

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 146 -

Chapter 146

“Huh?!” James’ jaw dropped to the floor looking at the representatives **from** the Hummer family kneeling toward him.

Everyone’s eyes were as big as saucers as they stared in disbelief.

Who would’ve thought that the high and mighty Hummer family would ever kneel toward them in their **lives?**

Were **these** mega-bigshots ever this humble before? What was wrong with them today? Were they sick or something?

“What’s happening? Didn’t the Hummers come to retaliate? Why are they all kneeling?”

“What are the Hummers doing? This isn’t some kind of reverse psychology tactic, right?”

“Something’s fishy here. I think this is part of their plan!”

As the Nicholsons continued to stare at the Hummers who were kneeling in front of them, not only were they not the least bit happy about this, but this even frightened them tremendously.

Some of their legs even gave out as time passed. That was because the scene in front of them **was too** overwhelming for them to handle.

To think that a mega bigshot would kneel for them? They **couldn’t** even see it happening in their dreams.

“Forgive me. Ms. Nicholson. The Hummers were the ones who were at fault last night. Thus, we are gathered here today for the young lady to offer **her** sincere apologies to you in person. I hope you can forgive **us**, Ms. Nicholson.” Aft

er Fletcher took the lead and spoke up, he immediately bent down and kneeled **on** the ground

with the utmost sincerity.

“Our sincere apologies, Ms. Nicholson!” The representatives from the Hummer family shouted. All of them kneeled in unison afterward, without much thought for their reputation.

Such a turn of events dumbfounded the Nicholsons yet **again**. So, it **was** true! The Hummers were apologizing

to them!

But the question now was, why?

“W—

why are you all? What is going on, Mr. Lawson?” Dahlia stuttered while lying on her hospital bed. She **was**

so antsy about the situation that she immediately got out of bed.

Weren’t they here for revenge? Why were they kneeling toward her?

“The Hummers aren’t unreasonable people. We admit our mistakes **when we’ve** done **wrong**, so we hope **that** you can forgive us for our trespasses, Ms. Nicholson, Fletcher replied with his **head lowered**.

“What are you talking about, Mr. Lawson? Please get up quickly! I’m afraid there **has** been a

misunderstanding. We’d already be glad if the matter **was** dropped entirely. **What** other reason do we have to accuse the Hummer **family** of?” Florence **apologized profusely** with a big smile after she came to her senses.

“Yes, she’s right! Please get up from the floor, Mr. Lawson!” The Nicholsons were still in a state of shock even

now.

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To them, it was already a huge relief that the Hummers were willing to let the matter slide. They wouldn't ever **have** the guts to coerce them into apologizing to them.

"As long **as** you continue to refuse to accept our apology, we'll continue kneeling like this until the **end** of time. Ms. Nicholson." Fletcher insisted stubbornly.

"Please get off the floor, Mr. Lawson. Let's just pretend none of this ever happened, alright? **Dahlia** spluttered, somewhat at a loss for words.

Even though Tina was the one who was at fault, she ended up being **the** one who suffered more severe injuries

than Dahlia.

While she was expected to recover in about three to five days, she doubted if Tina could even get out of bed by herself without resting in bed for half a month first.

This **was** the main reason she was so speechless when she heard that Tina, a member of the usually pigheaded Hummer family, was **even** going to apologize to her.

"Thank you, Ms. Nicholson, for being so kind to us!" Fletcher exclaimed as his face lit up with joy. He proceeded to give her a bow before gesturing for the representatives from the Hummer family to get up off the

floor.

"This is great. So it was a misunderstanding, after all. We should be fine now." Florence let out a long sigh of

relief.

Although she didn't know what had just happened, it was obvious that they managed to tide through this time

of crisis unscathed.

"That's right! Peace and harmony bring wealth, after all!" James grinned, even though his back was drenched

in a cold sweat.

Just when everyone thought that they were safe, Dustin suddenly spoke out, “Wait a minute. Tina **was** the one who beat Dahlia up, so it’s only fair that she apologize too,”

The crowd immediately burst into an uproar the moment they heard that. Some of the representatives from the Hummer family started exchanging glances with frowns on their faces.

Meanwhile, it felt as if the Nicholsons had been struck by lightning, as all of them remained frozen on the spot.

Was that man batshit **crazy**?!

The Hummers had **already** announced **that** they planned to drop the matter entirely, so why was it that this man still insisted on courting death on their behalf?

It was one thing to beat her up and cause such a huge disaster to happen in the first place, so why did he still insist on getting an apology out of Ms. Hummer when the Hummers had already decided to drop the matter?

The f*cking audacity of this bastard!

“Rhys! Have you been kicked in the head by a donkey? If you don’t know what to say, then shut up!” The moment she reeled back from her shock, Florence barked at him out of fear,

“You little shit! If you **want** to f*cking kick the bucket so much, why **don’t** you **keep** us out of this!” James

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cursed and felt like going up to him to throw hands.

“Some balls you got. Rhys! The Hummers let you off by the **grace** of their hearts, **and** yet you still **dare** to say that so shamelessly! Do you **want** to die so **badly**?”

To them, Dustin was a lunatic **who spouted** nonsense. Both parties **had** already reconciled with one another, so **why** bother stirring up trouble again?

What if this angered the Hummers? Then, who would be the one to take the fall?

“Is it not right to seek an apology from someone who beat you up? Am I wrong?” Dustin asked plainly.

“Shut the f*ck up, **Rhys!** You’re a nuisance. You’re going to get us killed!” Florence jumped to her feet **and**

cursed.

“Dustin! Please stop this, okay?” Dahlia pleaded as she broke out in a cold sweat too.

She hadn’t expected the man in front of her to spew such outrageous words from his mouth in their current predicament.

“Fine. I’ll shut up. I’ll leave the rest up to all of you,” Dustin replied. Without saying anything more, he retreated to a corner, by his own admission.

“I think his brain must have been fried, Ms. Hummer. Thus, you shouldn’t pay him any mind.” Florence immediately lunged forward to apologize, **as** she was afraid of offending the Hummer family.

“Yes, yes! This guy **is** a psychopath. He no longer has dealings with the Nicholsons.” James **was** also full of smiles as he feigned humility.

However, instead of feeling any sort of relief, the representatives from the Hummer family turned

extraordinarily gloomy instead.

After Fletcher whispered a few words to Tina, who was nearly fully paralyzed in her wheelchair, Tina gritted her teeth and finally opened her mouth to **croak** something.

1–I’m sorry...it **was** all my fault,” She said, out of breath.

The whole room fell dead silent the moment she finished.

Florence and the **rest** were even more shell-shocked, as their expressions immediately twisted into shock.

Did the spoiled young lady of the Hummers, the one who called all the shots in Swinton, actually just apologize?

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When Tina and her entourage left the scene, the Nicholsons still felt like they were in a daze.

They were still reeling at the fact that the high and mighty young lady of the Hummer family had not only pardoned their wrongdoings but was also the first to humble herself and apologize to them in person after getting her ass whooped.

It was truly unfathomable!

“What’s wrong with the Hummers today? Who knew that they could even be this humble?”

“I know, right? If I hadn’t pinched myself, I would have thought I was dreaming!”

“Could it be that Ms. Hummer genuinely realized her mistakes, and that’s why she came over to apologize in person?”

“Nonsense! You overestimate how righteous the Hummer family can be!”

The Nicholsons erupted into a flurry of discussion, and it seemed like it wasn’t about to die down soon.

“This can’t be Dustin’s doing, right?” Julie asked herself with a suspicious look; she felt uneasy on the inside.

Ever since last night’s beating session, Dustin had displayed a kind of calm that was uncommon in most people. As if he was confident that everything was going fine as planned.

So, either he was completely aware of the situation, or he was too good at hiding his emotions.

Then again, when she thought back to the fact that he'd been married to his cousin for three **years** and hadn't accomplished much over the years, she found it incredibly hard to believe that he was the guy who brought the Hummers to their knees.

Amid all the confusion, Matt Laney, who was dressed to the nines, suddenly strolled into the room.

"Huh, so everyone's already here. Just in time, too. I have good news for you all the ban by the Hummers **has** officially been lifted!" Matt announced the news with a big grin.

"I understand everything now! So, everything that happened just now was because of you, right Matt?" Florence probed, **as** she assumed she'd succeeded in connecting all the dots. Her gaze instantly perked up

too.

"That's right! How did I forget that we still have Matt here with us!" James exclaimed after coming back to his

senses.

"No wonder the Hummers apologized to us! So, after all, it was because Matt **was** secretly helping us behind

the scenes!"

"Exactly! Who **else** could be this capable apart from Mr. **Laney**?"

At that moment, all of the Nicholsons had starstruck looks on their faces.

So the reason why the Hummer family decided to offer an **apology** was that Matt had pressed them to do so.

behind the scenes.

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That's right!

That must be the case!

“What’s wrong? What just happened?” Matt asked around, confused.

To think that they just bombarded him with things he didn’t understand. Even if he had sharp wits, **he** was still unable to piece together everything that had happened yet.

“You don’t **have** to hide anything from us anymore, Matt. We all saw what you did. If not for you, how would Ms. Hummer even have apologized to us?” Florence said with a relieved look on her **face**.

“She apologized?” Matt repeated in disbelief, and his heart rate started to increase.

He knew exactly the kind of person Tina was. To think that an obnoxious woman like her had shown up at one’s door to apologize in person?

“Exactly, Matt! This time, not only did you tide the Nicholsons through our storms, you even managed to surprise our family. You are a great benefactor to our family!” James praised enthusiastically.

*Thank you, Mr. Laney! You saved our whole family!” The Nicholsons shouted as they stretched out their

hands to thank him **profusely**.

“Um—” Matt trailed off in confusion.

Immediately after reeling from his stupor, the ever-quick-witted Matt flashed a big smile. “No need to be so polite, everyone. It was just something easy to take care of, I didn’t even do much.”

Although he had no idea what the context behind this was, **he** felt like he should just accept the Nicholsons’ gratitude towards him.

After all, who would think of turning down another’s kindness?

“You’re too modest, Matt! If it weren’t for you, I’m afraid the Nicholsons might have ended up in shambles!” James continued boasting.

“Please, please, this is nothing.” Matt grinned and shook his head. His modest and courteous appearance was worthy of nothing but praise, after all.

“You got lucky this time, Rhys! I didn’t expect you to get **away** with this! What are you still standing there for? Hurry **up** and bow down to Matt and give him your thanks now!” Florence yelled **as** she shifted her sharp gaze

toward Dustin.

“You want me to bow down to thank him? On what grounds?” Dustin sneered out of the corners of his **eyes**.

“Hmph, you’d better not be ungrateful! You **were** the one who beat someone up and **caused** such havoc in the first place, so if it weren’t for Matt, who saved **your** ass, do you think that you could even be standing here

right now?” Florence retorted with a glare.

“That’s right! If it weren’t for Matt, you would have died a hundred times over for **beating** someone up by now!” James echoed in agreement.

“You guys give Matt too much credit. He’s not even remotely **as** capable as you think he is,” Dustin replied

with a cold expression.

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He was **even** impressed at the mental gymnastics they performed to get to this point. To think that they **dared** to prop him up and hail him as if he **were** a savior without knowing the full story yet.

And worst of all, Matt was just standing by and taking it all in.

“Hmph! Are you telling us that you’re more capable than Matt? Why don’t you look into the mirror and reflect on the kind of person you really are?”

“Yeah! People like you only know how to cause trouble and nothing else!”

“To think that there are people in this world who could be so heartless! Not only did he not thank his savior, he even talked shit about him! How disgusting!”

The Nicholsons berated Dustin. They despised people like him who were hellbent on repaying good with evil from the bottom of their hearts.

“Is it so hard for you just to thank someone, Dustin? If it weren’t for Matt, you might have been killed by now!” Dahlia suddenly piped up.

To her, Dustin **was** still being ignorant until the bitter end. Compared to Matt saving his life, **what** was a mere thank you?

“I would have if he **had** actually helped me. But he didn’t. In fact, not **only** did he not help me, he was the one

who started this whole fiasco in the first place!” Dustin replied flatly.

“What do you mean?” Dahlia frowned.

“I ran a background check and **found** out that Matt and Tina are lovers. Tina deliberately **targeted** you out of jealousy, thinking that you and he had some hanky panky going on behind the scenes. So, that **was** what led to the assault! In a nutshell, he’s the true culprit all along!” Dustin declared firmly.

“Bullshit! Rhys! Not to insult you or anything, but Matt is an upright guy. He’s not as bad **as** you say he is!” Florence cursed and jumped to her feet without waiting for Matt to respond.

“That’s right! I think you’re just jealous! You probably planted all kinds of evidence to frame him, knowing how much better he is than you!” James scolded.

“Oh, Dustin. Who knew you’d be so despicable!” The Nicholsons scoffed.

“Why do **you** always insist on causing havoc, Dustin? Can’t you be more mature and sensible for once?” Dahlia **spat** with a scowl

However, it was fairly obvious to her that he had done all of that as a result of his jealous rage.

“Don’t believe me? Just ask Julie. She was the **one** who saw it **all** last night!” Dustin defended himself **and** pointed at something.

Everyone’s gazes immediately shifted to see what he was pointing at.

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“What, me? When all eyes fell on her, Julie couldn’t help but be stunned and speechless for a while.

She was just here for the show, so why did she **get** implicated in this whole mess when she **was** just another

person in the crowd?

“Tell us everything you saw, and don’t try to hide anything, Julie. **I want** to see how **this** punk can **still** argue his way out of this!” Florence ordered as she crossed her arms.

“Yeah, Julie. Just tell us everything that’s on your mind. We must expose this punk for all his lies!” The Nicholsons spoke out in agreement.

“Um—But before Julie could say anything, she stopped herself.

Her response made the people in the crowd feel like she’d be a loose cannon.

This **was** especially true for Matt, **as he stood** there with his heart pounding out of his chest while **his** forehead

broke out in a cold sweat.

He’d **already** been scared shitless when Dustin spoke out the truth just now, so if Julie also knew something and exposed him for being the one who lied instead, he’d lose face!

“I believe you know what happened **yesterday** the best. Julie. So, it’s time to tell everyone the truth,” Dustin

added flatly.

“Stop this nonsense at once. Dustin! Save some face for yourself already.” Dahlia chided with a frown.

“There’s no need to be afraid, Julie. Your aunt here will back you up no matter what you say, so **just** tell us

what you saw!” Florence said, acting all protective all of a sudden.

“About last night Julie started and trailed off. After hesitating for a few seconds , she mustered up the

courage to continue with a firm gaze. “Yesterday night, I saw nothing and know nothing about the events that

went down. All I knew was that Dustin **was** the one who **beat** up Ms. Hummer!”

The moment she finished, Dustin froze on the spot. He didn’t expect Julie to completely flip the story on its

head in front of so many people like that.

“Did you hear that, Rhys? So, this is the whole truth! I can’t wait to see **how** you’re going to argue your way out

of this!” Florence shouted even louder than before.

“Not only do you not know how to be grateful, but to think that you even resorted to repaying good with evil, Dustin! You **really** are **shameless**! The **Nichols** **ons** spal and shook their heads. They stare at him with looks of

contempt and disdain.

Now **that** the evidence was conclusive, no amount of arguing could ever get him out of this mess.

“Ugh.” Dahlia sighed as a look of disappointment appeared on her face. She had given him so many chances to back down, and yet the **man** still insisted on being **as** stubborn as **ever**.

It **was** almost as if he wanted all of this to happen to **him**.

“I don’t think I’ve ever offended you, so **why** do you insist on slandering my **name**, Dustin? **It’s a** good thing

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that Julie has an upright character and helped me clear my name today. If not, I doubt if I could **even** recover from this!" Matt spat, feigning anger.

He'd been on tenterhooks the entire time, but he can't help but be secretly relieved now.

"You know exactly what you did. So stop pretending in front of me already." Dustin snapped before turning his gaze to Julie. "And as for you. I don't understand and why you're lying right now. I'm sure you know the kind of person Matt is very well. But if you insist on standing there and watching your cousin jump into a firepit, then I've got nothing else to say to you."

"Stop spouting nonsense! What did I **lie** about? It was clearly you who hit Ms. Hummer!" Julie insisted obstinately.

"Rhys! Now that your plan to slander has failed, are you resorting to threatening people? Do you honestly think that we're afraid of you?" Florence shouted in fury.

"Stop this insanity, Dustin! Stop making a fool of yourself already!" Dahlia cried. She only hoped that could see himself and the reality of the situation now.

Dustin

"Since you guys don't believe me, let's just pretend that I said nothing today. I'll be taking my leave **now**," Dustin shook his head as he decided not to argue with them any further. He **then** turned around to leave.

He never asked for any reward or even gratitude, but he felt disappointed **by** their response today.

"Hold it right there! You've slandered my name on multiple occasions, and yet you still think of running **away** without giving me **an** apology first? Aren't you being a little pretentious right now?" Matt ordered.

He had never liked Dustin, but to keep **up** his gentlemanly facade, he always tried to brush his ill feelings toward him aside.

So, now that the opportunity to take out his anger **had** come, he naturally didn't want to let it go so easily.

"You want me to apologize to you? What makes you think that you're worthy of it?" Dustin sneered.

"You're not allowed to leave if you don't apologize to me **today!**" Matt growled as he used his body to block

the doorway, his gaze menacing.

He had practiced martial arts for a few **years**, so he thought it would be a breeze to put an average man like

him in his place.

"Is that so? Then, I'd like to see if you can actually block my path. Dustin snorted coldly before pushing past

Matt and walking out of the **door**.

"Thinking of leaving? I'd like to see you try!" Matt shouted in rage as he grabbed Dustin's shoulder with one

hand and **shoved** him hard. He thought that he could teach him a lesson by doing **that**.

"You dare **lay a finger** on me?" Dustin said coldly **as** he turned around. He then proceeded to give Matt a heavy

slap on his face, the sheer force of which sent Matt flying into the air.

Two teeth could even be seen flying out of **his** mouth.

"Y—

you actually dare to hit someone at this moment, Rhys?" Florence **gasped** in horror. She didn't think Dustin

would be so bold **as** to assault **someone** in public.

"An animal! He's an animal!"

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“Matt saved your life with good intentions, and yet you still did this to him! You’re worse than a dog!”

Everyone started cursing at Dustin angrily. Everything would’ve been **fine** if he hadn’t laid a finger on **Matt**, but now that he **had**, everyone no longer held back their verbal assaults.

“Are you out of your mind. Dustin? Why are you **beating** people up **now**?” Dahlia scowled. She quickly went to help Matt up from the floor.

To think that he’d turned his embarrassment into anger and had even resorted to beating people up in public. This **was unheard** of!

“Can’t you see that he **was** the one who threw hands first? Dustin retorted with **a grimace**.

“He merely grazed you, so why did you **have** to return the favor so harshly?” Dahlia probed with an icy glare.

“So, are you telling me that it’s fine if he does it? But when I do it back, I’m committing the greatest sin **in** all of humanity?” Dustin snickered.

“You’re clearly just trying to force a point here! I hereby order you to apologize to Matt right now!” Dahlia

glared.

“What if I don’t want to?” Dustin frowns **slightly**.

“Then, I’ll make you!” Dahlia shouted. With that, she slapped him in the face in a fit of rage.

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“Slap!” A crisp noise sounded as Dahlia’s hand landed heavily on Dustin Rhy’s face.

Due to the excessive force she applied behind the slap, the wounds on her hand that had just healed got torn open again, causing a stream of fresh blood to flow down her fingers.

Dustin touched the side of his face that burned from the slap and merely stood right where he was with a

neutral expression on his face.

He could take all the misunderstandings and contempt from other people, but he refused to accept the fact that his ex-wife had just slapped him on behalf of another man.

“Why? Why do you insist on being this way?” Dahlia said through gritted teeth as her eyes filled with tears and immense disappointment overtook her.

She couldn’t understand for the life of her why Dustin had become the person he was today. He was close- minded, full of jealousy, and a gossipmonger; he was even repaying kindness with evil now.

All kinds of **bad** attributes were concentrated in the body of this man. She wanted this slap to serve as a **wake-**

up call to him!

“Hmph. Do you want to fight **me**, kid? Aren’t you a little too young for that?” Matt couldn’t help but sneer at him

as he witnessed the two of them turn against each other.

Although he had just lost two teeth, he couldn’t help but feel somewhat triumphant on the inside when he saw

Dahlia slap Dustin to stand up for him.

“That was a good slap! He deserves to be slapped!” Florence cheered as her eyes **lit** up.

“That’s right! If you don’t teach him a lesson, are you still considered human at that point?” James parroted

out loud.

“Ha—” Dustin suddenly let out a tired sigh after a long time of silence.

After getting married for three years, the two had barely quarreled, let alone thrown hands at one another. Thus, this would be the first and last time this happened!

“That slap just now was for everything I’ve ever done to you in the past. From now on, you and I don’t owe each other anything anymore,” Dustin said quietly. Dustin took a deep breath before calmly turning around to

leave.

There was **no** anger, no complaints—just an unexpected feeling of quiet indifference.

“Huh?” Dahlia gasped in shock **as** she stared at his defeated back. She’d been rendered speechless for a while.

“Knock, knock.” Just then, they all heard a knock on the door.

It turned out that Mr. Fletcher, who had taken his leave earlier, had returned.

“Huh? Where did Mr. **Rhys** go?” He asked as he scanned the **room**.

“Why are you looking for that punk, Mr. Fletcher?” Florence asked in surprise.

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“Oh, Sir Hummer told me that he hopes to dispel all the **bad** blood the Hummer family has with Mr. Rhys, so he specially requested me to send him a gift,” He replied.

“A gift?” Everyone looked at one another in confusion.

“You have got to be kidding us, right, Mr. Fletcher? How is that punk worthy of receiving a gift from Mr. Hummer himself?” Florence asked in disbelief.

“What do you mean “how is he worthy”? Don’t you know that he was the reason why the Hummers decided to lift the ban against the Nicholsons? And that he was also the one behind the apology? Mr. Fletcher replied,

dumbfounded by their reactions.

“What?” A collective gasp could be heard in the room the moment he finished his sentence. The crowd was dumbfounded and filled with disbelief.

They didn’t hear him wrong, right?

The person who had saved the Nicholsons and coerced the Hummers to give a public apology **was** Dustin? The trash that they’d scoffed at and despised? H–how was this possible!

“Y–
you’ve got to be joking, right, Mr. Fletcher? Are you telling us that Dustin was t
he one who saved us?” Florence asked with widened eyes, she found this fact
difficult to accept.

“Who else do you think it was?” Mr. Fletcher asked seriously.

“No, that’s impossible! Wasn’t Matt the one who helped us? How was it that tr
ash Dustin instead?” James shouted in alarm and shook his head so vigorou
sly it looked like a rattling drum.

“Matt Laney? He’s nothing more than a washed–
up member of some family, so how capable can the man be? Obviously, not e
nough for the Hummers to lower their heads.” Mr. Fletcher scoffed before sho
oting Matt a look

of disdain.

Hearing that, every head in the crowd turned to look **at** Matt simultaneously.
For a moment, Matt’s cheeks turned bright red, and the atmosphere became e
xtremely awkward.

His reaction immediately proved that what Mr. Fletcher said was true.

“How could this have happened? Could it be that I’ve misunderstood him?” Da
hlia muttered to herself after a

bolt of realization hit her.

With that, she instantly rushed out of the room and chased after **Dustin** in the
direction he seemed to have left

1. in.

When she chased **him** to the gate, she looked at the figure about to get into the car. She immediately ran up to him and grabbed him by the sleeve.

“Dustin! Wait. I misunderstood you just now, I **was** too impulsive. I had no idea that you did all of this for us. especially the part where you had to carry so much **on** your shoulders. But why didn’t you explain it to us? You were obviously the one who saved everyone, so why didn’t you clarify it with **us**?” Dahlia cried while biting her lips. Her face **was** twisted in **pain**.

“What use was there to explain everything? When have you ever believed me?” Dustin shot back as he shook his head. There was no greater sorrow **than** death, and he had been completely let down by her.

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“You should’ve made it clear to me at the very least. How can I believe you when you don’t tell me anything?”

Dahlia complained angrily.

“I don’t care if you believe me or not anymore. We’re done here. **Let** go of me.” Dustin retorted **as** he broke away from her grasp with force. His gaze toward her made her feel like he was looking at a stranger.

“What do you want from me, Dustin? Can’t you just stop being so impulsive all the time? Can’t you just ask yourself if there’s anything wrong with you? After all, you were the one who went out and beat up people who disagreed with you. If not for luck, do you think you could’ve gotten out of there unscathed? All I’m asking is for you to be more mature and sensible. Am I wrong for wanting that from you?” Dahlia shouted as his words

struck a nerve inside her, causing her emotions to go out of control.

“Yeah, you’re right. It was all my fault. I totally deserved that slap, don’t I?” Dustin said coldly.

“You-

” Dahlia wanted to say more but stopped herself. For a moment, she was at a loss for words.

“You’ve always been this arrogant and self-righteous woman to me, Dahlia. You were never one to admit your mistakes first. This has proven to be true on multiple occasions, especially when you just need to put a bit more thought into something or perform a simple background check to get the desired outcome. But as usual, you prefer to do nothing and only listen to the words you like to hear. This is why even now, you still have zero

faith in me.

“Haven’t you noticed? You’ve been living in your little bubble all this time, and you shut yourself off from anyone who tries to get near you. I admit, I tried my best to get to you back then, but now I’ve decided to stop trying. I’ve decided that this will be the last time I ever help you. I wish you all the best in your future

endeavors.”

With that, Dustin got in his car and sped off.

Meanwhile, Dahlia looked as if she had been struck by lightning, and she stood quietly in place and did not

say anything **for** a long time.

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“I’m sorry... I’m so sorry! I had no idea that things would ever turn out like this!” She lamented to herself.

“I just wanted you to succeed too. My only wish was for you to get **ahead in life**. I really had no idea that you’d suffered this much. I was wrong; I was the one who was wrong all along! From the day of our divorce until now, I knew that I was the one who was in the wrong all along! I remember telling you that no one would be able to make me fall in love again, but in reality, there was already someone there all along.

“And that person **was** you! But knowing that in mind, do you know why I gave you **up** again at the last second? That’s because Dustin, can’t you see that I’m still hopelessly in love with you?” She painfully admitted.

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After staggering back to her ward, Dahlia felt as if her **soul** had left her body.

She had a dead expression on her face, and her eyes were dull. She **didn't** realize that her bandaged hand was still dripping with blood.

She remembered Dustin's disappointed gaze on her before he left, and it felt like a knife that kept stabbing at her heart. She knew that the two of them had grown further and further apart.

In the past, she had **always** been career-oriented, **as** she was determined to carve her own path, which is why she ignored and sacrificed many things along the way.

However, since the day of their divorce, she slowly started to realize something. It turns out that there are things in life that were more important than one's career. However, it was a shame that she only realized **this**

now.

"Honey, I just heard that- Florence said as she burst into the room upon seeing Dahlia enter inside moments

before.

"I just heard that it **was** that Rhys kid who was the one who laid hands on Ms. Hummer and used her life as bait to get the Hummer family to apologize to us. He was merely using underhanded tactics the entire time!"

"That's right! This Dustin guy, to make a name for himself, committed such heinous and shameless acts

without a care for his reputation at **all!** James echoed.

Initially, they were shocked to find out that Dustin **was** the one who had helped them behind the scenes, but after digging for more details, they realized that

it wasn't that the Hummers were scared of Dustin, but that it was Dustin who used despicable means to get them to do what he wanted, which was why they came and

apologized in person.

So although it seemed as though he was a force to be reckoned with, in reality, he had merely backed them

into a corner!

"Mom, can you all just leave, please? I just want to **be** alone for now," Dahlia responded flatly, she didn't even

flinch at the news.

"Honey, even if we've misunderstood Dustin, **so what?** The matter still stands that he's the one who's at fault

here. He was just making up for his mistakes. We don't owe him anything!" Florence continued.

"I'm tired, Mom. I **just** want to rest now. Please go outside," Dahlia requested again.

"But honey..." Florence whined.

"Just leave me alone!" Dahlia yelled sternly.

Seeing the scowl on her face, Florence said nothing more and proceeded to usher everyone out of the room.

"Who would've thought that the biggest contributor to the matter would be Dustin, while the person who

surprised us the most was Mr. Laney."

*Fucking bigshots! To think we let him scare us like that. It's already a good thing that we didn't disturb him

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for anything!"

“And as for Matt. I suspect that he’s so blinded by love for Dahlia that, to win her over, he resorted to trickery and lies,” Florence explained.

“If you ask me, a man like this who risked his life for love and even put his reputation on the line is truly worth giving yourself to for life!”

“All of you should learn from him from now on!”

After their session of mental gymnastics, everyone turned from discussing how despicable Matt was to putting him on a pedestal instead.

But the thing was, many of them seemed to agree with this.

Back inside the ward, Dahlia sat frozen on the bed with an empty gaze for a long time. She had no idea how much time had passed since the first tear started dripping down her face and when her shoulders started shaking profusely.

Finally, not able to withhold her emotions anymore, she cradled her head between her knees and violently broke down in tears!

She didn’t shed a tear when the company was in danger. She shed no tears when somebody brutally humiliated her. She also didn’t cry when she was beaten up or tortured in a variety of ways.

This was the first time she had ever cried this hard and this heartbreakingly.

Over at the Hummer Villa, Tina was sitting in her wheelchair with a look of resignation and anger.

“Dad! The Hummers have never suffered such great humiliation before! You must avenge me no matter what!” She ordered with gritted teeth.

“Of course, we have to take our revenge, but you shouldn’t underestimate this punk either. Thus, we must be fully prepared if he stirs up havoc again.” Edwin said seriously. He definitely wouldn’t let anyone who dared to lay a finger on the Hummers go that easily.

“Isn’t Mr. Lawson proficient in mystic arts? Why don’t we just have him use the most powerful mystic arts on Dustin so that he gets tortured half to death?” Tina suggested, her voice full of resentment.

“It’s no use. Not only is he a powerful martial artist, but he’s also equally proficient in poison. He even managed to break the venomous mystic arts I used on

the Harmons, so I'm afraid I can't do anything toward him at the moment." Fletcher, who was standing at a corner, answered.

"Then what should we do? If we **don't** cut him into pieces, I don't think my hatred toward him is ever going to subside!" Tina shouted with a fierce gaze.

"There's no need to rush things. Just hold it in for a few more days. I've already informed your brother about this matter. After he clears customs in a few **days**, he'll make his return **to** Swinton, and that's when he'll exact your revenge on you. When that time comes, I doubt if the punk can make any waves, no matter how strong he is!" Edwin said as he narrowed his eyes.

What he was most proud of in his life was not his status **as** the richest man in Swinton, but rather the fact that

he **was** the father of an excellent individual named Joshua Hummer.

Joshua grew up practicing martial arts and was so talented that at the **age** of 15, he was able to defeat all **of** his challengers in the entirety of Swinton.

When he **was** 18, he had the honor of joining Boulderthorn and **was** trained under Clement Lincoln.

Now at the age of 25, he was already in the top ranks and dubbed to have a promising future. Not to mention that he **was** also known as one of the top ten young martial arts masters in the province..

In no time, he was even expected to surpass Tyler, who was regarded as a natural talent!

"Perfect! Then, **I** will let Dustin live for a few more days. Once Brother returns, I will make sure he'll be begging for his life once I'm done with him!" Tina laughed maniacally.

To Tina, her brother was a god who had the power to do anything for her.

No matter how difficult the task was, he could get it done as if it was a walk in the park. Thus, wouldn't it be a breeze to deal with a mere martial artist this time around?

"Sir Hummer, since Joshua is scheduled to return, then we shouldn't **fear** Dustin anymore. I propose that our main target now be the Harmon

family **instead!** The production of Eternumax is being rushed and is **taking** shape now, so now should be the ideal time **for** us to launch our attack.” Mr. Lawson suggested.

“Good idea! Schedule a press conference to announce our new pill in three days then. Since Natasha is willing to give her face away. I’ll make sure she never recovers from this! Edwin proclaimed as he balled up one of his hands into a fist. He had balled it up so hard that one could hear his fingerbones crackle.

At best, Dustin was just a stumbling block, while Natasha was a thorn in **his** side.

He must get rid of both of them as soon as possible!