

An Understated Dominance by Marina Vittori Chapter 126 -

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“This fellow really hit the jackpot! I can’t believe he really found a **Blood** Luminianth Root!”

“I know right? With a treasure like that, he won’t have to worry for the rest of his life!”

“Damn it! If I knew there was a treasure hiding in that piece of wood, I would’ve bought it myself!”

With the Blood Luminianth Root’s debut, the onlookers immediately started talking.

All of them looked at Dustin with a gaze full of envy.

“Fuck! This guy really struck gold!” James clenched his teeth, eyes filled with rage.

“**That’s** odd, how did he know that there was a treasure hiding inside? Dahlia was more puzzled than shocked.

Everyone had no clue, even Mr. Walter.

And yet, Dustin managed to notice.

“Is it really luck? Or was there another reason?” She wondered.

“Dustin, we really won big this time! But, how did you guess that a Blood Luminianth Root was hiding in there?”

Ruth asked the question that was on everyone’s minds.

“To be honest, I wasn’t sure as well. It was purely a guess.” Dustin said humbly.

“A guess? You’re saying that you had no idea there was a Blood Luminianth Root inside? And you still used

five million dollars to gamble?” Ruth was a little stunned.

“You can put it **that** way.” Dustin **nodded**.

“I really don’t know whether to call you stupid or lucky.” Ruth gave him an incredulous look.

“I admit that it was indeed a big gamble, but my bet was right. When something goes wrong, there is usually a good reason behind it. There must be a **reason** for a long–living Luminianth Root to wilt. I read about

something similar from a book before.” Dustin smiled faintly.

“You’re a genius! You really enlightened me today!” Ruth gave him a thumbs up.

Her respect for him immediately grew tenfold.

“Wait! This Blood Luminianth Root is mine!” Florence suddenly exclaimed.

She **reached** out to snatch the root but luckily was stopped by Ruth. “Hey! What are you doing?!”

“I’m not selling it! I’ll return your five million **dollars**. I’m not selling this Blood Luminianth Root anymore!” Florence was **in a panic**.

This was worth ten billion dollars. How **could** she give it to someone else so **easily**?

“That’s right! We’re not selling it anymore! Give it back to us!”

After coming back to her senses, Julie chimed in.

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Everyone could not help but frown at their unreasonable behavior.

“Oi! Are you guys that shameless? The deal is done. Now you want to back out? No way!” Ruth blocked them from the Blood Luminianth Root, her expression fierce.

She had never seen such shameless people. They were laughing when they thought they had scammed Dustin. Now that they know they made a loss, they’re using all kinds of methods to get it back.

How disgusting!

“I don’t care! This Blood Luminianth Root is mine. You must return it to me today!” Florence exploded in anger.

It was like a child throwing a tantrum,

“Dustin! I’m warning you, you better give us back the Blood Luminianth Root! Otherwise, I won’t **hold** back on

you!” Julie glared at him with daggers in her eyes.

An invaluable treasure like this **was** enough to make them lose their minds.

“You were the ones who sold it voluntarily. We also handed over the money. Now that I discovered a treasure inside, you’re backing out? Do you think we’d really **give** it back to you?” Dustin brushed them off coldly.

“Stop the nonsense! If you weren’t so despicable and scammed us our Blood Luminianth Root, did you think

we’d sell it to you?” Florence roared in anger.

“Exactly! You clearly knew there was a Blood Luminianth Root inside. Why didn’t you tell us? You purposely

scammed us!” Julie said.

Hearing this, Dustin could only laugh. He was looking at two clowns.

“First of all, I didn’t know there was a Blood Luminianth Root in there. It was just a guess. Secondly. So what if

I know there was a treasure inside? Why do I need to tell you guys? Also, you guys were the ones who harbored **bad** intentions and tried to scam someone else. Otherwise, why would you sell it to me? So, all in all, you guys brought this upon yourself!” Dustin said calmly.

Everyone nodded and agreed with what he said.

“Well said! This guy earned the treasure fair and square. He earned it with his talent!”

“When you scammed them, why didn’t you back out then? Now that you know you made a loss, you’re being shameless!”

“That’s right! If you were to follow their dumb logic, wouldn’t the Blood Luminia nth Root belong to Mr. Walter?”

The onlookers started to express their disdain.

“You— you all **are** ganging up on us, aren’t **you**? You scoundrels, I’ll kill you!” Florence yelled, ready to strike a hit.

“Enough! You’ve made a loss! What’s the point of spilling your guts here? Are you not shameful enough?!”

Dahlia yelled at Florence.

“Dahlia, you...” Florence **was** stunned.

“What **are** you standing there for? **Go!**” Dahlia said angrily, her face contorted in frustration,

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“Mom, we’re definitely not getting back the treasure now. Let’s **go** home and figure out another way.” Before

the situation turned sour, James hurriedly convinced his mom.

His sister rarely gets angry, but once she does, **no** one will be spared.

“Dustin! I’m not done with you!” Florence also didn’t dare to act out. After giving Dustin a fierce glare, she left the room unwillingly.

“Humph! So what if you guys got a Blood Luminianth Root? A guy like you wouldn’t live long enough to use it!” Knowing that they lost, Julie left him a curse before leaving.

“Bleh, bleh, bleh!” Ruth mocked as they left.

“Dustin, those who possess treasures will attract the attention of robbers. Having a treasure like this is not an easy job. You should be careful” Dahlia’s gaze lingered on him for a few moments before leaving.

Because of that, Ruth’s senses were tingling. “Dustin, that gaze of hers **was** a bit weird. Are you guys still not

over each other?”

“What nonsense are you on about?” Dustin rolled his eyes.

“Hey! Don’t say that I didn’t warn you, but you must keep yourself together. Don’t give in to her temptations!” Ruth warned with narrowed eyes. She clenched her teeth, showing her two canines that seemed threatening.

“Rue, what on earth is going on in that little head of yours? Now that we’ve got the Luminianth Root, let’s head home!” Dustin lightly knocked on her head.

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The night passed by peacefully.

Natasha enjoyed her cup of coffee at Java Joys **as** she flipped through **pages** of documents.

She looked worn **out** after staying up the entire night.

“Natasha!” Just then, Quentin **and** Mr. Wangle stormed in through the **door**.

“What is it?” Natasha couldn’t even be bothered to spare them a glance. She continued to flip through the

documents.

Bang!

A wooden box **was** rudely slammed on the table.

It opened up to reveal a single white pill in it.

“Check this out. Natasha. Do you know what it is?” Quentin pointed at the pill, and his tone was unmistakably demanding

“How would I know? You tell me.” She sat up lazily.

“Hah! You can’t even recognize the Eternumax?” Quentin looked unimpressed

.

“So this is Eternumax. Well, what about it?” Natasha asked, not too concerned

.

“What about it?! You have the gall to **ask** me what about it? I bought this Eternumax from the Hummers! They’ve managed to manufacture it! Are you aware of that?” Quentin raised his voice.

“Oh? So what? Isn’t it only a matter of time?” Natasha couldn’t be any calmer.

“What is this attitude you’re showing? Do you not see the severity of the issue at hand? The Eternumax that the Hummers produced have shown phenomenal results, and many of the rich and powerful have already put in their orders. Its price has **sky**–

rocketed, and they’re now worth a whopping 500 grand per pill!” Quentin

looked exasperated.

“Oh? So?” Still Natasha was **unfazed**.

“An object **is** valued in proportion to its rarity. Eternumax is monopolizing the market right now because there are no other medications that **can** compete wi

th it yet. But once the Hummers start producing it, we will be severely affected!" Quentin rapped sharply on the table.

"What exactly are you saying?" Natasha countered.

"You **are** now left with two choices. You either **develop** the Eternumax **as** soon as possible, or you will have to

collaborate with Edwin Hummer!" Quentin announced decisively.

"Our **research** findings on the Eternumax have been stolen. It's too late to **start** over from scratch. As for working with **Edwin** Hummer, that's impossible." **Natasha** relused flat out.

"You disagree with **both** options. But you don't have **a** solution to solve the situation, don't you? The family

puts such importance **on** you, and this is **how** you **repay** us?" Quentin questioned aggressively.

"I have my way of dealing with it. You don't have to worry." Natasha **was** still undisturbed.

"This has to do with the gains of the family. I will not allow you to mess around! If you do not come up with a satisfactory solution in three days, do not blame me for reporting you to the board!" Quentin declared justly.

"Do as you wish." Natasha shrugged nonchalantly.

"Fine! Just you wait!" Quentin scoffed before he turned to leave.

From how he saw it, Natasha was bound to lose this time around.

Once she messes up, the family will need a scapegoat to pin the blame on, and he would have an excuse to force her to back out.

Not long after Quentin left, Ruth came running in.

"We did it! We did it!" Ruth exclaimed as she ran in, looking for Natasha with excitement.

"Did what?" Natasha looked up, bewildered.

“The Immortunol! Dustin managed to produce the Immortunol!”

Ruth pulled out a little bottle as she spoke and poured out a green pill from it.

The pill was bright and clear, with a sort of luster to it.

It even has a slight fragrance.

“Oh? This is Immortunol?”

Natasha looked astonished.

Appearance-wise, the pill looked really attractive, akin to a pearl.

“It tastes really good too! Would you like to give it a taste?” Ruth gushed, as though showing off a precious

treasure.

“It tastes good? Do you think this is some kind of snack?”

Natasha did not know what to make of her sister’s comment. But still, she picked up the Immortunol and

popped it in.

It dissolved instantly, and a cool **sensation** flowed through her body as she swallowed it.

A tingly sensation came over her, and she felt rejuvenated. All of her exhaustion seemed to have dissipated on

the spot.

She was refreshed and energized right away!

“Immortunol is amazing indeed!” **Natasha** could not **contain** her awe.

She was really in disbelief at how it **was** able to exhibit such palpable effects immediately.

“Sis! Your face! You look like you’ve aged backward! Your complexion looks much brighter too!” Ruth cried out

in surprise beside her.

“What are you blabbering about? That’s impossible!” Natasha rolled her **eyes**, obviously not buying **what** Ruth had **just** said.

“It’s true! Take a look in the mirror if you don’t believe me!” She took **out** a compact mirror and **passed** it to her sister,

“What?” One look in the mirror was all it took to give Natasha a shock.

She found that after ingesting the Immortunol, her complexion had improved.

Even the dark circles under her eyes, a **result** of her staying up the whole night, had disappeared too.

Her skin’s texture felt like she had just applied a mask to it, bright and hydrated.

“My goodness! This is miraculous!”

She was in utter disbelief **as** she touched her face.

One Immortunol made her feel so rejuvenated, removed the dark circles under her eyes, and primed up her **skin**, making her look much more alluring.

Its beautifying effects were a game-changer!

“How is it? I wasn’t lying, was I?” Ruth looked very pleased with it.

She had been busying herself with assisting Dustin ever since they got their hands on the **Blood** Luminianth Root the **day** before..

So she **played a** part in the production of Immortunol, at least that was what she believed.

“It’s great, isn’t it!” She was momentarily lost in her thoughts before breaking out into a grin. 1

Frankly speaking, she had not held high hopes for them being able to produce the Immortunol. But Dustin had proved her wrong yet again.

He **was** truly their lucky **star!**

“Sis, Immortinol does not only give superb effects, but its production cost is also so much lower than Eternumax. We spent 5 million dollars on the Blood Luminian Root, which Dustin diluted with water, and now, that can last us years!” Ruth’s statement was incredible news.

“Really? That’s wonderful!” Natasha’s spirits were lifted.

Based on what she had just experienced, she was sure that the Immortinol’s effects far surpassed that of the Eternumax.

Furthermore, if they could control its production cost, that would be a breakthrough!

It would not be an exaggeration to **say** that once Immortinol was out on the market, it would bring Eternumax down to its knees.

“Ruth, we **need** to keep Immortinol a **secret**.”

“Why?”

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“Edwin will be having a press release for the launching of **Eternumax** in a few days. We have to take him by surprise and hit him where it hurts. It’ll give him a huge shock in **front** of the press!”

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Over at the Nicholsons’ that afternoon.

“Dahlia, are you going to Miss Hummer’s birthday party this evening? Can you bring me along?” James asked

excitedly when he saw the invitation on the table.

She was, after all, the daughter of Edwin Hummer, the richest man in the country. It would be beneficial to

make acquaintances with such a person.

“I will be attending the birthday party, but the invitation is limited to two persons only. Julie has already called dibs on it.” Dahlia cast a damp over James’ enthusiasm.

“Her?” Displeased, James turned to look at Julie, who **was** on the couch applying makeup to her face.

“Dahlia, I’m your brother! How could you bring her, and not me?” He grumbled.

At that, Julie shot him a glare and **said** condescendingly, “And what can you do there? Everyone attending the party tonight will be people of status and elites. Wouldn’t a high school dropout like you just embarrass

yourself showing up there?”

“Hey, what’s that supposed to mean? Do **you** think that you’re all that great?” James was irked.

“Better than you, at least.” Julie wasn’t one to back off easily.

“You!”

James was just about to burst into a fit of anger when Florence stopped him just in time. “That’s enough. Julie’s our guest, you should play nice. I think it’d be a good opportunity for her to make good connections at the party this evening since she’s fresh out of college. Let her go with Dahlia.”

“Do you hear that? If I manage to befriend **Miss** Hummer, I’d be on the highway to success! When the **time** comes, I’ll make sure you benefit from it too!” Julie said with her **head** held high.

“Hah! You? I’d be better off relying on myself!!”

James plopped down on the couch, obviously feeling indignant.

Ever since Julie came, all the attention had been shifted to her. He felt that he was now out of favor.

“Ah, right, Dahlia, I nearly forgot.”

Florence seemed to recall something as she rummaged around in her bag. In the end, she pulled out an intricate jewelry box.

“This **is** a **present** that Matt gifted you two days ago. Since you’re attending the party today, I think you can

put this to **good** use. Have a look.”

As she spoke, she opened up the jewelry box. There was a pair of ruby earrings in it..

The earrings were exquisite and delicate. They were dazzling under the light’s illumination.

“Wow! It’s spectacular!”

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Julie’s eyes lit up as she scrambled to get up. She pulled the jewelry box over for a better look at the earrings. Aunt Florence, such gorgeous earrings **must** cost a bomb, won’t they?”

“I heard Matt mention that these are Pandarum earrings, and they are custom — made. This is the only pair in the whole of Swinton. It costs millions, Florence announced proudly.

“Is that so? As expected, only the best from Matt!”

Julie beamed as she picked up one of the earrings and put it on. “Aunt Florence, how does it look on me?”

“You’re a born beauty, Julie. Of course, it looks magnificent on you,” Florence answered.

“Hehe! Well, thank you then, Aunt Florence!”

Julie brazenly took the other earring and put it on too. It was evident that she was about to take it as her own.

Her actions gave Florence quite a shock. “Julie, this is your cousin’s gift from Matt. It wouldn’t be too nice for you to wear it tonight.” Florence chuckled awkwardly.

“What’s wrong with me wearing it? I’m just borrowing it for the night, it’s not like I’m not going to give it back.” Julie snapped bluntly.

“But”

Florence **was** about to counter what she just said, but Julie cut her off. “Aunt Florence, **we’re** relatives. You can’t be so petty, can you?”

“Julie Amberson! These are my sister’s earrings! What rights do you have to wear them?” James finally could not take it any longer.

She said that she was just borrowing them, but the fact was, she had never once returned the items she

borrowed!

This was plain robbery!

“Hey! Why are you shouting at me? Isn’t it just a pair of earrings? Aren’t you just being selfish?” Julie slammed her hand on the table aggressively.

“I’m selfish? Do you have any **idea** how greedy you look right now? Do you have no shame?” James bellowed.

“How dare you scold me? Aunt Florence! Did you hear what James said? I can leave if I’m not welcome here!” Julie flared up.

And with that, she turned to leave.

But before she could even take her first step, Florence pulled her back. “What are you doing, Julie? Of course, you’re welcome here! Aren’t they just a pair of **earrings**? I’ll lend them to you!”

“Mom! You-!”

“Shut it!”

Florence whipped around and shot him a glare. “You’re her older cousin! Why do you keep picking fights with her? Can’t you be more generous?”

“Fine! Keep siding with her then. See if I care!” James was so angry that he stormed out and slammed the door.

Dahlia frowned. It wasn't the earrings that she was concerned about, but Julie's domineering attitude did not sit well with her.

“Dahlia, you do not mind me wearing your earrings, do you?” Julie smiled as she touched the earrings gently.

“It's up to you.” Dahlia could not be bothered to continue speaking to her.

To begin with, she **was** not comfortable with Matt's gift to her.

“Hehe! Thank you, Dahlia.” Julie beamed brightly as she continued applying her makeup.

That evening at Kingdom Hotel, a black Mercedes-Benz rolled up to the main entrance.

The door opened, and Dahlia and Julie got out of the car.

Dahlia dressed down for the occasion in a black dress and black heels. She kept her accessories simple too.

Julie, on the other hand, went all out and dressed herself up, almost looking like a peacock.

She had jewelry from head to toe and looked dazzling under the lights.

To further accentuate the million-dollar pair of ruby earrings, she even did her hair up in a chignon.

She **was** out to be in the limelight.

“Wow! What a stunning lady! She looks like a celebrity!”

“I think she looks even more attractive than any celebrity out there! Her looks and elegance are other-worldly.”

When the both of them got out of the car, a bunch of guests at the entrance turned to look at them. However,

most of their attention **was** on Dahlia.

Despite Julie's showy appearance, she did not receive much attention

After all, it **was** clear that Dahlia was far superior to her in all aspects, from looks to figures. Julie's

extravagant outfit alone **was** not enough to make up for what she lacked.

"Hmph!" She was not pleased.

She had made every preparation she could think of for the birthday party that evening, and she had expected to impress everyone with her beauty.

It had never occurred to her that Dahlia's presence would steal all the attention.

"These men are so blind! How could a woman who had been married before compare to me?" She thought.

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"Dahlia, you can head up first. I'm waiting for a friend here." Julie made up an excuse to send Dahlia **away** once they entered the hotel lobby.

She was well aware that with Dahlia around, she would never get the attention she yearned for.

How would she make acquaintances with the rich and famous then? How would she get to know rich, eligible men?

"Okay, I'll be waiting for you at the banquet hall." Without giving it much thought, Dahlia took the elevator up to the banquet hall.

With Dahlia gone, Julie quickly became the center of attention. She deliberately walked around the lobby and flaunted coquettishly, attracting much attention

Some men approached her in an attempt to strike up a conversation, but she rejected them all, playing hard to get.

“Hey, you’ve got such lovely earrings! May I know where you bought them from?”

“Yes, that’s **true!** I’ve never seen such exquisite earrings before!”

“These rubies **are** huge! They must **have** cost you a lot!”

Soon, not only the men came up to her, but even the ladies flocked over to ask her about the earrings. As usual women could not resist jewelry.

“These ruby earrings are from Pandarum. My boyfriend gave them to me. These are uniquely custom-made, and they **are** the only pair out there. As for the price, they were not too expensive. Just a million or two.” Julie pretended to be unconcerned about their price and smiled.

Though her words sounded humble, arrogance **was** evident on her face.

“A million or two, and you say it’s not expensive? Seems like you’re not the average Tom, Dick, and Harry!”

“How fortunate you are to **have** a boyfriend who gives you such precious earrings!”

“From how I see it, it’s not the price that matters, but the sincerity behind it! It’s custom-made and unique! That’s so **sweet!** How I envy you!”

The group of women chattered away praising Julie.

That fueled Julie’s vanity, pleasing her to no **end**. She really enjoyed being the center of attention and being

praised by others.

Right then, a Rolls–Royce Phantom pulled up at the door.

The car door opened and out stepped **an** alluring **woman** with delicate features and long, flowing hair. She

came **walking** in like a celebrity **among a** group of adoring fans.

“Miss Hummer?!”

The lady’s appearance garnered a lot of attention and a commotion started both inside and outside the lobby.

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The crowd that had surrounded Julie immediately dispersed and flocked over to Tina, ready to flatter her.

She was, after all, the star of the day. Edwin Hummer’s daughter, **Tina** Hummer!

Julie had intended to go over and welcome her too, but as there were too many people surrounding Tina, she

did not do so.

She knew that going along with what everyone was doing would not make her stand out, and she needed to stand out to make Miss Hummer notice her.

At the thought of that, she intentionally stood at the entrance and tried her **best** to show off the biggest asset she had on her at the moment, which happened to be the pair of ruby earrings.

That was the first step to forming a connection with Miss Hummer. She refused to believe that there **was** any

woman on earth who could resist the temptation of such irresistible jewelry.

As Julie predicted, Tina stopped in front of her when she reached the entrance, with the crowd still around her.

Her gaze was fixed on Julie.

Julie suppressed her excitement and walked up to Tina to introduce herself when she saw that the timing was

right. “Hello, Miss Hummer. I am Julie Amberson. Pleased to make your acquaintance.”

She stretched her hand out for a handshake. But Tina ignored her outstretched hand and stared unwaveringly

at her earrings.

“Those ruby earrings, where did you get them from?” she asked icily.

“My boyfriend gave them to me. These are custom-made Pandarums, you won’t be able to find a similar pair

out there. But of course, Miss Hummer, if you fancy them, I can give them to you.” Julie **was** secretly **delighted**.

“Even the daughter of the wealthiest man can’t resist these earrings,” she thought to herself.

“Boyfriend?”

Tina’s expression clouded over. “Is it Matt Laney?”

The reason why she asked was that she had received the exact same pair of ruby earrings from Matt as her

birthday gift not too long ago.

“Oh! Do you **know** Matt too, Miss Hummer? In that case, we’re friends **too!**” Julie’s **eyes** lit up.

Who knew that a pair of earrings would be the key to her success?

“Who’s your friend? Bitch!”

Tina glared at Julie and struck her across the **face**.

Smack! A loud, crisp sound **was** heard.

Julie was at a **loss as** she held her cheek in her hand. “**Miss** Hummer, why did you hit **me?**”

“What is your relationship with **Matt** Laney? You better come clean. If you hide anything from me, I’ll make

sure you won't live to see the next sunrise!" Tina's **expression** made it clear that she meant every word she

said.

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She would not let other women mess with what was hers.

"Miss Hummer, I think you're mistaken. Matt and I are just regular friends, nothing **more** than that!" Julie

started to fluster.

She did not know what **had** happened, but it was obvious that she had angered **Tina**.

"Would regular friends give you ruby earrings worth a million dollars? Do you think I'm a dim-wit?" Furious

was an understatement to describe what Tina **was** feeling at that moment.

"It has nothing to do with **me**, Miss Hummer! These ruby earrings aren't mine, they're my cousin Dahlia's! I **only** borrowed them for a few **days**!" Seeing that the situation wasn't favorable to her anymore, Julie stopped

pretending and came clean with the truth.

"Dahlia Nicholson?" Tina's eyes narrowed into slits.

She remembered that that was a name that Matt had mentioned when he asked for her help concerning the interrogation room. She hadn't put much thought into it then, but it turns out that there **was** something fishy

going on with the two of them.

"That b*tch! She seduced my man, and she has the audacity to show up at my birthday party?! Is she **trying** to **provoke** me?" Tina gritted her teeth **as** a murderous glint flashed in her eyes.

“This is all Dahlia Nicholson’s fault, Miss Hummer. I’ve got nothing to do with it. Will you please let me off?”

Julie **was** so scared that she broke out in cold sweat.

She finally **got** an idea of what had happened. Tina and Matt were obviously a couple. The main problem was that Tina recognized the pair of earrings. That was no different from her catching Matt and Dahlia together.

“Shut up! If you do not have a death wish, then do what I tell you to do!” Tina roared.

“You name it, Miss Hummer. Whatever you need me to do, I’ll try my best to accomplish it!” Julie promised

wholeheartedly.

“Put this into Dahlia’s bag.” Tina **took** a delicate jewelry box and handed it to Julie.

“What do you mean, Miss Hummer?” Julie could not wrap her head around Tina’s request.

“Don’t ask questions! Just do **as** you’ve been told!” Tina scolded. “Yes, yes.” Julie nodded vigorously. She was in no place to refuse.

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Over at the banquet hall, Dahlia was puzzled when she saw Julie panting as she entered. “Didn’t you **say** that you were waiting for a friend, Julie? Where’s your friend?”

“Something came **up** and she couldn’t make it.”

She smiled sheepishly. “Oh, Dahlia, could you lend me your compact mirror, please? I need to fix my makeup.”

“I remembered that you’ve brought one yourself,” Dahlia said.

“Mine’s faulty. I’d prefer to use yours.” Without waiting for a reply, Julie took Dahlia’s bag and fished around in it.

Dahlia was annoyed by that. She had to admit, her cousin was really a spoiled brat who lacked manners.

“**Thanks**, Dahlia.” Julie tossed Dahlia’s bag back to her after she managed to get the compact mirror out. Then, she made up some excuse to go to the **was hroom**.

Right at that moment, Tina made her entrance, followed by a crowd behind her, creating a ruckus in the banquet hall,

In the end, **she** stopped smack in the middle of the hall.

“Quiet down, everyone. I **have** an announcement to make.” Tina raised her hand and gestured for the crowd to

calm down.

The effect was immediate and the hall fell silent.

“It’s my birthday party today, and it was meant to **be** a happy occasion, but something awful has happened!”

Tina’s gaze swept across the hall before she continued. “A pair of valuable earrings which I have intended to wear for the occasion has been stolen. They are a unique pair of custom-made Pandarum earrings, and they are priceless to me!”

The crowd was **in** an uproar when they heard that.

“What? Did someone steal Miss Hummer’s **earrings**? Who has the guts to do that?”

“We must find out who did it! Such a vile person must never be let off the hook!”

“Damn it! If I ever find out who stole Miss Hummer’s belongings, I’ll make sure to rearrange his face!”

The crowd in the hall **was** all worked up, shouting curses and threats at the thief.

On the one hand, they despised the thief, but on the other hand, they **were** trying to please Tina.

“Everyone, please calm down. The fact is, I know who did it.” Tina continued.

“Who? Where’s the thief **among us**? Everyone looked around, trying to figure out who the culprit was.

Tina smiled mirthlessly and strode over to Dahlia.

“She’s the one!” Tina pointed a finger at Dahlia.

“What?”

The crowd was collectively taken **aback** by the accusation,

If the culprit had been a creep, they would have **gone** ahead and taught him a lesson.

But it turns out that the person whom Tina had accused of stealing her belongings was an enchanting beauty.

Everyone **was** at a loss.

“Isn’t that the president of Quine Group? Why would she steal?”

“Exactly! Everyone knows Ms. Nicholson. She wouldn’t stoop so low, would she?”

“One may know a person for a long time without understanding his true nature. Who knows what vile intentions this lady is hiding behind her glamorous appearance?”

The men were generally doubtful of Tina’s accusation, whereas the ladies trusted her fully.

“Miss Hummer, there must be some sort of misunderstanding. I have not stolen anything.”

Dahlia took a moment to regain her composure before denying Tina's accusation.

She had never thought that Tina would pin it on her.

"A quick search should easily be able to tell us whether or not you did it." A faint smile graced Tina's features.

"Miss Hummer, would it not be inappropriate to conduct a search on a guest whom you've invited to your birthday party in front of everyone?" Dahlia **knew** that she was innocent, but that did not **mean** that she should allow others to do as they please.

After all, Tina's suggestion to go through her belongings was an obvious act of disrespect.

"What do you have to fear if you're **not** guilty?" Tina smirked.

"That's right! If you truly are innocent, what harm would a search do to you?"

"Hmph! I think that someone's just feeling guilty!"

The ladies started to back Tina **up**.

Dahlia's presence alone was enough to overshadow their radiance, so they were eager to see her get into trouble.

"Fine, since Miss Hummer insists on going through my things, then, by all means, go ahead." Dahlia could not be bothered to argue with her, so she handed her bag over.

Her conscience was clear, and she did not want to cause a scene, so she might **as** well let them go through

her bag to prove her innocence.

Tina did not **say anything** and simply gestured for her bodyguards to search Dahlia's bag.

Soon, the bodyguards fished out a delicate jewelry box from the bag. The jewelry box even had Tina's name carved on it.

"Miss Hummer, here it is!" The bodyguard handed the jewelry box over to her.

Chapter 130

"Ladies and gentlemen, do you see **this?**"

Tina raised the jewelry box and took out the pair of magnificent ruby earrings in it, displaying them to the crowd. "This! this is evidence!"

The moment the pair of ruby earrings were produced, it brought about a whoosh of uproar throughout the entire hall.

Eyes widened as shock came over everyone's faces.

"No way! Would the president of Quine Group do such a thing?"

"Hah! And I thought that she would be above that! Who would've guessed that she was so materialistic!"

"I thought that such a beautiful person would know to conduct herself better than this! Of all things to do, why would she go and steal from others? That's terrible!"

At that moment, the winds of opinion completely shifted.

With irrefutable evidence staring them in the face, everyone chose to believe Tina.

"No! That's not possible!!

Dahlia's expression changed as she shook her head vigorously. "Why is this in my bag? I've never even

touched it!"

"You b*tch!"

Infuriated. Tina slapped Dahlia.

Smack! Five red streaks immediately bloomed on Dahlia's cheek.

"Miss Hummer, I did not steal them! Someone must **have** set me up!" Dahlia fought to explain.

"How dare you deny it when we have concrete evidence? Seems like you're one to give up only at the sight of the gallows!" Without saying any more, Tina gave her

two more slaps. She truly wasn't going easy on her.

Dahlia's face swelled up and her hair was a mess.

"I did not **steal!**" She clenched her jaws, an unyielding **look** in her **eyes**.

"If I said you stole it, that means you did!"

Tina scoffed. "Guards! Hold her down! I'm going to **teach** her a lesson today!"

"Yes, Miss Hummer!"

Two of her bodyguards went up to Dahlia and restrained her. They held her arms behind her back and brought

her down to her knees so that she **was** kneeling.

"You slut! How dare **you** seduce my man? Have you got a death wish?" Tina grabbed hold of Dahlia's hair, a

wicked look on her **face**.

"It was you? You were the one who framed me?" Dahlia **was** stunned for a moment before it struck her. She had been Tina's target from the get-go!

Chapter 125

"Hah! Guess you're not such a thickhead after all." Tina let out a low laugh.

"But so what if you know? No one can help you now. I can deal with you however I want to." With that, she picked up a bottle of red wine and stuffed the neck of the bottle into Dahlia's mouth.

The red fluid gushed into Dahlia's mouth, and Dahlia choked on it, coughing unstopably. Her face **was** flushed red.

She felt lightheaded and it was horrible.

"Down it! I **said**, down it!" Tina's expression was nothing short of maniacal.