

Life at The Top – Chapter 1146

Not that Coffey planned to enter the room anyway. Thus, the man replied courteously, “Alright. Then I shall wait here at the door.”

Jasper closed the door and called Julian over. After changing into another jacket, he opened the room door again.

“Let’s go,” Jasper said calmly.

Coffey glanced at Julian and said, “Mr. Laine, the little prince only invited you.”

Under normal situations, Julian would not speak unless prompted.

Yet, here he was, speaking up before Jasper could reply. “Jasper isn’t going anywhere without me.”

Jasper’s expression turned solemn when he heard the other.

He knew that Julian’s words were not without reason.

Coffey narrowed his eyes slightly and stared at Julian intently.

The two locked eyes and the atmosphere around them turned heavy.

Julian's body was kept taut, and his aura was kept internally. He was ready to strike at any time.

Jasper had never seen Julian like this before.

"I'm not too used to sitting in other people's cars. It's alright if it's not convenient, I guess the little prince will have to come to the hotel to look for me instead," Jasper suddenly said.

Coffey frowned slightly. After a moment of thought, the aura around him disappeared and he returned to being a harmless middle-aged man. He gave a small smile and replied, "That's alright. Please follow me, gentlemen."

Jasper did not call Henry this time. With Julian in tow, he followed Coffey downstairs.

Once they arrived downstairs, they saw a low-profile commercial vehicle waiting for them.

Jasper did not get in. Instead, he had Julian drive his Bentley over and got into the passenger seat of his own car.

Coffey did not make a big deal about this as he got into his own vehicle and had it lead the way.

As he drove, Julian suddenly told Jasper, "Jasper, that man is a skilled fighter."

This was the first time Jasper saw Julian so wary of someone else. He asked, "Is he stronger than you?"

Julian shook his head and replied, "I won't know until we fight for real. But he's older than me and my body's in peak condition. If I don't lose in thirty hits, then he's no match for me."

Jasper nodded and smiled. "But I thought the older the sorcerer, the stronger they are?"

"That's just fiction. There's no such thing as magic in this world. There are such things as stronger genes, but it's not as prominent as it is in fiction. How strong you are still goes back to your physical capabilities," Julian explained with a smile.

They followed Coffey's car and took some winding roads. After more than an hour of navigating a labyrinth of roads, the car finally pulled to a stop next to a clean pavement.

Both walkways of the small street were filled with parasol trees, and there were vintage western houses all around. One glance was all it took to know that this was a very historical place.

Within the concrete forest that was Waterhoof City, such a quiet and exquisite place was prime property for the bourgeoisie.

Jasper inexplicably thought of the small courtyard Steven Monty had gifted him back in Nauritus City. "Please follow me, gentlemen."

Coffey led Jasper and Julian into what looked like a normal western estate.

Walking through the courtyard, they took the creaking wooden stairs upstairs and arrived at the second floor of the western building. Jasper then walked through the doors of a small private room.

After walking through the doors, he saw that the interior of the building was a completely different world.

The second floor of the western building had been renovated into a small stage, where two girls were currently performing ballet. The sound of a piano drifted through the air as this vintage room showcased the scene of a high-standard musical.

In front of the stage, right in the middle of the second floor, was a dining table. A young man was sitting at the table, facing away from Jasper as he watched the ballet performance.

“You’re stepping on land the consuls used during the French Concession a century ago.”

“Every single item here is an extremely valuable antique. I love them, for these inanimate objects come with the breath of time and age.”

“Every time I sit in this room, I can’t help but think about how those people have become nothing but artifacts of history after a century of hardship. I wonder if we would be remembered the same way by people in the future one day.”

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This was his first time meeting the little prince Dominique Royal, but Jasper almost choked on the other's air of pretentiousness.

Jasper looked at Dominique, who remained seated on his chair, showing no intention of turning to acknowledge him. Jasper gave it some thought before he smiled.

When it came to acting pretentious, Jasper liked to think that he was just as good as anyone else.

“I cannot hold onto the people who turn away from me. After all, the past will only add on to my troubles.”

“On the contrary, I much prefer the future. A time where everything is uncertain and up to us to decide.”

Jasper strode into the room with his head held high as he talked.

Julian took in the situation and followed instinctively.

Only for Coffey to tilt his body slightly and stood in his path.

“My apologies. Like me, you can only wait outside the doors.”

Coffey gave Julian a small smile and said gently.

The man’s tone was calm, but his gaze was firm and held no room for argument.

Julian’s pupils contracted and his chilling aura exploded. He replied indifferently, “And if I must enter?”

Coffey replied with a small smile, “No one can cause trouble in front of the little prince.”

Julian narrowed his eyes and stepped forward.

With that, the two men who were already standing close to one another physically clashed.

Julian's left shoulder knocked against Coffey's right, the former trying to enter the room while the other standing in his path.

Their flesh had obviously collided, yet, it made a dull thud as if a sack had fallen from the sky.

One man stood at the door while the other stood outside. One was trying to enter while the other was trying to stop him. The two men's strengths collided through their shoulders, but neither Julian nor Coffey moved.

Unimaginably powerful strengths clashed, and Julian's eyes shone brightly with wonder. With a slight harrumph, his body shifted and Coffey leaned back slightly.

The two looked at each other as they both shared the same thought.

They recognized each other's strengths from the brief conflict.

Julian's gaze was filled with the excitement and the urge to fight. It had been a long time since he had met an opponent that filled him with excitement and nervousness.

However, this was not a place for him to do as he wished upon finding a worthy opponent. Hence, Julian quickly looked at Jasper.

If Jasper nodded, then Julian would have no qualms about inviting Coffey outside to fight.

“Wait for me at the door, Jul.”

Jasper’s words completely dispelled Julian’s desire to fight and he took a silent half-step backward. His gaze was still trained on Coffey.

He heard a creak, followed by the sound of the latch being locked, and the door was closed.

“It must be great being young.”

Coffey said with a smile, seeing how Julian was still staring at him.

“I’d be no match for you if you were ten years younger.” Julian’s words were direct but confidence shone through his eyes after he said that.

“But right now, you’re no match for me.”

Coffey chuckled. He did not refute Julian's claim. The man merely closed his eyes to rest them and repeated what he said softly, "It must be great being young."

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In the room, the little prince Dominique Royal finally turned to look at Jasper.

Dominique's appearance was pleasing to the eye. His facial features leaned more to the feminine side, and despite being a man, he gave off a distinct charm.

This was especially true for the delicate shape of his eyes under his defined brows. The man's gaze lit up with an unforgettable shine.

While Jasper looked Dominique over, Dominique did the same to him.

The two equally young men observed each other quietly for two whole minutes without saying anything.

The ballet performance did not stop and the sounds of the piano flowed slowly like trickling water in the room.

Dominique eventually smiled.

“Have a seat.”

Dominique gestured to the seat opposite him with his palm.

Jasper walked up to take a seat.

Dominique’s gaze flickered back to the ballet performance on stage and said, “It’s a refreshing idea to hear an argument in favor of the future, Jasper.”

Jasper replied, “Your vision is unique as well, little prince. Not many so young prefer antiques and history.”

Dominique chuckled and replied slowly, “I had cooked up many ways of talking to you before we met, Jasper. But after seeing you, I realize that all those methods and tactics are useless.”

“So, I’ll be frank. I want to protect the Gardner family!”

Jasper nodded and replied, "Indeed. I do like it when things are more straightforward. In that case, I'll be frank too and tell you and I want to get rid of the Gardner family."

Dominique was neither angry nor frustrated when he heard Jasper say this, as if he had already anticipated this.

The man's gaze was deep and he showed no sign of the terror rumored outside. It was almost as if he was just a normal gentle scholar.

"I've researched you before this, Jasper. And all this while your performance has been exceptional. To be frank, I don't think anyone can do any better than you did. Especially as an entrepreneur from a normal, or even poor, family."

"From what I understand, I believe that you are a businessman through and through, Jasper. As a businessman, what matters most to you are your interests. You know that I wish to protect the Gardner family, yet you seem adamant about getting involved in this. This doesn't seem to follow your motto of what benefits you most."

Jasper's gaze also fell on the graceful ballerinas before him. The two men resembled good friends that were currently enjoying art together.

"There are short-term and long-term interests. In the long-term, maintaining a good relationship with you is indeed beneficial, Little Prince. But in terms of immediate interests, the Gardner family's existence is an obstacle to my plan."

“More importantly, I don’t know what relationship you and Norman share, Little Prince. But if Norman’s able to ask you to step up and protect him, then it must mean that he must serve some unique purpose to you. I also can’t guarantee that Norman won’t request you to target me, Little Prince.”

“So even if I give up on my plan of getting rid of the Gardner family, there’s still the risk of me butting heads with you in the future, Little Prince.”

“But if I continue on my quest of eradicating them, at least I’ll be able to guarantee my current interests.”

Dominique nodded after hearing Jasper’s calm statement and said, “Very well. Not bad, Jasper. There are no flaws in your judgment.”

Dominique reached out and took out a bottle of red wine as he spoke, pouring Jasper a glass.

Then, he swirled the glass of red wine with a playful smile and toasted Jasper. “This bottle of wine is part of my family collection.

“It was processed during Princess Diana’s fiftieth birthday by the British royal family sixty years ago. Excluding the one in the Royal Treasury Museum, this is the only bottle in the entire world. Let’s celebrate our acquaintance with this bottle today.”

Jasper raised his glass and the two transparent glasses clinked against each other with a clear sound.

Jasper tilted his head back to drink the wine. It was slightly bitter with a sweet aftertaste while its aroma was full-bodied and mellow. It was a high-grade red wine.

“It’s good,” Jasper praised.

Dominique chuckled and clapped his hands.

The music stopped, and the ballet dancers and the pianist got up to leave the stage. At the same time, from the dark area from which they exited the area walked out a shaky father and daughter.

These two were precisely Norman and Lisa.

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Jasper frowned slightly when he saw the father-daughter duo.

Norman and Lisa had not expected to see Jasper here either. Already afraid, the two of them were terrified now.

Dominique continued to swirl the glass of wine in his hands and said lazily, “Norman’s father used to be my grandfather’s driver. So, I suppose there is some semblance of a relationship between us.”

“But. A favor my grandfather owes has nothing to do with me. And I don’t see why a grandson must repay his grandfather’s debts.”

Dominique then turned to smile at Jasper as he said, “Don’t you think so, Jasper?”

Jasper did not react at all.

Norman and Lisa were stricken when they heard the little prince.

To them, the Royal family was supposed to be a definite source of protection. No matter how powerful Jasper was, there was no way he could do anything if the Royal family wished to protect them.

Yet, after they had just found shelter in the Royal family, the little prince decided to change his tune and send them straight into Jasper's jaws. 'What is the meaning of this?!

"Little prince! This, this, this isn't what we agreed upon!" Norman stuttered, his tone confused and pleading.

Dominique chuckled and swirled the glass of red wine, admiring the fine red liquid that had fermented for the past sixty years. It seemed like the glass of red wine was more important than Norman to him.

"This was supposed to be an easy job, but I changed my mind after I found out that it's Jasper you wish to trouble."

"What more important is that I've already asked Jasper about this, and he doesn't seem to have any desire to give up. Thus, I suppose I'll have to sacrifice you two instead."

Norman was confused when he heard Dominique's statement. Even Jasper was shocked.

He was even fully prepared to go against the Royal family before he arrived.

'But from the way Dominique acted, it seems like he's unwilling to become my enemy simply because of Norman.'

Jasper narrowed his eyes and quickly ran through everything that had happened during his brief interaction with Dominique. However, there were too few leads, and he could not deduce what was going on in Dominique's mind at all.

"You have to save us, Little Prince. We can't be given to Jasper! Please, on behalf of our history and what insignificant relationship we shared, please help us," Norman began to sob and beg.

At that moment, he felt terrified, as though the world was ending.

Norman had always been fearless while he still had the Royal family as his trump card.

This was because Norman believed that neither Jasper nor anyone else would dare to hurt him as long as the Royal family was involved.

However, this trump card was too valuable, and he would not use it unless it was a life-and-death situation. He was so adamant on this that he could not afford to help even when the Hull father-son duo was cornered and desperate.

Despite this, now that it was his turn, he suddenly realized that this trump card was nothing but poison to him.

Lisa was frantic right now and she mustered the courage to approach Dominique. She knelt and looked up at Dominique, trying her best to show the fair white flesh of her chest to him.

“You’re a generous and kind man, Little Prince. I’m sure you won’t just let us die, right? Just one word from you and I’ll do whatever you say.”

At this moment, the only bargaining chip Lisa had left was her own body.

Hence, Lisa had resigned herself to be treated as a business product and tried to Show off the ‘best’ part of herself in front of Dominique in hopes that he would change his mind.

Dominique chuckled.

He tilted Lisa's chin up with one hand gently and swept a playful gaze over every inch of her body wantonly.

Instead of feeling humiliated, Lisa took his gaze like it was some glory and pushed her chest out further. She thought that every man in the world was the same, and as a woman, her body was the most tempting weapon.

Just as Lisa began to build up some level of hope, Dominique said something that made her pale.

"You might not know this, but I'm a clean freak."

This sentence was a huge form of humiliation to any woman. Even for Lisa, who had long since discarded her dignity.

At this moment, she felt Dominique crush her dignity, throw it on the floor, and step on it harshly.

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“Things Fabian’s had his fun with, I find disgusting.”

Dominique then pulled his hand back after that and pulled out a clean white handkerchief to wipe the fingers that touched Lisa’s chin.

This action had Lisa, her face colorless, feeling further humiliated.

“If you want to live, I’m not the person you should be turning to. Ask him instead.”

Dominique pointed at Jasper.

Lisa and Norman looked over.

Jasper’s expression remained calm.

From the short conversation between Dominique and Lisa, Jasper had acutely caught on to something

important.

Dominique knew about Fabian, and he also knew of the relationship Lisa had with him.

This was worth pondering on.

“Ja-Jasper.”

Norman looked at Jasper. His gaze was conflicted as he called the man’s name with great difficulty.

Jasper’s gaze fell on Norman calmly.

There was no mockery nor any hint of boastfulness in his tone as Jasper’s gaze remained calm and unaffected.

Norman took a deep breath and suddenly fell to his knees in front of Jasper.

Bending his knees and leaning forward, Norman knelt curtly in front of Jasper.

“Dad! ” Lisa screamed and rushed to Norman’s side. She tried her best to pull him back onto his feet.

“What are you doing, Dad? Why are you kneeling for Jasper? You’ve gone mad!”

However, Norman pushed Lisa away and stared intently at Jasper. He looked extremely exhausted and aged.

“I’ll kneel for you, Jasper. I don’t ask that you let me go, but please let Lisa leave.”

“I’ll take responsibility for everything. I know that I’m in no position to talk about conditions. But as a father, this is the last thing I can do.”

Norman then bent over until his forehead hit the floor harshly.

He had prostrated in front of Jasper.

“Dad!”

Lisa shrieked, her tone tragic and utterly heartbreaking.

Despite this, Norman did not change his posture. He did not move, nor did he say anything. It was as if he were waiting for Jasper's reply.

Jasper had yet to say anything since they appeared.

Dominique looked at Jasper playfully. He seemed to be admiring this play; It was an act much more interesting than the ballet performance from earlier.

The atmosphere immediately grew heavy.

He could not tell if it was due to his weak body or psychological fear, but Norman's body began to tremble as he awaited Jasper's reply.

Norman was moments away from collapsing when a hand grabbed onto his arm and helped him to his feet.

"I help you up in admiration for your fatherly love. This alone makes you stronger than I am."

Ecstasy graced Norman's pale face.

'Was Jasper agreeing to let them go?'