

## **An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 216 -**

### Chapter 216

“Mr. Brooks, why on earth are you willing to go against our family for him?” Phineas demanded with a threatening glare. He had approached Roderick confidently but **never** expected this outcome.

“To tell you the truth, Mr. Rhys is my **savior** and honored guest. If you have a problem with him, that means you have a problem with me! So, you either beg for his forgiveness, or your family **is over!**” Roderick declared: the aura he exuded was overwhelming.

“You want us to apologize to that asshole? In your dreams!” Matt yelled angrily.

“Then, get lost! I wonder how long your family can last.” Roderick kicked them out.

“Roderick Brooks, life has its ups and downs, so don’t look down on a broke man! You’ll regret it one day!” Matt forced through gritted teeth and stormed away.

“Mr. Brooks, you’ve incurred the wrath of the Laney family. I doubt my family can’t borrow merely three billion dollars elsewhere!” Phineas glared at Roderick before following his son.

“Arrogant fools!” Roderick sneered.

No one in the province would dare lend the Laney family money since Roderick already rejected them.

Matt and Phineas returned home displeased with the outcome.

“What’s wrong with Roderick Brooks today? He refused to help us because of that brat!” Matt seethed.

“It seems like that kid has some connections.” Phineas frowned.

“As if! He’s just a pretty boy who got lucky because of Natasha! I bet Roderick only went against us because of Natasha’s support too.” Matt was displeased

“The Harmon family sure is bothersome. I have a feeling that our financial issues have something to do with

them.” Phineas pondered.

“What do we do now, Dad? Should we fight to the death?”

“No. We aren’t at the end of our rope yet. Let me make some calls. Phineas pulled out his phone and began asking for help. The Laney family still had some friends **and** partners, so they’d definitely pull through as long as he managed to raise the funds.

“Hey. Mr. Smith, it’s me. I’m kind of short on cash, so do you think you could help me out? I’ll pay you back

with interest after the turnover.”

“Hi, Mr. Thompson. This is Phineas Lancy. I’m calling to ask for a favor.”

“Hey, Mr. Johnson. I need your help.”

Phineas made call after call to any of his friends who were well off. However, his face darkened with each call

he made.

As soon as they heard that he **was** trying to borrow money, these people who claimed to be his **friends**.

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immediately changed their attitudes and came up with all sorts of excuses to refuse, and some even hung up without responding.

Phineas finally knew what fair-weather friends were like. After all the calls, he still couldn’t get any money. Instead, he stirred up more trouble.

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“How did it go, Dad? Is anyone willing to help us?” Matt asked tentatively.

“Fuck those bastards! They come wagging their tails as soon as they have something they want and call themselves my friends, but the moment they find out that our

family is in trouble, they start running away! Those f\*cking fakes!” Phineas’ face contorted with rage. He never thought that he, the head of the Laney family, would end **up** like this.

“Dad, everyone **always** says that misfortune shows you those who are not your real friends. Stop hanging out with them from now on. I’ll make them regret their choice after we pull through.” Matt swore solemnly.

“**Matt**, my contacts are useless now. You’re the only one I can rely on.” Phineas suddenly thought of someone. “Aren’t you close with Edwin Hummer’s daughter? Why don’t you ring her up and see if she can lend us some money?”

“Oh, right! I nearly forgot! The daughter of the wealthiest man in Swinton should be able to spare us three billion dollars easily. I’ll call her now.”

Matt pulled his phone out and dialed a number.

“My, my. If it isn’t Mr. Laney? How did you find **the** time to call me?” Someone grumbled over the phone.

“Don’t put it like that, Tina. I’ve been busy at work recently. I called you the second I got some free time,” Matt

said with a smile. He was a professional when it came to coaxing women.

“Humph!

At least you remembered to call me. So, why are you actually calling?” Tina smiled.

“Because I miss you so much, of course! Why else?” Matt teased.

Tina chuckled mirthlessly. “Right. I’m hanging up if you won’t tell me the truth.”

“Hold on, hold on. I do **have** a favor to ask you.” Matt cleared his throat. “My business ran into some financial issues recently, **so** we need some money to turn things around. Would you like to invest in us?”

“How much do you need?” Tina asked back.

“Not much. About three billion dollars.” Matt answered with a smile.

“Three billion isn’t a lot? You’re **Joking**, right?” Tina’s voice went up an octave.

“To others, it may be a lot. But you’re the daughter of the Hummer family, the prettiest and most talented woman in Swinton. Three billion can’t be much for someone like you.”

Tina was pleased with all the flattery. After all, who didn’t like to **hear** their lover praising them?

“I don’t mind getting you the money, but you have to tell me why.” **Tina stated**

.

“To tell **you** the truth, someone ruptured our capital chain, and I have a feeling that the Harmon family was the

one who did it,” Matt answered bluntly.

“You and the Harmon family **had always** kept a wide berth. Why would they do something like that to you?” Tina asked curiously.

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“Because of Dustin Rhys!”

Matt briefly explained everything to her.

“What? You threatened that psychopath?” Tina shrieked.

“That’s right! That shameless bastard tried to humiliate our family, so I had to teach him a lesson. I’ll destroy his family with your investment!” Matt fumed.

“Are you a f\*cking idiot? Why would you try to piss that psycho off?”

“Why are you so afraid? He’s just a country bumpkin. I’ll get rid of him easily.” Matt declared confidently.

“In your dreams, you moron! Don’t drag me along your death quest!”

With that. Tina hung up the phone.

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“Hello? Hello!” Matt held **his** phone by his ear with a dumbfounded expression. All he did was mention Dustin’s name. Why did Tina sound so frightened?

Matt had no idea that Tina was still traumatized from the time Dustin slapped her. What’s worse was that instead of getting her revenge, she had been forced to grovel for Dustin’s forgiveness, which was nothing less than an utter embarrassment and a terror for her.

Although she was bitter about it, she couldn’t lay a hand on Dustin because her family didn’t dare seek revenge before her brother returned.

Dustin was someone who could defeat a martial arts master like Mr. Milfroy with ease. If someone like him

were to go crazy, he could destroy the entire Hummer family in a heartbeat! Because of this, they didn’t dare seek revenge, and Tina shook in fear every time someone mentioned Dustin.

“What did Ms. Hummer say, Matt?” Phineas saw his son in a daze and asked.

“Fuck! That b\*tch is terrified of Rhys. There’s no way she’ll lend us money.” Matt scowled.

“The daughter of the Hummer family is scared of that brat? Is it because of the Harmon family?” Phineas

pondered aloud.

“Possibly.” Matt nodded, thinking hard. He couldn’t think of any other reason.

“This is bothersome...” Phineas frowned. “Our family is doomed if we don’t get any money soon. We might

have to beg for that brat’s forgiveness.”

“Beg for his forgiveness? Fuck, no!” Matt yelled. “Why should we lower our heads to someone like him? I’d

rather suffer than beg!”

“Don’t be rash, Matt!” Phineas warned gravely. “He has the Harmon family to support him, and now, he has Roderick Brooks’ support as well. We’ll sink further if you do anything to him!”

Alas, those words failed to reach Matt, who has lost repeatedly to Dustin recently. Today’s incident only fueled his anger, and his hatred toward Dustin peaked.

“Matt, leave this matter to me. You should **take** a break for the next two days. Just don’t get into any trouble.” Phineas instructed his son seriously, who didn’t reply as he began to plot his revenge.

Soon, night fell.

Inside Midnight **Rose**, Dahlia downed shot after shot in a corner.

Lyra sat beside her, her face full of worry. This was the first time she **saw** Dahlia like this.

Dahlia refused to return to the company or care about what was going on, completely abandoning her strong woman character and letting herself go.

Lyra heard that it **was** because of Dustin, but was it worth it?

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“Please stop drinking, Ms. Nicholson. Let’s go back. Your mother is worried about you.” Lyra implored.

“Leave me alone. I want to keep drinking. All my worries disappear when I’m drunk.” Dahlia chuckled

humorlessly before chucking another **shot** down her throat.

She didn’t know what to do. She was under constant pressure because of her family **and** had to fight her feelings for Dustin at the same time.

Dahlia knew she misunderstood him, but she didn’t know how to explain herself. Actually, it’d be more accurate to say that she was terrified of seeing Dustin’s heartless expression, so she decided to **use** alcohol

to numb herself.

She may be a capable leader in the business world, but when it **came** to her personal feelings, she realized she **was** an utter failure. Even though she knew that she had been the one who misunderstood Dustin, her pride wouldn’t let her apologize. Instead, she expected Dustin to step forward and request a reconciliation.

“So this is where you are, Dahlia.”

Matt entered the bar and spotted the two ladies immediately.

“Mr. Laney, you’re here. Please stop her. Her body can’t take it if she drinks so much!” Lyra quickly stood up **and** greeted Matt, whom she called. She felt that Matt was a much better option than Dustin.

\*Please get her some water, Lyra. I’ll talk to her,” Matt assured with a smile.

“Thank you, Mr. Laney.” Lyra nodded and darted off.

“Why **are** you drinking so much, Dahlia?” Matt asked with a concerned expression.

“It’s none of your business. Go **away!**” Dahlia’s eyes were hazy, but her tone was colder than ever.

Matt’s smile froze for a second before he recovered himself.

Without anyone noticing, he slipped a pill into her wine and smiled. “You still want to drink, don’t you. Dahlia?”

Let me join you.”

He poured another glass for Dahlia. Dahlia, who was already tipsy, didn’t notice anything wrong and downed the glass without a word. Soon, her head became heavy and her vision blurred, making her sway.

“Mr. Laney, I think Ms. Nicholson is drunk.” Lyra returned just then.

“It’s a

alright. I’ll send her home **now**. Her family’s worried sick.” Matt promised with a kind smile.

“Alright. Thanks, Ms. Laney.” Lyra didn’t think too much about it and helped carry Dahlia into Matt’s car. Since the car only had two seats, she could only watch as the car’s headlights disappeared.

“Humph! You’re finally in my arms. **You** like acting high and mighty, don’t you? Well, I’ll have some fun with **you** tonight.” Matt smiled sinisterly and headed straight to the hotel.

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Meanwhile, at Peaceful Medical Centre, Dustin **was** reading a book in silence when a Maybach pulled up at the door. The car door opened, and Phineas came out holding some gills.

“Mr. Rhys.” Phineas entered the building with a smile, no longer carrying the arrogance he had when they first



met.

“Do you need me for something?” Dustin glanced at the other man indifferently.

“Mr. Rhys, I’m really sorry about today’s incident. Please forgive us for being so ignorant.” Phineas smiled apologetically.

He finally understood that there was more than meets the eye when it came to Dustin, who had the support of the Harmon family and the friendship of Big Bucks Brooks. If Phineas wanted to borrow three billion dollars, he had to first get Dustin’s forgiveness.

“How could a nobody like me make the Laney family apologize?” Dustin replied, unconcerned.

“What are you talking about, Mr. Rhys? You’re young but talented. We admit defeat proudly. Please give us a way out.” Phineas bowed his head. However, Dustin didn’t respond. Gritting his teeth, Phineas fell to his knees.

with a thud.

“Mr. Rhys, please accept our family’s sincere apologies. As long as you give us another chance, you’ll be our honored guest forever! I’m willing to offer a third of—

no, half of our property as an apology.” Phineas quickly bowed lower, surprising Dustin, Dustin admired the older man for having the courage to put his pride aside to

apologize.

“What should we do about the death of Caitlyn’s **cat**?” Dustin asked coldly.

“We’ll pay her back! We get her as many cats as she wants!” Phineas frantically **vowed**.

“Dusty’s dead. It doesn’t matter how many cats you get.” Caitlyn murmured sadly next to Dustin.

“Did you hear that? I don’t mind forgiving you, but you offended Caitlyn.” Dustin shrugged.

“I’m so sorry. Ms. Lawler. I **swear** I won’t do it again! Please forgive me this once. I’ve learned my mistake!” Phineas quickly dragged **himself** to Caitlyn without getting up, and he began to apologize.

“I forgive you on the condition that you never do anything evil **again!**” Caitlyn declared gravely.

“Definitely! I’ve learned my mistake.” Phineas **nodded frantically**, having no choice but to lower **his** head

toward them.

“Since Caitlyn forgives you, I’ll let this matter go. You better remember your promise. Hall of your properties.” Dustin reminded calmly.

“Of course. As long as the Laney family is able to pull through, they’re yours!” Phineas dared not object.

Dustin hummed. He was about **to** say something else when his phone started **ringing**.

Dahlia **was calling** him.

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Muffled noises could be heard **as** soon **as** he picked up.

“Let me go. I want to go home.” Dahlia demanded weakly.

“What do you mean ‘go home’? Look at how pretty Estelle Hotel is. Let’s keep drinking there.” Matt cackled.

“You can go alone. Piss off.”

“Fucking slut! You better appreciate the chance I’m giving you. You don’t have a say in this. You’re drinking tonight. Get in!”

As the phone fell to the floor, the cursing became softer until it completely faded away.

Dustin’s face darkened immediately, and the air around him became unbelievably cold.

“What’s wrong, Mr. Rhys?” Phineas shivered.

A loud slap rang out as Dustin struck Phineas across the face, causing the latter to fall to the floor. “You motherf\*cker! You better hope your son didn’t make a mistake, **or** I’ll destroy your entire family!” Dustin opened the door and dashed out.

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“Huh?” Phineas covered his cheek with a hand, dumbfounded.

Meanwhile, inside a room in Estelle Hotel, Dahlia was lying strewn across the bed, nearly unconscious, her head heavy and her body weak.

Matt stood next to her, grinning wickedly as he admired her voluptuous figure.

“Dahlia, I **have** to admit. You sure are a beauty.” He tsked.

“Your looks and figure are perfect. I’ve f\*cked countless women, but none were as charming as you. Naturally, I’m the perfect man for you. How dare **Dustin** Rhys try to claim you as his! But don’t worry, you’ll be mine after

tonight.”

Sneering, Matt began to unbutton his shirt before remembering something. He pulled out his phone and

**panned** the camera toward Dahlia.

“I nearly forgot to record our wonderful night. I promised Dustin that I’d send him a video of us making love. Men don’t break promises.” Matt grinned excitedly.

“**You** despicable, shameless bastard! I’ll throw you to jail if you touch me!” Dahlia seethed feebly.

“If you don’t mind others seeing **the** video, go ahead. I don’t mind. So **what** if I have to go in for a few years? At least I get to f\*ck **you**. Still, there’s no **need** for us to take things that far. You’ll just have to **marry** me after

tonight. That way, you'll be able to protect **your** reputation while **having** the honor of being f\*cked by me. Isn't that a great deal?" Matt sniggered confidently

"**In** your dreams, f\*cker! I'd rather die than marry a hypocritical asshole like you!" Dahlia tried to **get** up several

times but flopped back to the bed pathetically each time. Soon, her face flushed from the exertion, and the

drug was still doing its job.

"Huh?" Matt's expression hardened. "Are you still thinking of that loser right now? I don't get it. How is he

better than me? **Why** do you keep thinking of him?"

"He's better than you in every way. You don't even deserve to compete with him!" Dahlia fumed.

"He's a f\*cking nobody. If someone hadn't supported him, do you think he would have **made** it to where he is.

today? That dickhead ruined my **plans** so **many** times. I swear I'm **going** to kill him one day!" Matt snarled.

"I'll kill you if you touch a hair on his **head!**" Dahlia swore, her expression ferocious.

"You're still protecting that asshole? I better teach you a lesson!" Matt **tugged** his belt off and **began** to lash out at Dahlia. "You **whore!** I'll kill **you!** You better say that I'm the best and that I'm the **man** you want!"

Soon, Dahlia's fair skin turned bloody as whip **marks** littered her body. Still, she kept silent, digging her teeth into her lip stubbornly.

"Fuck! **You're** stubborn, eh? I'll f\*ck you up tonight!" Infuriated, Matt yanked his **clothes** off and lunged toward

her.

As he was tearing at Dahlia's clothes, the room door flew open with an ear-splitting boom, and a formidable figure stormed in murderously.

Instantly, the freezing wind whistled in, and lightbulbs exploded.