

An Understated Dominance by Marina Chapter 961

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But Dustin's attitude only stirred Vanessa's competitive spirit.

"Hey, can't you be a little friendlier?" Vanessa pouted teasingly.

"It's polite to return kind gestures. I'll lose sleep if I don't repay you."

"You'll be fine with a couple of sleeping pills. Goodbye," Dustin replied curtly before walking away.

"Wait, mister!"

Vanessa tried to catch up to him but stumbled after a few steps. As she fell, her torn clothing revealed her voluptuous figure.

Dustin paused briefly to remove his coat and tossed it to her.

"Thanks!" Vanessa quickly covered herself with the coat, feeling genuinely grateful.

"Vanessa!"

A man and woman approached. Their elegant fashion tastes made it easy to tell that they held a higher status than ordinary citizens!

"I'm here!" Vanessa waved at them, her spirits lifting.

"Where did you go, Vanessa?"

"Why didn't you inform us? We were so worried!" The woman in red feigned annoyance.

"What happened to you, Vanessa? And why are you dressed like this? Did something bad happen?" The man in black was puzzled.

"I encountered some thugs earlier. But thankfully, this young man saved me!" Vanessa recounted,

fear **still** in her voice.

"I see." The man in black studied Dustin doubtfully.

"Thank you for saving Vanessa," said the woman in red.

She nodded respectfully before continuing, "I'm Emily Hoyles, and I belong to Azure Mist.

"This is my senior, Nathan Hoyles. Mind if I ask for your name?"

"My surname's Rhys." Dustin nodded politely in return.

"Nice to meet you, Mr. Rhys." Emily smiled.

"Judging from your accent, you're not from around here, right? Are you here to search for Iris

Meskill's tomb?"

"Hmm?" Dustin raised an eyebrow, surprised.

"How did you know?"

"Just a hunch." Emily smiled.

"Lester's been lively today, and even Azure Mist received news about it, too. So, other than tourists,

"Good intuition. I'm impressed," Dustin complimented.

"Since we're all after the treasure, why don't we team up for safety? What do you think?" Emily offered.

Most adventurers who came today were capable, so working together would benefit everyone.

"I'm used to traveling alone, so I might slow you guys down," Dustin declined politely.

"You saved Vanessa, so it's only fair we repay the favor.

"You'll even get a share of the treasure once we find it." Emily insisted.

When she saw Dustin hesitate, she added, "The Black Forest is dangerous and filled with poisonous mist.

"People who don't know their way around that place will get lost easily. However, we're locals, so it'll be safer for **you** to travel with us."

"Emily/let's not force someone." Nathan's tone held some annoyance.

Others would have jumped at the chance to travel with them, yet Dustin was still hesitating

What a fool!

"The Black Forest is dangerous. It'll be safer if you travel with us," Vanessa said.

She was grateful for what he'd done for her, so she didn't want him risking his life in vain.

Dustin gave it some thought and agreed. "I'll accept your offer since you insist."

He wasn't familiar with the Black Forest, so having a guide would save a lot of trouble.

"Alright. Let's meet at the hotel's restaurant tonight." Emily and the two walked away. Before leaving, Vanessa glanced at Dustin.