. He looks unconcerned and casual yet can take up huge responsibilities. At the same time, he knows when to advance and retreat. This kid is extremely unpredictable... Conrad has indeed lost to a worthy competitor."

Standing beside Steven, Mr. Whitlock asked, "Are you really going to give this courtyard to Jasper, Mr. Steven? This is your favorite place."

Waving his hands, Steven said, "I've given what I've given. These are all materialistic things. What's wrong? Do you think it's a pity to leave this place, Mr. Whitlock?"

Mr. Whitlock chuckled and said, "If this is what you want, Mr. Steven, then I have nothing to feel pity about."

"You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs. I don't know if I've made the right decision today, but I'm buying three years' time for Conrad. Hopefully, he understands," Steven said calmly.

"Don't worry, Mr. Steven. Mr. Conrad is wise. Even though his confidence has taken a huge hit after going through several failures, he's showing progress. I believe that he'll not let you down," Mr. Whitlock said to console him.

Steven laughed and said, "Thanks for the kind words. Let's go. We should head back and inform the servants to clean up this place before transferring the ownership to Jasper. We're not coming back here anymore."

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Southface River Tower. In JW Investment Company's office.

Wendy was assigning work to her subordinates.

"Mr. Ardolf, this is an extremely important case so you must follow closely with your team. Investigate the other party's background, and other relevant works must also be done without fail. Besides, we're tight on time, so I can only give you one week at most."

The middle-aged man who was called Mr. Ardolf let out a wry smile. "Ms. Schuler, that's a huge challenge for me. I can finish the job because that's my

responsibility, but one week is simply too short. I need at least half a month to get some results.”

Wendy, who was sitting behind the desk, frowned. She closed the folder and looked up at Mr. Ardolf. “Half a month to get some results? If it’s going to take such a long time, don’t you think it’s better if I get someone else to do this job?”

Mr. Ardolf could tell that Wendy was displeased and dared not say anything else.

Everyone in the company knew that the boss would not normally interfere. If anything happened, they would only discuss it with the CFO, Chief Financial Officer Wendy Schuler, and the COO, Chief Operating Officer Malcolm Malibu. Between them, Wendy was the lady boss, so she would have the final say in the company.

The lady boss was usually easy to talk to and unbelievably gentle. Though when work was involved, she would not show due respect for anyone’s feelings. During this period of time, there had been senior executives who cried after getting criticized by her. There were some who even got dismissed.

“The company spent so much money to hire you because we acknowledge your ability. If you can’t complete the tasks that the company requires you to do in time, then that means that the company has made a mistake in hiring you. We’ve overestimated you.

“For employees who fail to meet the expectations for their position and the money they’re earning, the company will have no choice but to act in accordance with the rules and regulations. Do you understand what I’m saying?”

Upon hearing what Wendy said, Mr. Ardolf responded loudly, “I understand! Don’t worry, Ms. Schuler, I’ll get it done within a week even if it means that I have to work overtime. One week from now, I’ll send all the information to you so you can have a look.”

“Go on then,” Wendy said indifferently.

Mr. Ardolf breathed a sigh of relief and turned around to leave when he saw the big boss Jasper standing at the door with a grin.

Of course, the big boss was not smiling at him. Even so, Mr. Ardolf still had chills as he greeted him carefully and with infinite admiration, "Hello, Mr. Laine."

"Mm. Hello." Jasper waved his hand. "You can go out now."

When Mr. Adolf left, Wendy stood up from behind the desk with a look of surprise and greeted Jasper, "What brings you here?"

Jasper took Wendy's hands with a smile, saying, "If I hadn't come, I wouldn't have known that we have an iron-fisted queen in the company."

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Wendy was a little embarrassed by Jasper's words.

Though in no time at all, she scrunched up her nose and said, "If it weren't for you, the boss who's always absent and does nothing, I wouldn't have to be like this either."

"Now that the company is growing and we're getting more business, our employees are growing in numbers as well. If I don't put on an attitude and use some means, I'll get bullied by those old birds at work instead."

Wendy sat on the couch looking slightly exhausted and said, "Now I understand why it was so hard to meet my dad when I was young. It's too tiring to manage a company."

"This is after we've implemented structural optimization in the company. If it isn't for the fact that the company's branches handle the majority of the businesses themselves, I think I'd really need to clone myself to finish so many tasks."

Hearing Wendy prattling on, which was rare, Jasper poured her a glass of water and said, "If you're really that tired, take a few days off to relax. The company is so big and there are always people to take care of the company. Let Malcolm share your burdens, and if that's not enough, hire a few more people who can do it. Work is never-ending. It won't be worth it if you suffer from burnout."

Wendy held the glass of water Jasper gave her and took a sip. "I don't feel comfortable leaving so many tasks to others."

After saying that, she blinked and looked at Jasper. "Why are you so early today?"

Jasper played with Wendy's fingers and said nonchalantly, "I went to talk to Steven."

"Steven? Conrad's father? The previous head of the Monty family? What did you guys talk about?"

The woman's curiosity was completely aroused. Wendy turned around and sat on the couch, facing Jasper while asking excitedly.

"What else could we have talked about? If he planned to stand up for his son, then he wouldn't have anything to discuss with me. Since he wanted to talk, then it's definitely a compromise.

"We each took a step back. I let the matter drop, whereas Conrad returned the position of authority in the family to his father. Also, the Monty family will not get involved in industries other than minerals for three years.

"This will give JW a chance to develop at ease for three years. Three years later, JW will not be afraid of anyone anymore."

Jasper was overflowing with confidence as he said with certainty.

"That's it?" Wendy was obviously a little disappointed.

"I also received a secluded courtyard downtown. I think your father will love that place. I'll transfer it to his name so we can go over and get some rest whenever we're free," Jasper said with a smile.

"Transfer? Don't bother. It's the same either way," Wendy said.

While they were speaking, Jasper's phone rang once again.

The caller was Darrel who was currently working on a business project.

On the phone, Darrel's voice sounded more mature than before.

"Jasper, it's me, Darrel."

Jasper asked, "I know. What's up?"

"Jasper, our first Hello Hotpot restaurant is opening tonight. Do you want to come over and try the food?" Darrel asked apprehensively.

Meanwhile, inside a newly renovated hotpot restaurant in the bustling downtown of Nauritus City, lights and colored banners were all over the place. Standing next to Darrel who was currently talking to Jasper on the phone was a young and stocky man. The man looked expectantly at Darrel as he waited for the result.

After some time, Darrel put down the phone and said to the man in delight, "It's done! Jasper said he'll come over with Wendy!"

"Really?!" the man exclaimed in surprise. He then waved his fist hard, saying, "That's awesome!"

This man was Jonas Yale, the founder of Hello Hotpot.

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Compared to Darrel's naivety, Jonas was a man with deeper thoughts.

In fact, after learning that Jasper was Darrel's cousin and Jasper's power from several friends, Jonas vowed to hold on tight to the precious treasure that was Darrel even if it meant risking everything he had.

It was not because of anything else but simply because Darrel had a great cousin.

Jonas was an extremely ambitious and cunning person. Although business in the several other Hello Hotpot restaurants he ran was good and his daily profits were as much as an average person's salary for half a year, Jonas was still not satisfied.

He knew that the true rich big bosses in this world would turn their noses up at his small business.

Unfortunately, he did not know how nor did he have the chance to venture into something else. Moreover, Darrel was the fastest and best opportunity for him to rise rapidly.

Equipped with a keen sense, Jonas realized that as long as he could hold onto this big ship that was Jasper, even if it was only a tiny position in a corner, it would still be a great opportunity for him to soar.

Perhaps Hello Hotpot could use this opportunity to skip the difficult stage of traditional accumulation of capital and head straight for nationwide expansion!

Driven by these interests, Jonas was more concerned than Darrel about whether Jasper would show up today.

“I told you your cousin would definitely come, didn’t I? You were so embarrassed to invite him earlier. There’s nothing to be embarrassed about. Honestly, he’s the actual big boss because he owns 60% of the shares!

“How could he not come to the opening of our first Nauritus City branch today? Besides, he’s your cousin, not a stranger,” Jonas said excitedly to Darrel.

Darrel scratched his head simple-mindedly. After months of working hard, his complexion was now darker and he was glowing with vitality. He was no longer the same white-collar worker just sitting around waiting for his doom.

“Yeah, it’s all thanks to you,” Darrel said from the bottom of his heart.

Staring at Darrel who had been taken advantage of by him, Jonas let out a pleased smile and said, “Let’s go. What does your cousin like to eat? We can make some preparations. We must not let him down tonight.”

Shoulder to shoulder, arm in arm, both of them discussed excitedly on their way to the office amid the greetings of the waiters.

At the corner of the crowd, a 16 to 17-year-old girl who was still very young but who had grown up to be a beautiful girl stood out among a group of pretty-looking waitresses as she stood shyly on one side.

She looked enviously at the bosses as they walked farther away, thinking about how she could pay for her little brother’s tuition fees after getting this month’s salary. At the thought of this, the smile on her face grew a lot brighter.

Even when she was clad in an ordinary waitress uniform, her beauty could not be concealed.

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In the evening, in front of Nauritus City's first Hello Hotpot branch that was brightly lit, decorated with colorful banners, and bustling with activity, a Bentley slowly pulled up across the road.

"Okay, Julian. Find a place to park the car and come and have something to eat when you're done," Jasper said to Julian before getting out of the car.

Julian nodded with a smile to indicate that he understood.

He turned around and took Wendy's hand. While leading her to Hello Hotpot, Jasper said, "Hey, you can't say that I don't bring you out for dinner in the future. We'll have hotpot tonight. You can order whatever you want and I guarantee that you won't be disappointed."

"You're really sneaky!" Wendy chuckled.

At the entrance of Hello Hotpot, Jonas and Darrel greeted them while dressed in suits. Jasper was about to walk over when his eyes were drawn to a timid and delicate figure in the corner of the crowd.

It was her!

Jasper had not felt ripples in his heart for a very long time. Now, this thin and weak figure had stirred his heart once again.