

Life at the Top Chapter 566

Within a high-end residential area in the province, Nauritus City.

Zayden Hanks now lived in a double-storey terrace house.

That was right. Zayden Hanks had returned from Harbor City.

Zayden Hanks had undergone a major transformation since the confrontation between the Hanks and Jasper Laine in the province, after being sent to Harbor City by his father.

He was much more thinner than before, and kept his hair long and tied into a ponytail at the back of his head.

The feminine clothes that he was clad in did not look out of place on an ordinary man like him. On the contrary, he emanated an indescribable sense of cold slyness.

Zayden's father, Sylva Hanks, was sitting in the room as well.

Sylva seemed to have aged by more than a decade within half a year's time. His slightly hunched figure was perched atop the sofa as he stared at his son, who was standing by the side of the window and looking down at the view of the Southface River.

"Zayden, why did you come back..."

Before Sylva finished talking, Zayden turned around and smiled at his father. "Father, I know what you're going to ask me. That's right, I've come back to avenge you and myself," he said.

Sylva's fingers, which had a cigarette in between them, trembled. A flurry of ashes fell onto the ground as he spoke in a bitter voice, "Things are different from how they were in the past. Too many things have happened in the past six months.

"Dawson Schuler acquired the country's largest supermarket chain and set up a real estate company with Jasper Laine. In addition to the supermarket industry, that newly set up real estate company has also risen to become the largest name among the real estate enterprises in the Southeast Province.

"You've seen the development site in Southface River, right? Those tall skyscrapers are proof of their capability."

"Their current strength cannot be compared to how they were in the past. We've lost to them back then, so what will change now?"

Zayden stared into the distance with dark eyes. He sneered at the sight of the development site in Southface River, which was now the talk of the town. "What a lively area. They haven't stopped the construction even though it's going to be Christmas real soon. It seems like they're extremely confident," he remarked.

"Once this project is completed, it'll be the largest signature project in the Southeast Province. Not only do the municipal and provincial governments greatly prioritize this project, even the officials from higher order associations are looking at the type of development that this project will bring to the Southeast Province in the future.

"I've heard from some old friends that once the project at the South Bank yields results, it's likely that it'll become a benchmark project for the construction of new urban areas in other cities within the country. By then, it's significance will greatly increase."

Sylva laughed bitterly as he spoke. "Given their current position, what right do we have to go against Jasper Laine and Dawson Schuler?" He questioned.

Zayden sniffed in distaste. "Father, don't trample upon your own prestige by amplifying their status," he said in a frigid tone.

"Jasper Laine mostly relies on the support of the Laws from Harbor City. Before gaining their support, he was nothing. Back then, he was simply a nobody in the Southeast Province."

As Zayden spoke, he shifted his gaze away from Southface River and turned to face his own father. "This time, I returned with the support of a prominent figure as well. I must go against Jasper Laine!" He yelled out in frenzy.

He recalled the humiliation that he had received back in the Southeast Province, which had caused him to run all the way to Harbor City. After that, Jasper Laine had continued to trample over him. While Jasper basked in glory after presiding over Harbor City's economic rescue plan, he could only tremble while hiding in the corner.

All of this distorted Zayden's psyche.

The more he hated and feared Jasper Laine, the more his facial features twisted in rage.

Eventually, his face twisted in infuriation to the point where his bloodshot eyes glinted red as if he were a wild beast.

"Father, don't worry. Jasper Laine has rose to success way too quickly. As a result, he has blocked the paths of many people out there. He has made too many enemies.

"Now, it's almost a given that many people out there want him dead. These people definitely outnumber those who support him!"

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“This time, I’m here on behalf of those people. With their support, Jasper Laine will nothing compared to me.”

Sylva’s eyes twitched as he looked at his own son. He seemed like a stranger to him.

Sylva sent Zayden to Harbor City because he wanted him to live peacefully for the rest of his life after moving to a new place.

However, Sylva did not know what Zayden had been through in Harbor City. He had no idea why he had returned this time without anyone knowing and with so much anger pent up within him.

“Even with that being the case, the Hanks are all living cautiously. Furthermore, I’ve offended Dawson Schuler, who has now risen to immense power. I no longer have the right to speak on behalf of our family, so I cannot help you,” Sylva said with a sigh.

Zayden snickered loudly. “Father, do you still not believe what I just said? The Hanks are nothing great. They have so little influence that it’s next to nothing,” he said.

“Besides, we couldn’t compete against Jasper Laine back when you still were in your prior position and were capable of using the family resources. How could we go hope to against him now?”

“However, this time, I have the Laines’ support.”

Zayden smirked coldly. He decided to reveal the truth to his father in order to win his confidence.

“The Laines? Which family are you talking about?” Sylva asked. He was slightly stunned.

Just as Zayden was about to say something, a knock on the door interrupted him.

“I’ll explain things to you slowly later on. One of my pawns is here right now,” Zayden said. He proceeded to open the door.

The person who entered the room was none other than Terence Laine.

“Mr. Hanks!” Terence Laine greeted Zayden courteously from outside the door.

Zayden nodded and broke out into a cackle. “Have you met Jasper Laine?” He asked.

“I’ve met him. Hmph, what a haughty and bossy person. He disregards everyone other than himself!” Terence exclaimed at once.

“However, he’s no competition to you, Mr. Hanks. He’s just a tiny ant on the ground. Meanwhile, someone like you is destined to soar up into the skies like a phoenix and become a prominent figure in the industry, Mr. Hanks,” Terence Laine remarked in a flattering voice.

Zayden chuckled without denying what he said. After letting Terence into the room, he told Sylva, “Father, this is Terence Laine. He’s Jasper Laine’s distant relative. If I’m not mistaken, he’s his cousin.”

Terence took a step forward immediately. He bowed down to greet Sylva. “Nice to meet you, Uncle Hanks. I’m Terence Laine, and I’m Jasper Laine’s cousin,” he said with a look of fondness and flattery on his face.

“Please sit,” Sylva said in an even tone.

Terence did not dare to sit down. Instead, he turned around to look at Zayden.

“Why are you looking at me? My father asked you to sit down,” Zayden said. He feigned a sullen tone, even though he was extremely satisfied with Terence’s behavior.

Terence nodded and bent down to sit right at the edge of the sofa.

“Since you’ve met Jasper Laine, I’ll tell you what to do next. Your most important task is to find a way to join one of Jasper Laine’s companies. It can be the investment company or the real estate company. Join the company first, as it’ll be extremely useful to us,” Zayden said.

An awkward expression appeared on Terence’s face when he understood Zayden’s request. “You should’ve told me about that in advance, Mr. Hanks. I got into quite an awful squabble with Jasper Laine today...” he said bitterly.

“I have a 200-year-old piece of wild ginseng back at home, which I originally intended to give to you. However, Jasper Laine, that b*stard, asked my father to give it to him. Being the coward that he is, my father gave it to him immediately.”

“I even got into an argument with Jasper Laine over this incident.”

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Terence continued blabbering on about the incident. However, he did not notice the darkening expression on Zayden’s face.

“You piece of garbage!”

Zayden roared out in rage, cutting off Terence’s speech.

He pointed his finger at Terence, almost poking him on the tip of his nose. “What did I tell you before this? I told you to leave a memorable impression in front of Jasper Laine. Is that how you intend to do it?” He yelled in rage.

“F*ck, this is just perfect. You’ve left a memorable impression on him indeed, but you won’t be of any use to me anymore!”

Zayden grew angrier the more he spoke. He raised a hand and slapped Terence across his ashen face.

A loud smack resounded through the room.

Terence’s head whipped to the side from the force of the slap. Instantly, he clutched his face and got up from the sofa in fear. “Mr. Hanks, I’m sorry. I messed things up because I didn’t know about your plans,” he said in a hurry.

“Sorry? It’s useless to apologize to me!”

Zayden scolded him in infuriation.

“Who do you think you are? Why would I ask you to approach Jasper Laine? I asked you to do so so that you would be able to formally join Jasper Laine’s company in the future and collude with me in private!

“Who allowed you to offend him? How dare a f*cking disgrace like you offend him? How dare you?”

Zayden was engulfed in fury. Terence was so frightened that he did not dare to utter a single word.

Right then, he could tell that he had caused trouble with his self-righteous actions.

“Don’t be angry, Mr. Hanks. Why don’t I try to mend my relationship with Jasper Laine?” He asked, a despondent expression splayed across his face.

Zayden sneered. “Someone like Jasper Laine can end you by just lifting his finger. How dare you conspire against him? Are you seeking your own death?” He asked.

Terence rolled his eyes and suddenly said, “Mr. Hanks, don’t panic just yet. There are still other methods to go about this.”

Zayden laughed stonily. “In that case, tell me. What other methods are there? I’ll forgive you if you manage to compensate for your actions,” he said.

Terence immediately replied, “Although I offended Jasper Laine, he really admires my elder brother, Darrel Laine. Previously, I told you that my brother is in talks to work together with a boss from outside the province. He intends to open a hotpot restaurant chain in the province.”

Zayden scoffed and asked, “Aren’t you embarrassed to talk about some small, lowly business like that?”

Terence laughed drily and said, “This may not seem like much in the eyes of a prominent figure like you, Mr. Hanks. However, I received news about something today. My brother’s business is being funded by Jasper Laine’s investments.

“Therefore, Jasper Laine still admires my brother a lot.

“Maybe we can target my brother instead. We can achieve your goals through him, Mr. Hanks.”

Terence’s words brought a shine to Zayden’s gaze. His anger subsided a little as well.

“Really? Are you sure that you didn’t mishear? Did Jasper Laine really invest in the business?” Zayden asked three consecutive questions.

Terence responded in a hurry. “No matter how courageous I am, I would never dare to trick you, Mr. Hanks. It’s a hundred percent true,” he said.

Zayden walked back and forth for a while. Suddenly, he raised his head and looked toward Sylva, who had not said a single word thus far. “Father, what do you think?” He asked.

Zayden knew that his father still outclassed him when it came to strategizing. At a time like this, he had no choice but to ask Sylva for help.

Sylva pondered upon it for a moment before speaking slowly, “Are you planning to first plant a mole beside Jasper Laine, and have that mole cooperate with you in your future plans?”

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Zayden nodded. He glanced at Terence and said, “Initially, I intended for him to act as our informant, but it looks like that won’t work anymore.”

Sylva chuckled. “If that’s your intention, I wouldn’t say that the plan is totally ruined. If you manage to take control of these two brothers, you can do things in the open and behind their backs. It may be unexpectedly effective,” he said.

Zayden’s gaze lit upon registering what he said.

Sylva did not say much due to Terence’s presence in the room. However, Zayden instantly made a 180-degree change as an idea popped up in his head due to Sylva’s advice.

After organizing his thoughts, Zayden looked at Terence and snickered. “How certain are you that you’ll be able to convince your brother?” He asked.

Terence peered at Zayden hesitantly after pondering upon it for a while. He could not bring himself to say anything.

“Why are you hesitating? Say it at once!” Zayden said impatiently.

“Mr. Hanks, I know that you’re a prominent figure with extensive capabilities. However, I don’t know if that will be enough to win over my brother. Besides, my brother has just received an investment from Jasper Laine. He’s currently preparing to start up his business, so I’m afraid it might difficult to convince him without a practical excuse,” Terence explained.

Zayden sneered and said, “You haven’t done anything for me yet, but you’re already requesting benefits?”

Terence shivered as he caught sight of Zayden’s cold gaze. “Give me two days, Mr. Hanks. Christmas is coming soon. I’ll think of a way to convince him,” he said immediately.

Zayden hummed nonchalantly and said, “You can promise him that I’ll give him double of whatever Jasper Laine is offering him. After we succeed, the two of you will enjoy plenty of benefits.”

Terence suppressed the excitement in his heart. “Thank you, Mr. Hanks!” He exclaimed courteously.

“Scram.”

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Jasper did not know anything about Zayden’s return to the province. He was clueless about the fact that Zayden was currently coming up with a scheme to defeat him as well.

At that moment, he was having a discussion about work with Jack Tanner, who had just returned from Swallow Capital, at the investment company.

“Sena’s condition has generally stabled. Besides, it’s now the Christmas holidays, so most of the employees have returned to their hometowns for the new year. There are only a few employees on duty right now,” Jack said.

Jasper nodded and smiled at Jack. “You’ve worked hard during this period of time,” he told him.

“It’s just work. Furthermore, it’s not like I’m working for nothing. I’m being paid to do so. It’s my responsibility,” Jack replied.

Jasper massaged his temples and said, “I’ll still need you to be in charge of the work in Sena in the future. However, the investment company can’t be left vacant either. Do you have any close associates that would be able to share the workload with you here?” He asked

Jasper had long been dissatisfied with the performance of the investment company.

As the main boss of the company, it was impossible for Jasper to allocate all of his effort and time to the investment company. He needed time to handle other ventures as well. Therefore, setting up a senior management team within the investment company was a pressing issue that they had to attend to immediately.

Jack pondered upon it for a while. “I can inquire with some old friends. However, I’ll only be able to tell you the results next year. On the other hand, I’d suggest you seek out a professional headhunter company,” he said.

Jasper agreed with Jack. “Alright, I’ll hand this task over to you then. In short, it must be done as soon as possible,” he said.

After Jack agreed with his arrangements, he continued hesitantly, “Mr. Laine, I’m actually here today to ask you about your opinion on something as well.”

Jasper laughed and said, “Why are you still being hesitant in front of me? Ask me directly if you’re curious about anything.”

Jack asked, “Mr. Laine, have you ever considered letting Sena go through with its public listing?”

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A public listing!

It was the ultimate goal of any company out there.

Many benefits came from a public listing.

The most evident and important benefit was the ability to quickly obtain a huge amount of funds from the stock market.

With the support of countless shareholders and investors, the company would not have to worry about funding issues during its development.

However, a public listing came with its own set of problems as well. In theory, listed companies all faced the risk of being taken over by someone else.

Jasper had attacked companies through the financial market and brought forth their downfall by obtaining a majority stake in them.

Therefore, he had always been cautious about pursuing a public listing himself.

“Jack, we’ve talked about this before. The companies directly affiliated to JW will not be considered for public listings due to our company principles,” Jasper said in an even tone.

“I can understand your choice not to list the investment and real estate company. After all, you’re not lacking any finances in those. However, isn’t it a pity for companies like Sena and Terizone to not be listed?” Jack asked.

Jasper chuckled and said, “I have other plans for Terizone. As for Sena, I am currently the sole proprietor. I can withhold some of the shares and go for a public listing. As long as the shares are diverted to small stakeholders, a listing won’t affect my majority stake. Therefore, I can consider listing the company.

“However, it’s still not the right time to do so.”

Jack was stunned by Jasper’s words.

Nevertheless, Jasper had his own considerations as well.

“Currently, all listed Internet companies are facing the same problem. They’re all relying on their user capacity, empty promises and marketing techniques to attract investors. However, in reality, the inability of Internet companies to gain profits has not yet been fundamentally solved.

“Furthermore, Sena’s main operation is its portal business. Although its capacity has greatly increased after absorbing the users from Terizone, it’s still taking on losses despite being the ranked the top platform within the country.

“In my opinion, the portal website is not profitable. If Sena wants to be listed, it must be supported by a strong and sustainable profit margin. Otherwise, it won’t be able to withstand any external pressure even after it’s listed. Minor disturbances will easily result in heavy losses.”

Jack frowned and said, “You’re right, but everyone in the industry is facing the same problem...”

Jasper laughed and interrupted him. “Although everyone is facing the same problem, that doesn’t mean that we have to lower ourselves to their level. I have identified Sena’s profit point,” he said.

Jack raised his head in surprise. “Mr. Laine, you’ve found a way for Sena to make a profit?” He was shocked.

Jasper smiled faintly.

Of course, he had an idea!

Not only did this method make an Internet company profitable in his past life, but it was also responsible for creating the country’s richest man.

He was referring to the online game “United Legends”, that had been released by Senator Agency back in the year 2001.

The game industry was a vast blue ocean that no one has explored thus far. This was a space that would grow from nothing to a trillion-scale market in just ten years. To Jasper, it was a prosperous cornucopia.

Not only could it win over a large number of users, but the amount of profits it would generated was terrifying as well.

What was the value of digital goods?

A few lines of code, a few graphic materials, and a single server could create unlimited digital goods that could sell for tens of thousands, or even hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Only a fool would choose not to dive into this field.

Furthermore, in his past life, Jasper had experienced the rise of online games from a barren industry to its flourishing peak in just twenty years’ time. Jasper knew very well about the techniques that he could exploit to earn money from these players.