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Jasper smiled. "It's alright. If I wasn't afraid of him when he was conscious, why would I be now?"

Seeing how there was not a shred of logic or humanity in Ben's crazy gaze, Jasper spoke plainly, "I've been suspecting that you're just pretending to be crazy this whole time, and now when I'm looking at you, I was right."

Ben did not react. He merely glared at Jasper like a predator watching their prey.

"You know what I think? I think you're just pretending to be crazy so you don't need to suffer legal consequences. But your dad is screwed. His crimes are enough for him to get executed and shot. Or maybe an indefinite sentence if he's lucky.

"But... To him, to me, and oh, to you, it's the same, isn't it? Indefinite sentence and death, not really much of a difference there.

"And as for your uncle, Hans Hull, his time will come soon."

Jasper quirked the corner of his lips. "After all that he has done, the only reason why he's still safe and sound is because of the Hull family. But this is the end of the Hull family. All his enemies and all those family members of women he has hurt, they won't let him get away with it.

"If you look at it from a different angle, you could say his fate would be worse."

Jasper let out a light exhale and chuckled. "The Hull family is over, as I promised you before... And now you, without the Hull family's protection, it's over for you too!"

At Jasper's words, Ben suddenly stopped struggling.

He stared at Jasper with emotionless eyes.

He stood there unmovingly like a plank of wood.

The abrupt change had everyone looking over and staring at Ben. Ian even closed his mouth mid-shout.

Under everyone's gaze, Ben suddenly smiled and asked Jasper, "How did you know I was pretending?"

At that moment, everyone was stunned.

Even the hospital had diagnosed Ben to have gone mad.

No one ever expected that Ben had been pretending all along.

Everyone's gaze when they looked at Ben was now filled with fright. They did not understand how a normal person underwent professional tests by machines and managed to fool medical science.

The only calm one was Jasper. "A madman, yes, and you managed to escape despite being watched over by so many people. All the way here, tens of kilometers away.

"If that was all, then fine, but you just had to run to your own company. Now that was worth a slightly deeper thought.

"You must've seen through my goals and plans, hmm? You came here to find Derick, didn't you? What a shame then, since I had never planned for Derick to come back here."

Jasper's words had Ben bursting into laughter, to the point where tears began to bead at the corner of his eyes. He pointed at Jasper and was short of breath from laughing.

"Good, good, very good! I thought I had managed to scam everyone but you're good, Jasper. Losing to you? I accept my defeat."

Ben suddenly turned to prostrate to Ian.

No one was suspicious of this action, and the two men who had been holding him this whole time reflexively let go as well.

No matter how terrible Ben was, he still had the right to be a filial son.

However, Jasper frowned slightly because he saw the eerie smile hanging on the corner of Ben's lips.

"No!"

Jasper suddenly shouted.

At the same time, Ben had a sudden outburst and stood up. He rushed toward the edge of the rooftop before anyone could react.

"I'll admit my loss to you, Jasper. But you can dream on if you think I'll let you torture me!"

Before the words could reach everyone else, Ben had already jumped off the rooftop...

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Ben jumping off the building was something no one had expected at all.

Even Julian only managed to run to the edge of the railing where he watched Ben fall with wide eyes.

“Ah!”

Ian howled loudly and heart-wrenchingly.

As if he had gone mad, Ian was suddenly filled with unimaginable strength in such a hopeless situation. He managed to shake off the two uniformed men who were holding him down. He rushed toward the railing.

Jasper had arrived as well.

Both Jasper and Ian saw Ben's body freefall through the air and crash harshly against the ground.

There was a loud bang upon impact!

Fresh blood sprayed everywhere, and Ben's body splattered all over the ground like a watermelon. His organs and blood exploded everywhere, up to a five-foot radius.

No normal person could bear to see such a scene.

Watching Ben die before his eyes, Ian leaned against the railing with his mouth wide open and his complexion ashen.

At that moment, Ian felt all the energy in his body zapped away. It was as if he had aged 30 years.

“He’s dead. He’s dead...”

Ian stared at Ben’s disfigured body downstairs and the crowd that was beginning to surround it. Falling back on his butt, Ian suddenly wailed.

Ian did not say another word when he was finally dragged away in the end.

It was as if his heart had died...

Jasper did not look at him anymore.

Jasper had long talked to Henry about this, and according to Harbor City’s laws, Ian would undoubtedly be charged with a life sentence. He had smuggled too high a value of goods.

It was fortunate that Harbor City had demolished its death penalty, or 200 million worth of smuggled goods would surely end in execution by shooting.

The officers brought Ian away. Having witnessed such a huge problem arise within the company, the other employees were filled with fear. They all left to search for new ways to make a living.

However, Vita did not leave.

Instead, he walked toward Jasper and spoke in admiration, “Everything has been dealt with, Mr. Laine. Just as you said, Ian can’t fight back at all... Thank you. If not for you, our branch would’ve surely been troubled with that two billion Somer Dollar loan.”

Jasper smiled. “It’s nothing. We’re all just taking what we need here.”

Vita chuckled loudly. “You’ve saved my life. I would’ve lost my job and even got put into jail if I couldn’t get such a large loan back.

“Ignoring everything else, you can trust me with transferring Ian’s assets to you. I promise you’ll be satisfied.”

Jasper shook Vita’s hand and replied, “That’s all I request, to have all of the Hull family’s assets. As for the specifics of it all, I don’t really care.

“But, Mr. Layne, do tell me if there’s any problem with the valuation of the assets. I don’t mind paying a little more if it means my friend can have it easier.”

Vita was very content with Jasper’s words.

While he had not participated in Jasper’s plan at all, following Jasper over here allowed Vita to understand a little bit of what had happened between Jasper and Ian.

Having worked in the system for so long, Vita had to be a sensitive and detailed man for him to rise to the position of office manager in charge of asset management.

Jasper had exposed a large smuggling case involving hundreds of millions in Harbor City and destroyed the entire Hull family in the span of a conversation.

The power involved in this incident was beyond what Vita would dare to imagine.

Still, Jasper was far from cold and overbearing with Vita. Jasper’s extreme politeness had Vita respecting Jasper even more.

While it was not rare for youths to be ambitious, the fact that Jasper remained so humble and understanding after he had achieved his ambitions spoke of how limitless Jasper’s future would be!

Vita decided internally that he would treasure Jasper as the other was a valuable asset. Vita smiled. "Understood. I won't let you suffer any losses no matter what."

In tacit agreement, both of them rejoiced.

Returning to the hotel, Jasper found Henry sitting with his legs crossed. He was happily watching television while waiting for him.

"Done?" Henry immediately walked over when he saw Jasper enter the room.

Jasper nodded. "It's all done."

Henry clapped his hands together and laughed aloud. "Great. Promise me, you'll let me sell the goods on those two cargos."

Jasper replied in shock, "Sure, I already promised your dad this anyway. But will he give them to you, though?"

Henry harrumphed and replied proudly, "Of course. Giving it to my dad means giving it to me. He told me to find someone to get rid of all the goods and we'll split the profit."

Jasper smiled. "The Hulls have a total of 2.5 to 2.8 billion worth of assets in the Mainland. After paying for the loan the Hulls own, that's still 500 to 800 million. Well, at least I didn't lose anything."

Henry's eyes shone. "Would you be interested in the import and export trade?"

Jasper glanced at Henry and asked intently, "What's your idea?"

Henry snickered. "My dad promised me over in Harbor City, so I've started to look for people. But seriously though, I just realized how good it is to do import and export trade in the Mainland. A few hundred million in a year, just like that."

Jasper replied, “No thanks, I’m not interested. You can go for it if you want, but I won’t suggest going too big with it. Something tells me that this industry might only last for these two years. Profit is going to drop when the craze is over.

“By then, your profits will decrease while you’ll need to increase your capital. You’ll be making several million with a capital of several hundred million. It’s not worth it.”

With memory from his past life, Jasper was well aware of the change the import and export trade would go through as the country’s market developed. Not to mention that with competition growing every day, doing business would become more difficult as time passed.

That was why he had never decided to dabble in an industry with such a short lifespan.

However, it was fine if Henry wanted to do it. After all, there was still profit to be earned—albeit not much.

Not to mention that Henry had the Law family supporting him and enough support from all sides. If anything, he could cooperate with the Boyle family, a tycoon in Harbor City’s shipping industry who ordinary businessmen in the import and export industry could only dream of partnering with.

Henry now hung on to Jasper’s every word.

Seeing such a reaction from Jasper, Henry fell deep into thought. “Sure. I’ll do as you say. I’ll take what I can get now so that profit can still be earned. We’ll deal with the future when the time comes.”

Just as Jasper thought that the case with the Hull family had come to an end, he received a phone call.

Gale Hurlbutt wanted to meet him!

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In the same traditional-looking manor in Suesville.

After receiving Ian here as a guest a few days ago, Jasper appeared as well.

Jasper had always thought that Law Manor was huge, but it paled in comparison to Gale's manor. There were five entrances and exits each, and a courtyard that occupied hectares of land.

It was evident that Gale had put a lot of his wealth into this residence.

Arriving at the entrance of the courtyard, Jasper found servants already waiting for him there.

After clarifying Jasper's identity, the servant then ushered Jasper into the manor that had hundreds of years of history.

After seven to eight minutes of walking and passing two artificial hills, an artificial lake, and two lake pavilions, Jasper arrived at the inner courtyard.

Between beautifully decorated buildings was another lake pavilion, one that Jasper found Gale sitting in.

Though his head was full of white hair, he was a strong man.

Gale was reading when Jasper walked over.

Glancing at the cover, Jasper realized that it was a thread-bound ancient book, a rare 'History of the North and South'.

Jasper walked into the lake pavilion, and Gale shut the book before turning to smile at Jasper. "You're here."

Despite not knowing whether Gale was a friend or a foe, Jasper still held enough respect for the Haddock Chamber of Commerce's spiritual leader. He nodded and replied, "Yes, I have."

Gale hummed and looked down to read his book again. He merely pointed at the seat opposite him and spoke, "Take a seat."

Jasper sat before Gale as ushered, and there was a small round stone table between the two.

Like that, half an hour passed.

Gale continued to focus on his book throughout that half an hour while Jasper enjoyed the coffee served by the servants. He did not mind the fact that he had to wait.

Half an hour later, Gale finally put the book down and sighed. "I'm growing old now. There are times when I end up forgetting things while I'm doing something else.

"Especially when it comes to reading. Interesting plots take up all my focus. I apologize if I have made you wait, Jasper."

Jasper smiled. "You still insist on reading every day, Old Master Hurlbutt. You're a role model to youths like me. I'm honored to be able to learn from you. I don't feel like I've been made to wait at all."

Gale smiled and placed the book down. "Among this compiled 'History of the North and South' is 'The Tale of Casey Charles'. The troop of white horsemen is truly fascinating.

“Now that I think about it, you share many similarities with Casey Charles, Jasper.”

Jasper immediately replied, “You’re too kind, Old Master Hurlbutt. The white-robed General Casey Charles was a legendary general. How could I possibly compare to him?”

Gale smiled. “Historians claim that Casey Charles was a cautious man. Dressed poorly and uninterested in musical instruments, he was a horrible archer and even worse on horseback. However, he was great at uplifting soldiers and urging them to do their best.

“You, on the other hand, are humble and low-profile. You have never flaunted your ability and while you are ambitious and young, you have never held it over anyone’s head. In terms of business tricks, you are understanding of what people want and you are good with scheming.

“Would you not say that you two have much in common?”

Jasper looked at Gale and replied calmly, “I’m honored that you’ve paid so much attention to me, Old Master Hurlbutt.”

Beneath Gale’s snow-white eyebrows were a pair of wise eyes that were now filled with intent as he spoke, “I did not know much about you in the beginning and then Ian came to look for me to ask me for help.

“I became interested in this young man who managed to corner my student, so I had someone ask around for me.

“It would be fine if I had remained ignorant, but the more I heard about you, the more intrigued I became. You’re an interesting young man... The Laws value you a lot as well, correct?”

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Jasper replied calmly, "Old Master Law is very kind, he's been watching out for me a lot."

Gale nodded. "Let us get back to the topic. You should know that Ian Hull is my student and a member of the Haddock Chamber of Commerce."

Jasper gave a small smile. "This is the first time I've heard that he's your student, but I do know that the both of you hold a close relationship. I knew about his identity as one of the business people from Haddock right at the start as well."

"Yet you wish to fight to the death?" Gale's eyebrow twitched as he asked.

Jasper looked at Gale, the older expressionless, and stood his ground. "He crossed my boundaries! He touched what he never should have!"

"The Hull family has to die!"

"If not the Hulls this time, then there would only be other families in the future."

Gale replied calmly, "Young man, both of you made names for yourselves in youth. But Casey Charles had only come into power when he was in his middle-ages while you came into power the moment you made a name for yourself. There is too much hostility within you."

Jasper shook his head. "I wouldn't say that I'm a hostile person, but it does depend on the situation. Are you perhaps planning to take justice for your student, Old Master Hurlbutt?"

At that, Gale looked at Jasper intently but did not reply right away.

As Jasper waited silently and without a word for Gale to reply.

The early winter air was slightly chilly as it swirled through the small lake pavilion. The sound of running water and fishes swimming drifted over from a distance not too far away, breaking the silence between them. The scenery around them was splendid but the atmosphere in the pavilion was far from relaxed.

It was as if the relationship between Jasper and Gale, or rather Jasper and the entire Haddock Chamber of Commerce, was to be confirmed in this short span of silence.

“I am not.”

After a long while, Gale shook his head. There was a tint of disappointment in his calm expressions when he continued to speak, “I do not like Ian’s sinister and cruel methods. Much of the way he does business is against the rules of Haddock’s Chamber of Commerce.”

“However, his father had done something for me and I owe the Hull family two favors. For the first favor, Ian’s father had begged me to take Ian as my student. I have accomplished that.”

“The second favor, Ian had begged me to help him. I have accomplished that as well.”

“Whatever relationship I have with Ian has ended.”

The atmosphere lightened with Gale’s words.

Jasper let out a slow sigh. To be absolutely honest, if possible, Jasper did not want to make an enemy of the powerful Haddock Chamber of Commerce at such a point in time.

After all, business people from Haddock were involved in a broad range of business and they were all over the world. Members of this Chamber of Commerce in influential positions in almost every industry.

It was very unbeneficial for a rift to appear between Jasper and the spiritual leader of businesspeople from Haddock while he was still developing his business.

“If that’s the case, then I’ll have a lot less to worry about. From what I heard, you were the one who gave Ian that 3 billion, Old Master Hurlbutt?” Jasper asked.

Gale smiled subtly and looked at Jasper. “Why? Do you wish to pay me back?”

Jasper was stunned. Before he could reply, Gale then waved his hand dismissively, “Forget it. I am but an old man, I have no need for such money. Not that I can bring it with me in death anyway.”

“I’ve never expected to get that 3 billion back after giving it to Ian. Let the money sign an end to this incident.”

Jasper nodded. “You’re a generous man, Old Master Hurlbutt.”

Gale chuckled and spoke meaningfully, “Still, you have gotten rid of the Haddock Chamber of Commerce’s Waterhoof City Branch’s leading figure. Countless people have their eyes on the incident and they will focus on what happens to you ever since the moment you walked through my doors.”

“So promise me one thing, whether it is to placate the Chamber of Commerce, or to let an old man like me preserve my dignity.”

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“Please tell,” Jasper replied, sounding neither arrogant nor inferior.

In truth, Jasper had given Old Master Law a call when he made his way over to Suesville to meet Gale. He had also asked Old Master Law something, and instead of forbidding Jasper to go, Old Master Law said something intriguing.

“I don’t see a problem with you going to meet Gale Hurlbutt, Jasper. While that old man has a short temper, he sees his dignity as more important than anything else. There’s no way he would push that aside and do anything to you.

“Not to mention that you’ve really offended the businesspeople from Haddock this time. If you could get a positive reaction from Gale, then you’ll at least be safe from open attacks from the Haddock Chamber of Commerce.

“But be extremely cautious when dealing with Gale, Jasper. This man is very sly, and there’s more to him than his facade of being uncaring and retired.”

With those words still echoing in his ear, Jasper thought back to everything that had happened since he met Gale.

Jasper did indeed feel that Gale had more in mind for him, but there was no confirming whether they were good or bad plans.

Gale’s white eyebrows twitched slightly, and he smiled at Jasper. “Do not worry, young man. I am not the kind who would hold the fact that I am your elder over your head. If anything, I would propose a win-win bargain.

“I am sure that you are aware of Waterhoof City being our country’s financial center even without me telling you. There will only be more use for Waterhoof

City in the future and policies would only begin to favor the city more. It is a treasurable plot of land.

“Our chamber of commerce had initially planned the speed up development in Waterhoof City, but we had not expected a young man like you to appear mid-way and almost overpower our Waterhoof City branch’s forces in one go.

“Since this is a loss you caused, it is only right that you fix the issue.”

Gale’s eyes were filled with intent when he spoke. He looked at Jasper meaningfully. “I have decided to have you take the role of Waterhoof City branch’s vice president. You will be required to preside over the Haddock Chamber of Commerce as it integrates into Waterhoof City.”

Jasper was stunned.

He had prepared himself for Gale stating a large price to pay or that there would be a sinister plan in store for him.

The last thing Jasper imagined was for this old man to welcome him into the Haddock Chamber of Commerce while also giving him the position of Waterhoof City branch’s vice president.

As this position was out of his scope, Jasper frowned and shook his head. “I’m sorry. I’m not even a member of the Haddock Chamber of Commerce to begin with, nor do I have any plans to enter any chambers of commerce for the time being. Especially not as the vice president of a city as important as Waterhoof City... I don’t think that’s a good idea.”

Unsurprised by Jasper’s reaction, Gale chuckled and replied, “We call it a chamber of commerce, but it is more of a loose community than anything else. There are no limitations when it comes to the members. Of course...

“I could give you a formal promise if you require. The chamber will not force you to do anything you are unwilling to do.

“However, no matter how loose this community is, it is still an organization with centuries of history. I do not wish to see the Haddock Chamber of Commerce come to an end in my hands.”

“Waterhoof City is important, but there are too few people within the chamber suitable for such a job... You, however, are the best fit for the role.”

Gale turned to Jasper seriously before continuing, “Three years. I just need you to take the role for three years. Then you may leave if you wish.”

Jasper frowned. “What if I become the vice president in name only, Old Master Hurlbutt? What if I spend those three years lazing about and make no contributions at all?”

Gale smiled. “As I said, the chamber will not force you to do anything. If you do not wish to do anything for those three years, that is fine as well.”

The nicer Gale was being, the more Jasper wary Jasper felt.

Yet no matter how he mulled over it, Jasper could not find any obvious issues with the proposal.