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Love from My Dominant Boss Chapter 191 - 200

“Hello?”

“Are you free tonight? Care to have dinner with me?”

Ronan’s all-too-chipper voice sounded through the phone. He was always in a jolly good mood and not having a worry in the world.

“I—”

I was not in the mood to meet Ronan when I was troubled with the thought of Michael having dinner with another woman. After a glance at Michael’s office, I decided to tell Ronan that I was not interested in having dinner with him. But before I could turn him down, Ronan’s voice came through the phone.

“You’ve turned me down countless times. Are you going to do it again today? It’s not nice of you to keep rejecting me, you know?”

Ronan sounded rather aggrieved on the phone.

If I were to turn him down again, then I would be rather unkind towards him. Although I didn’t quite agree with Ronan’s frivolous ways, he was the one who took care of me when I was hospitalized. I knew deep down he was a good person.

“All right. I’m getting off work now and heading home. I’ll change my clothes first before calling you.”

In the end, I finally agreed to meet up with Ronan. Apart from his frivolity, he didn’t seem to have any other shortcomings.

“All right. I’ll wait for your call.”

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On the other end of the phone, Ronan sounded rather excited.

I hung up and cast a glance again at Michael's office. I didn't want to meet up with Ronan initially, but I didn't want to stay home and wait for Michael to return from his dinner date with another woman either. I would be better off having a nice dinner with a handsome man as my companion, although Ronan was like a brother to me.

At the end of office hours, most of the colleagues in my department had clocked off work. But Michael was still in his office. I frowned and fought the urge to go into his office to look for him.

Back at Birchwood, I changed my clothes and walked to a nearby bus stop before calling Ronan. I could have asked him to pick me up at Birchwood, but I didn't want anyone else to know about my relationship with Michael.

If Ronan were to know where I lived, he would have stormed into Michael's house. And if that were to happen, Michael would definitely fly into a rage due to some misunderstanding. By then, I wouldn't be able to explain myself out of that mess.

I waited at the bus stop for a short while before a flashy Ferrari drove up in front of me. Ronan was not driving fast because this was a residential area.

"Why are you waiting for me in a place like this? Next time, just let me know where you live, and I'll come and get you," Ronan said as he stuck his head out of the car window.

He was dressed in black casual wear with a pair of oversized aviator sunglasses. Although the sunglasses covered up more than half of his face, one could still tell that he was a handsome man.

"There's no need for that. It's not easy to find the street I lived in. Besides, it's just a stone's throw away from this bus stop. It's no trouble at all," I got into the passenger seat and answered with a faint smile before proceeding to change the subject.

"Do you have to go to such length to keep it a secret? We're friends now, aren't we? Are you afraid to let me know where you live?"

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Although Ronan seemed cavalier, he was also a clever man. He could tell that I was deliberately trying to change the subject.

“What do you want to have for dinner?” I quickly changed the subject as I didn’t want to be interrogated about where I lived.

Ronan’s face stiffened with dismay when he realized I was changing the subject, but he quickly put on a smile again after that.

“I heard there’s a newly opened Jetroinian restaurant that serves coast-worthy fresh salmons. Let’s go there, shall we?”

“Okay,” I answered with a smile.

Ronan put the car in gear, and not long after that, the car came to a stop at the entrance of a Jetroinian restaurant. This place looked to be a high-class restaurant, and it would definitely cost a lot of money to dine here.

“This place looks expensive. Let’s go somewhere else.”

I was being serious. Although Ronan was the son of a wealthy man, he was also unemployed. Thus, I felt bad for having to spend a lot at a high-end restaurant.

“Please don’t worry about the price. Dinner is on me, and I can afford it.”

Ronan seemed to read my mind. He patted me on the shoulder before he took my hand and walked into the restaurant.

Since I treated him as my own brother, I didn’t mind when he took my hand and led me in.

I felt rather out of place because that was my first time to dine at such a high-end restaurant.

We chose a window seat, and I sat across from Ronan.

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As soon as we sat down, a waiter approached us with the menu.

“Order anything you like,” Ronan said as he handed me the menu with a smile.

“I’ll leave it to you to order. It’s my first time at this kind of restaurant, so I don’t know what to order.”

I handed the menu back to Ronan. I didn’t know what to order without looking like a fool.

“Okay then, I’ll order for us.”

Ronan didn’t object either. With the menu in his hands, he began to order several dishes that I had never heard of before.

While we were waiting for our food to arrive, I shifted my gaze towards the main entrance. I froze when I saw who it was at the door.

Michael walked into the restaurant, with Ms. Light following closely behind. She looked exceptionally stunning, and it was obvious that she had taken the time to dress up for dinner.

She beamed widely as she walked up to Michael and hooked her hand around his arm.

Michael did not push her away, but he frowned as he looked at her hand on his arm. After that, they chose a table that was not too far from me.

When Michael was taking his seat, he looked in my direction and instantly spotted me.

He blinked in astonishment before shifting his gaze to Ronan. Since Ronan was seated with his back facing Michael, the latter only saw the former’s back.

A scowl darkened his face. And I began to get all hot and flustered from his icy gaze.

I’m so screwed! How could it be so coincidental? To run into Michael at the same restaurant when I’m out for dinner with Ronan.

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I panicked and lowered my head because I was afraid to lock eyes with Michael again. At that moment, I struggled to put on a calm face as my mind began to race.

“What’s wrong, Anna? You don’t look so good.”

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Ronan tilted his head up. His eyes shone with worry when he stared at me.

All I could think about at the time was Michael, so I paid no attention to what Ronan was saying. I simply kept my head down as my heart thumped wildly. Shoot! I can’t believe we bumped into each other here!

“Anna?”

Ronan called out to me again when he noticed that I wasn’t reacting at all. His handsome brows were frowning slightly, and his gaze carried a hint of worry.

“Huh? What?” I blurted in surprise while shifting my attention to him.

“Something seems off about you. What’s wrong?”

“I-I’m fine. I just need to go to the ladies’ room real quick.”

Ronan’s expression changed after he heard what I said, and confusion started glowing in his eyes.

I had tilted my head up and snuck a peek at Michael. Anxiety ran wild in me when I saw that he was staring at me, so I excused myself and quickly got out of my seat. After that, I rushed to the washroom.

Inside the washroom, I washed my hands and looked at my own reflection. I looked so nervous that it was ridiculous.

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What are you worried about, Anna Garcia? He's on a date with another woman, whereas you're having an innocent meal with a friend. Why are you scared?

I glared at my reflection as regret donned my face. Michael is the one at fault; he agreed to go on a date with that woman. Why do I have to feel guilty?

I splashed some water on my face before I exited the washroom. Unfortunately, I was pushed to the wall as soon as I walked out of there. My back was hurt, and my first instinct was to cuss aloud, but I never had the chance to do so. When I saw that the perpetrator was Michael, my heart started thumping wildly, and I was nervous once more.

"W-What are you doing here?"

Isn't he supposed to be on a date with that beautiful woman? Why is he here? Did he also come to use the washroom?

"I'm the one who should be questioning you. Anna Garcia, how dare you? I can't believe you're going behind my back and seeing another man. How freaking brave of you!"

Michael's handsome face was so grouchy that he looked scary. His words and tone brimmed with fury as he spoke like he was interrogating me.

"What the hell are you talking about? We're just friends. It's not what you think!"

When I learned that Michael had misread the situation, I was angry and worried at the same time. I didn't want him to see me like that.

Moreover, Ronan and I were really just friends. In fact, he was actually a few years older than me. So, I only saw him as a younger brother. Hell, did he think I am a cougar? I am not into younger men.

"You're having dinner with him! How could I have misread the situation? Seriously, do you think you can fool me, Anna?"

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Michael didn't believe a word I said because his anger had clouded his judgment. My explanation was to no avail as he was already intent on the notion that Ronan and I were an item.

I wanted to explain myself again, but then I recalled how he was out on a date with a beautiful woman. I didn't even complain about his date! Why should I reassure him when I'm only having a meal with a friend?

The thought fired me up. I glared at Michael and spoke in a distant tone when I pointed out, "You're on a date with a beautiful woman, so what's wrong with me being with a handsome dude? It's not like there's anything you can do about it."

"Anna Garcia!"

Maybe it was because he never expected me to change my stance so abruptly, but Michael was stunned for a second. His gaze instantly filled with fury when he looked at me again.

Michael was dying of anger. The rage in his eyes was burning wildly, but my words had cornered him, and there was nothing he could say. All he could do was glare at me, and I could tell that at that moment, he was already at the edge of going off.

"Mr. Shaw, if there is nothing else you'd like to share, I'd like to return to my seat. My friend is waiting for me."

I put on a brave face, but the pressure exuded from Michael's eyes made me incredibly uncomfortable. All I wanted was to run away from him as quickly as possible.

At first, I wanted to flee as soon as I finished speaking, but Michael grabbed my wrist and glared angrily at me.

"Anna Garcia, how dare you cheat on me that blatantly? You really have gotten gutsy!"

Michael had no intention of letting me go. He had always been a possessive man. Now that he saw me having a meal with another man, he was probably too angry to be hungry.

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“Have you forgotten we are not in a relationship, Mr. Shaw? So it’s a little inappropriate to say that I cheated on you.”

Michael’s attitude toward me had changed drastically over the past two days. I refuted and said those words because I wanted to test the water and learn who I was to him.

My words touched a nerve once again. His dark brown eyes burned with rage so wild that it felt like it would turn me into ashes.

His grip became tighter, and I felt like my bones were being crushed. I frowned in pain, but my gaze remained distant when I looked into his eyes.

“Let go of me, Michael. You’re hurting me!”

I used my other hand to push him and try to get away from him. Unfortunately, his hand was as strong as a pincer and had locked me in place. It didn’t matter how I fought back. His grip remained strong.

“I know you’re pushing my buttons, Anna, but I’ve told you a million times—you are mine!”

Michael had always been ridiculously possessive. It didn’t matter how he felt about me. All that mattered was that I belonged to him and must be blindly loyal to him.

“Let go of me, Michael. Let go!”

He was strong, and my wrist hurt so much that my tears were gathering in my eyes. Darn it. If I had known that I’d bump into Michael tonight, I would never have come out for dinner. Fate can be such a b*tch!

“I will shout if you don’t let go, Michael, and I will tell everyone that you attempted to rape me!”

I couldn’t help threatening him when I saw that he was not budging at all. This man is unreasonable. I’ve explained the situation to clear the misunderstanding, and I’ve fought to get away from him. Neither worked!

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“Rape? Have you forgotten that you belong to me?”

Michael’s tone remained distant, and his eyes shone with taunt when he heard my threat.

“Except no one knows about our relationship. If I were to shout and frame you as a rapist, people will believe me. You are a prominent figure, after all. Are you not worried about tarnishing your own reputation?”

Truth was, I had nothing to back up my words. I was honestly worried that Michael would ignore my threat completely, but I had to fight back. Who knows what he will do to me if we keep staying here?

Michael glared evilly at me, but he refused to let go. I parted my lips to shout. At that moment, he let go of me abruptly. His sharp gaze glared over as he threatened, “You win this time, Anna Garcia, but I will deal with you when I get home tonight.”

Michael turned around and left after saying his piece.

My wrist still hurt from being gripped like that, but I sighed a breath of relief. My relief didn’t last long, though, because I started worrying about what I’d have to deal with that night.

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I stood in the same spot and took quite some time to calm my nerves before I returned to my seat. That was when I saw that Michael was already back on his date with the beautiful lady.

The lady kept smiling, and it seemed like she was trying to seduce Michael. That got me upset. I was tempted to rush over and chase that woman away.

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“Anna, why were you gone for so long? Are you not feeling well?”

Ronan seemed curious and worried.

“Oh, I’m fine. There was a queue at the washroom,” I lied quickly while shifting my attention over.

“Oh, then let’s eat up. Everything is served.”

Ronan didn’t suspect anything. He simply got me a salmon sandwich. A hint of love and care glowed in his eyes when he looked at me.

Am I seeing things? Why does he look like he is staring at his girlfriend when he smiles at me? Gah, I’m probably just nuts. My brain hasn’t been working well lately.

I shook my head to stop myself from overthinking. After that, I tilted my head down and started eating, but I can’t stop myself from glancing over at Michael.

He happened to turn to me as well. All I saw was the anger in his distant gaze and the displeasure in his grouchy expression.

Those got me to turn my attention to the food right away and pretend I never saw him. That guy won’t let me go tonight, anyway, so I might as well enjoy myself while I still can.

I spent the entire meal looking away from Michael, but I could sense that his glare was on me all the time.

I ended up having that meal while on edge. Ronan took me to the bus stop. He wanted to drive me all the way home, but I honestly couldn’t explain myself if he met Michael there, so I rejected his offer.

Ronan seemed a little disappointed about that, but he didn’t push it further. He simply stared into my eyes before he turned around and left.

I took a deep breath after Ronan’s car had gone out of view. I had to prepare myself mentally before I deal with Michael back at home.

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I walked slowly because I truly didn't want to go back. He was scary when he lost his temper, and I honestly got on his nerve that day.

Unfortunately, I still had to go back. Michael was already sitting on the sofa in the living room when I reached home. His ferocious gaze shot daggers at me as soon as I entered the house.

"W-Why are you back so soon?"

I felt guilty when I looked at him and saw that haunting glare.

"Why are you home so late? How long does it take to finish a meal? Couldn't bear to part with your lover?"

Michael stood up and approached me. His eyes shone with intense fury when he glared over.

I averted my gaze. My initial plan was to circle around him and retire to the bedroom, but that no longer seemed possible. There's no way he'd let me go tonight.

Michael had barred my path, and his handsome face had an evil expression on when he looked at me.

"It's late. We should rest."

I looked at Michael and was speaking meekly because we're home. I no longer had anything to threaten him with, so I could only admit defeat.

"We have some scores to settle, don't we? So how can we go to bed? Anna Garcia, did you really think you can con me just like that?"

Michael has made his mind and will not let me go tonight. D*mn it. I've already lowered my stance to this extent, but he's still not satisfied. Seriously, what does he want from me?

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The truth was, I was angry as well, but I couldn't show it. Michael was already on the edge of losing his temper, so I will be making things worse for myself if I keep pushing his buttons.

Michael approached me as I backed away from him. Our steps were synchronized like we were a team, but I felt aggrieved when I looked into his eyes.

"It's not what you think. I was only out with a friend, and all we did was having dinner together. Will you please stop imagining things?"

I wanted to act tough and ignore Michael without offering any explanation, but I couldn't. This man has always reacted badly to being pushed. If I remain stubborn, he will crush me before I even know what happened.

"Is that so? Then why are you home so late? Where did the two of you go after dinner? Did you sleep with him?"

Michael didn't believe anything I said, even though I've already made things crystal clear. He insisted on assuming the worst.

"Don't cross the line, Michael Shaw! There is nothing between the two of us. Why must you think so badly of me?"

I was a little angry when I glared at him. His words were blatant insults to me. I have never slept with any other man since I met Michael.

I never even slept with Yuval, whom I dated for some time, and I've only known Ronan for a few days!

"Why should I believe you? I want to do a spot check!"

At that moment, Michael had reached his epitome of anger. He didn't trust me at all and didn't believe that there was anything between Ronan and me.

"Spot check? How do you do that?"

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I frowned and stared strangely at Michael. How could he tell if I have slept with another man?

“By taking you to bed!”

Michael spat those words evilly. He never gave me a chance to fight back and was quick to throw me over his shoulder before walking back to the room.

He dumped me onto the bed and showed no care for me at all. I struggled to sit up, but he hovered over me and pinned me down before I got to do so.

“What are you doing, Michael?”

I was a little scared when I saw the crazy look on Michael’s face. I honestly had no idea what he was going to do.

“Conduct a spot check, of course!”

Michael had a grouchy expression on when he spat those words. He pulled my skirt up the very next second.

I had been naked in front of Michael before, but the way he treated me at that moment made me feel ashamed and insulted. I truly wanted to fight back.

I didn’t do anything. Yet, he suspects my infidelity and insists on doing a spot check. Is that how he sees me? As a cheap wh*re?

“Let go of me, you pervert!”

The way Michael acted at that moment was no different from a pervert.

“A pervert? How dare you call me a pervert, Anna Garcia?”

Michael was a powerful figure, and it was likely that no one ever dared to insult him right in his face. As such, my words had completely infuriated him.

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He didn't give me a chance to say anything else. All I felt was a chill as he took my undergarment off right away.

Anger and humiliation intertwined within my heart. My eyes were bloodshot as I glared angrily at Michael's handsome face.

This man has reached a whole new level of despicable! How could he do this to me?

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"Let go of me, you pervert!"

I struggled as much as I could. At that moment, I was truly tempted to slap Michael right across the face, but I was too chicken to do so.

"You belong to me, Anna Garcia. Do you hear me? You are mine, and I will not allow you to be with another man!"

Michael was grouchy when he glared at me and grumbled into my ear.

My heart trembled fiercely. An idea instantly flashed through my mind. -Is he jealous? Is that why he's angry at me for having dinner with Ronan?

Thinking about that got me a little excited. I truly wished that was the case.

I stopped struggling against Michael. My eyes shone with sincerity, and I stared for a long time before I replied, "Okay, I understand, and I won't sleep with anyone else before our relationship ends, but he really is just a friend."

Michael was the only one I love with all my heart and soul, so how could I possibly get intimate with anyone else? Even if our relationship ends, I likely won't be with anyone for a while. I am destined to be hurt by this relationship between us.

The fury in Michael's eyes dissipated quickly when he saw me softening. His grip on my hand loosened as well.

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He looked into my eyes as I gazed calmly into his. There wasn't even a hint of guilt in me.

"You better remember the words you said, Anna Garcia. I will not allow my woman to betray me!" warned Michael in his deep voice. His tone was powerful and convincing as he did so.

My heart trembled as I nodded robotically. The strong aura his body exuded got me inexplicably nervous.

I stared blankly at him. Michael kissed me before I came around.

He wasn't as forceful as he was earlier, but he was still possessive. Despite that, I couldn't stop myself from falling for him. I knew that I would just get hurt if I fall deeper in love, but I couldn't help it.

Michael kissed for a long time. He didn't let me go until my mind had already shut down. That night, he was especially passionate, and I had trouble keeping up.

After what seemed like an eternity, I felt like my back was breaking when he was finally done.

I panted as I laid on the bed. Michael, however, walked right out of the bedroom. He didn't hold me in his arms like he used to, and that disappointed me a little.

Hearing the running water from the washroom got me curious. I wanted to know if he was simply possessive of me, or if he truly cared.

Despite my curiosity, I didn't have the guts to ask him. I worried that his answer would break my heart.

I was exhausted after Michael drained me like that, so I closed my eyes and stopped wondering.

It didn't take me long to fall asleep, and I didn't know when Michael returned to bed, but he was awake when I got up.

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He tilted his head toward me when I looked at him. His gaze was serene, and I couldn't detect any emotions from them.

"Last night..."

I remained quiet for a long time, but when I finally tried to speak, I realized that I was at a loss for words.

"Let's get up."

Michael didn't say much after blurting those words. He simply got out of bed.

I felt a little nervous as I watched him get dressed. Is the dinner incident over? Or is he still angry?

I didn't think that I did anything wrong last night, but I didn't want him to be mad at me.

Michael and I got out of bed together. At first, I assumed that he would offer to drop me off at work as he had over the past few days. But, he didn't. He walked down the stairs and drove away with no regard for me. It felt like he had completely neglected my existence.

I was a little disappointed when I watched his car going down the road. I sighed before heading toward the subway.

There were times when I found that I have overestimated my existence in Michael's life. He never let go of what happened yesterday and is still mad at me.

I had just reached the office when my phone rang. It was my mom. It had been days since I went to the hospital, and I hadn't called her in a while. Her calling me out of the blue like that gave me a bad hunch.

I scanned my colleagues to make sure no one was looking before heading to the pantry to accept the call.

"Hey, mom."

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“Anna Garcia, do you realize that it has been a while since you visited the hospital? Do you plan on abandoning your dad and your brother? Are you just going to ignore us after you tossed us to the hospital?”

Mom’s complaint spewed out of the phone as soon as the line was established.

I had already gotten used to my mom’s tone by then, but I still couldn’t help frowning a little.

“Sorry, mom. I have been busy at work, so I haven’t had the time to go visit.”

It didn’t matter how my mom treated me in the past. I was still wrong for not visiting more frequently.

“Steven will be discharged in a few days, but he needs to go for regular check-ups. It will be inconvenient for us if we go back to the village, so find a place for us to stay here.”

My mom never complained about me not visiting again. Instead, she changed the topic.

“Okay, I will try to find a suitable place.”

I spoke after being quiet for a while. My budget was already tight, so if I were to rent another place, the weight on my shoulders would be extremely burdensome. However, I understood that Steven’s legs were badly injured, and he needed proper medical attention. That was why I agreed to help out.

“Remember to source for a spacious place. Get us a place with three rooms and easy access to the washroom. You know how your brother’s legs are right now. It’s difficult for him to go to the washroom.”

My mom’s tone had no warmth; she had been ordering me around since the line was established. I knew that she was angry at me, so I was trying my best to butter her up. Still, I had to turn her down when she wanted a place with three rooms.

“Mom, it’s very expensive to rent a place with three rooms in this city. It’ll cost thousands a month.”

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I didn't have much money left with me, so there was no way I could afford it. The rent in Avenport was simply too high.

"What? Is money more important than your brother? So what if it's thousands a month? Are your brother's legs not worth the price?"

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My mom's displeased voice carried a hint of anger when it boomed from the phone.

"That's not what I meant, mom. It's just that it really is that expensive to rent a place like that in Avenport. I don't have that much money on me, and it'll take some time before I receive my salary."

I was quick to explain myself when I heard that my mom had misunderstood the situation. I was troubled as well. Naturally, I'd want to get Steven a nicer environment for him to recuperate in, but I simply didn't have the capability to do so.

"How about this, mom? I will get a slightly smaller place for the time being and will find everyone a better place after I receive my salary next month."

I honestly didn't have the funds to rent a better place, so I had no choice but to negotiate with my mom. I knew that my mom could never bear to see Steven being hurt even a little, but I simply had no choice.

"I bet you're just being stingy. You've been working for a while now, so how is it possible that you have no money for renting a place? Seriously, I have wasted my life raising you. I can't believe that you're not willing to even spend a few thousand on us."

I was working hard to please my mom, but she refused to believe me. What makes her think that I am rich?

"Mom, it's really not what you think. I don't have the money. Why won't you trust me?"

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My relationship with my mom was already strained. I had tried to fix it. Unfortunately, my mom didn't believe me at all, and that got me angry.

"Fine, even if you don't have the money, that Shaw guy must have it, right? He is a manager, so a few thousand probably means nothing to him."

My mom saw that she couldn't convince me, so she shifted her target to Michael. Hearing her words got me even angrier.

"Stop targeting Michael, mom. I will not let him spend another penny on us. He has already paid for Steven's medical fees and has given us over a hundred thousand! We can't possibly ask more of him."

I would never agree to let my mom ask Michael for more money. If things hadn't changed and Michael and I were just in a business agreement, I might consider asking him for the money, but it's different now. The way I see him has changed, and I don't want our relationship to be rooted in money.

"You won't give us the money, nor would you let the Shaw guy do so. Anna Garcia, are you deliberately trying to make things difficult for us? You're just going to ignore us now that you have a rich boyfriend. Is that it?"

My mom lost her temper right away when she heard how direct I was in rejecting her request. She thought that I was purposely being mean.

"Mom, there is nothing between Michael and me. He is just my boss, and he has helped us a lot. We are not supposed to just keep asking him for money. What gives us the right to do so? And why should he help us, anyway?"

My mom was angry, but so was I. My family was like a bottomless pit. Michael had helped them out a few times, and they've already gotten into the habit of asking more whenever they needed the money.

Why should Michael keep sponsoring them? Can't they be grateful for what they already have? Why must they depend on others?

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“What the hell are you talking about, Anna Garcia? Do you want to watch your family die? Have you forgotten that the person lying on the hospital bed is your own brother? His legs wouldn’t even be broken in the first place if you had gathered enough money!”

My mom never realized what the family’s problem was. All she ever did was shift the blame to me.

“I won’t ask Michael for the money, mom, and that’s that. I will try my best to find a more spacious place for the three of you to stay in. I have to work now, so I’m hanging up.”

I didn’t want to continue arguing, so I hung up immediately after I finished speaking.

It wouldn’t matter what I say. My mom would just pin all the blame on me, anyway. As far as she was concerned, I was the one who was always at fault.

I took a few deep breaths to ease my frustration after hanging up. After that, I left the pantry.

The situation at home made it so that it was impossible for me to concentrate on work. All I could think about was the family drama. I honestly don’t know what to do now.

I turned and stared at Michael’s office. For a moment there, I was truly worried about my mom contacting Michael and asking for money. The last thing I wanted was for our relationship to be further complicated by financial ties.

I was distracted all day. I didn’t return to Birchwood after clocking off. Instead, I started looking for places to rent near the hospital and prayed that I could find an economical yet spacious spot.

Unfortunately, I couldn’t find anything despite spending all my time on it. The hospital was located in a rich neighborhood, so the rent for the houses near the place was ridiculously high. I asked a few owners, but everyone asked for about three thousand a month.

I was stuck in a dilemma because I simply didn’t have any money.

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I went to so many places that I felt like my legs would give away. Still, I could find an affordable house to rent. Even the less spacious places would cost over two thousand a month.

I took the subway back to Birchwood. I spent all day walking around, so my feet were sore. The first thing I did when I got back was to sit on the sofa. At that moment, I didn't want to even lift a finger.

When Michael entered through the front door, the first thing he saw was me sitting there like a disheveled dog. His beautiful brows frowned tightly before he walked over and complained, "Is it really that tiring to work in the office? Just look at the state you're in."

Michael placed his briefcase aside and took off his coat before he tossed it on the sofa. Then he sat down beside me.

"That's not it. I have been looking for a place to rent since I clocked off today, but I can't find anything. I ended up walking all day. That's why I'm tired."

Joyful Success' workload was huge, but working there wasn't so tiring that it'd get anyone that tired.

"You're looking for a place to rent? Are you planning on moving out?"

Michael's frown became even tighter when he heard that I was out looking for a place to rent. His eyes also glowed with anger when he turned to me.

"No, I was just looking for a place for my parents and Steven. The hospital is discharging Steven soon, and he needs a nice place to recuperate. Renting a place nearby would make it easier for him to go for check-ups."

I don't know why Michael was suddenly angry, but I couldn't stop myself from explaining the situation to him quickly.

The anger in his eyes faded quickly after I told him the truth. His gaze also became less distant.

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He remained quiet for a moment before saying, "Just leave it to me. I will have my secretary go look for an ideal place tomorrow."

Michael spoke nonchalantly, and it seemed that he wasn't really worried about it.

"No, that's not necessary. Please don't involve yourself in the matter. You've already helped my family a lot, and I don't want to keep dragging you into this mess."

Love from My Dominant Boss Chapter 196

Michael had already spent so much money on my family, so there was no way I'd let him deal with the issue at hand.

A few hundred thousand meant nothing to him, but for common folks like me, it was an enormous debt. I had already owed him so much, and I didn't want that debt to become bigger.

"Do you honestly think that you can handle this on your own? If I'm not mistaken, you've already spent all your savings, haven't you?"

Michael wasn't angry about my rejection at all. He knows me so well! He actually guessed it right, and I have spent all my savings.

I tilted my head down in shame when faced with his nonchalant gaze. I didn't know what to say because I truly couldn't afford to make ends meet with the money I had on me at that moment. Despite that, I still didn't want to owe him more.

"I'll come up with something. Please don't involve yourself in the matter."

I looked into his eyes and had a straight face on when I spoke.

I didn't want Michael to get involved in the matter because I didn't want to owe him more than I already had, and I didn't want my family to keep asking him for money.

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Michael never owed us anything, and my family had no right to keep asking him for money.

He frowned a little after hearing what I said, but he never replied. I guess his silence means that he's agreed to stay away.

"Anna, you don't need to keep shouldering all the responsibilities yourself. I can help you out financially."

Michael was quiet for a long time before he spoke up. His words touched my heart, and I appreciated the way he could always lift me up when I was at my lowest.

I understood that my family had a lot of issues and knew that it would be very difficult for me to shoulder it all on my own. However, it was still my family's matter, and I couldn't drag him into it.

"There's no need for that. My parents will just become greedier if you keep helping them out. They will ask for more money as time goes on."

It would not be inappropriate to call my family members worthless bloodsucking parasites. All they ever did was daydream about how they could get rich without working. They never thought about making an effort to lead a fruitful life.

"The same applies to you, doesn't it? If you want to solve the issue within your family, then you must ignore them and stop letting them take advantage of you."

Michael was a smart man, and he understood all that as well. He could even analyze the pattern clearly. Unfortunately, I couldn't bring myself to ignore my family completely.

As a member of the family, I simply couldn't stand idly by and watch as they suffer. I especially couldn't ignore my parents, who were getting older. They were from a small village and had little income.

"My parents are getting older, and I don't want them to suffer."

I had my head down and spoke calmly. After that, I kept quiet.

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Truth was, my parents wouldn't need much money. They were two elders who lived in the village, so how much could they really spend? The only problem was that my stupid brother had a knack for dragging the entire family down with him.

We wouldn't be in that terrible state if he weren't addicted to gambling. There were times when I truly hated him, but it didn't matter what I said or yelled or scolded. Nothing worked on him because he never listened.

I only prayed that he had learned his lesson after his debtors broke both his legs. Hopefully, the pain and the heavy price will change him into a better person.

"It's late. You should go shower and rest."

No one dwelled on that topic. Michael got up and walked to the bedroom after saying his piece.

I sighed as I watched his figure walk away. After that, I followed him along.

I felt much better after the shower. When I got out of the washroom, I saw Michael lying on the bed and swiping on his phone. There was no saying what he was looking at.

I didn't say anything. Instead, I laid down beside him right away and prayed that the man would let me rest that night. I worked all day and went to look for a place to rent after I clocked off. Hence, I was exhausted and had no intention of dealing with him.

Michael put his phone away after I went to bed. He turned around and held me in his arms. I stiffened. He's not thinking about doing something dirty tonight, is he?

I closed my eyes as I tensed up. That was not a good night, and I truly wasn't in the mood for anything romantic.

To my surprise, he was simply letting me rest in his arms. He had his other arm hold me, but he did nothing else.

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I opened my eyes then. All I saw was that he had already closed his eyes and was going to sleep. That got me to sigh a long breath of relief. I guess the guy still has a conscience. He knows that I am tired, so he didn't ask for anything.

I closed my eyes and went to bed. It was nice. I had always slept better when I was in his arms.

Unfortunately, the rare peace didn't last long. My mom was waiting for me on the ground floor of my workplace the following afternoon. I didn't know that she was there and had been waiting for a long time until it was time for me to go have lunch.

When lunchtime came, my colleagues left one after another. I got ready to leave as well. However, Michael texted me just before it was time to clock off. He asked me to go to the parking lot.

When I got to the ground floor, I saw my mom sitting on the stairs outside the entrance. I frowned a little upon seeing her, but I walked to her, anyway.

"Mom, what are you doing here? How did you know this is where I work?"

I didn't know how my mom found this place, but I had a bad feeling about it. She must be here to ask for money again.

"Like I have a choice? I had to come here. Honestly, how long has it been since you went to the hospital? Do you still remember that the man lying on the hospital bed is your brother? Do you even still take us as your family?" scolded my mom. She was quick to get angry when she saw me.

I was angry when I heard her scolding me like that, but I didn't say anything. We were at the entrance of the company, and there were many spectators. If we got into a fight, it would affect my reputation at work.

"Mom, why are you here?"

I had to suppress the anger within me and look at my mother when I asked that question as calmly as possible.

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“What else could I have come for? I came to ask you if you have found a place to rent. Steven is getting discharged on the day after tomorrow,” said my mom while frowning at me.

“Mom, it’s not that easy to find a place to rent in a city like this. I tried looking for one after I clock off yesterday, but everything is just too expensive, and nothing fits. I’ll go search again later,” I promised.

I worried that my mom would think that I didn’t work hard on it, so I hurriedly explain myself.

“Too expensive? I bet you’re deliberately making it so that your brother can’t have things easier. He’s a patient now, so what’s wrong with spending some extra money to get him a better place? Are you really that stingy?”

Love from My Dominant Boss Chapter 197

My mom couldn’t be bothered to listen. At that moment, she simply thought that I was being stingy.

“Mom, will you please be reasonable? I will definitely give you the money if I have it, but I am completely broke!”

I was getting angry as well. No matter how hard my mom pushed, it wouldn’t change the fact that I am broke. What will it take for her to believe that I don’t have any money?

“I don’t care. The bottom line is that you must find a place for your brother to recuperate. I don’t believe that you can’t even afford to rent a place!” growled my mom as she glared over. Her words sent a shiver into my heart.

She was blatantly forcing my hand, and she remained persistent despite seeing how troubled I was. Does her heart not ache at all? I am her daughter. Even if she puts all the blame on me, shouldn’t she still feel something when she sees how troubled I am?

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“Let’s go, mom. I’ll take you to the bank now and show you my account balance. You can see for yourself if I have the money or not.”

My mom’s attitude had completely infuriated me. I walked to her and grabbed her hand to lead her to the bank.

I will show her just how much I have since she doesn’t believe me. That will prove whether I am wrong for being heartless or if she is unreasonable for pushing like that.

My mom flung my hand away and glared at me angrily. She insisted, “I will not go. If you want to go to the bank, then you can do so yourself! I don’t care if you don’t have the money right now. Everything must be perfect for your brother’s recovery. Deal with everything yourself. If you can’t even find a place to rent, then I will disown you!”

Seeing how agitated I got made my mom feel guilty. Maybe she knew that I didn’t have any money. She only came all the way over to make me ask Michael for the money. That makes sense. Michael has always been too generous when spending money.

Maybe they think that going after Michael is the fastest and easiest way to get rich. That could be why my mom is making such unreasonable demands.

“Mom, do you realize how heartbroken I am when I hear you say that? I honestly want to know. Does your heart ever ache a little when you push me like this?”

I would be even more disappointed if it turned out that she really was only using me for the money.

“Who would care for your brother if I sided with you? You’re standing all well and healthy here, but what about your brother? He can’t even stand now. Yet, you think I should be heartbroken for you?”

My mom’s emotion was running wild, so her voice was getting louder. That got the spectators to turn to us. My mom was tearing up a little. I know that she was only crying for Steven’s sake, but from the perspective of the spectators, it looked like I had made her cry.

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I had always known that my mom cared more about Steven, but hearing her words still stung my heart. Sometimes, I truly hated the fact that I was not a boy. If I were their son, my parents wouldn't treat me the way they did.

My tears were swirling in my eyes as well. I was truly disappointed in my mom, and I wanted to vent, but I didn't dare to say anything in front of her. I was worried that our relationship would become worse if I did.

My mom glared at me. Fury burned in her eyes, but she suddenly shifted her gaze elsewhere.

I hadn't even registered what was going on before I saw her walking around me to going after someone else.

I turned around curiously and saw Michael's figure in my line of sight. Panic ran wild within me. I instantly guessed that my mom was running toward Michael. My mom might ask Michael for money, and that worried me, so I chased after her.

"Mr. Shaw, I am Anna's mom. Do you still remember me?" greeted my mom with a bright smile on her face when she was right in front of Michael.

Michael paused. He shifted his gaze downward, and his brows were frowning a little when he looked at my mom. It was obvious that he wasn't happy about my mom's sudden appearance because he didn't respond to her right away.

I hurried over to my mom and pulled at her a little. Anger was burning in my heart when I requested, "Mom, will you please just head back for now? I will figure something out and deal with the housing issue."

"Figure it out? What could you figure out? If we were to depend on you, we will be homeless."

My mom flung my hand away. She didn't even bother to look at me.

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I snuck a peek at Michael. All I saw was him being grouchy without saying a word, and that got me worried. Anyone would get upset if someone were to show up suddenly and block the path.

“Mom, can we talk about this after we get home? We’re at the entrance of my workplace, so please don’t make a scene. You’re really making things difficult for me.”

I would be too embarrassed to face Michael if my mom kept causing a fuss like that in front of him. Additionally, my colleagues would see her and would gossip.

“Fine, I won’t make things difficult for you. I will solve the matter on my own.”

My mom spat those angry words at me as she glared over. After that, she turned to Michael.

“Mr. Shaw, will you do me a favor? I need some money. Will you loan me? You can deduct the money from Anna’s salary next month.”

My mom was smiling at Michael and was trying to butter him up. At that point, she could only think about the money. She never even considered how I’d make ends meet if my salary for the following month was deducted entirely.

Michael frowned deeply. He shot a calm look at me. He didn’t say anything when he saw how troubled I was. Instead, he circled around my mom and left.

We were in a public spot, and I’m guessing he didn’t want to have anything to do with me. Being badgered by someone like my mom probably made him even angrier.

My mom didn’t give up, even though Michael had walked away. She chased after him and whispered something into his ear. I didn’t need to be a genius to know that she was asking for money.

Michael was rich, and my mom knew that well. She also understood that she could get a lot more from him than she could from me.

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I was furious. She was badgering Michael right in front of me! Even if I somehow ignore how much Michael had already given us, this is a public space. She never even considered how Michael and I feel!

I followed closely behind my mom and kept tugging at her arm. I asked her to stop chasing after Michael and told her that he wouldn't loan her any money, but she refused to listen to me. In the end, she followed him all the way to the underground parking.

"Mom, will you please stop behaving this way? Can you spare me some dignity? Causing a scene at my workplace like this—how the hell am I going to continue working here now?"

I was forceful when I pulled at my mom. My voice was already filled with anger because I had run out of patience, and I simply couldn't hold it in anymore.

"Go away. Don't get in my way!"

My mom wouldn't listen to me and was forceful when she pushed me aside. I wasn't prepared for that, so that got me to fall hard on my butt.

Love from My Dominant Boss Chapter 198

The sharp pain from my butt made me frown in agony. My mom was harsh when she pushed me earlier, and it was obvious that she never worried about whether I'd get hurt.

Michael had a blank expression the entire time, but his gaze turned grim instantly when he saw my mom pushing me like that.

"That's enough!" growled Michael. His eyes burned with anger when he turned to my mom.

My mom was a senior who had seen more than what a typical youngster like us would've seen. However, Michael's cruel tone still managed to get her to tremble. Her eyes shone with anxiety when she turned around to face Michael.

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"I'm so sorry about this, Mr. Shaw. This is so embarrassing."

My mom was great at reading expressions, and seeing how angry Michael was prompted her to ignore me. She turned around and smiled at Michael.

"Please settle your family drama at home, and stop making a scene in my company!"

Michael glared over at my mom and spat those words evilly before he turned around. Once more, he left.

My butt was still stinging a little when I got up. I was devastated about how my mom pushed me earlier, but I was also angry.

"Mr. Shaw, wait. Do you think you can do as I asked earlier?"

My mom wasn't going to let Michael go because he hadn't given her the money.

Michael stopped short. He turned to my mom once more, and his eyes shone with distaste when he pointed out, "Anna must be the one to consent to the deduction of her future salary. Your words mean nothing!"

After saying his piece, Michael got into the car and closed the door. He never gave my mom a chance to say anything else. He simply fired up the car and left right away.

I felt ashamed when I saw Michael driving away like that. He already knew all about how my family was, but I still felt embarrassed when he saw how my mom treated me.

"Hear that? He said that you must be the one to make the decision. You are to ask for a loan off of your salary tomorrow. Your brother's accommodation issue must be settled!"

My mom had walked up to me when I was still out of it. She pointed her finger at me, and her tone was commanding when she spoke. There was no room for negotiating at all.

"I will not agree to this, mom. I am busy and will be leaving now."

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I wasn't heartbroken about spending the money, but I was angry at my mom. Is that all I am to her? Did she raise me just so she would get money out of me?

I circled around my mom and staggered out of there. I didn't want to discuss the matter with her at that moment.

"Anna Garcia, do you even still see me as your mom? Are you going to abandon me here just like that?" she howled at me, not expecting me to leave her there.

I felt bad about it, but I steeled myself and didn't look back.

I, too, was an emotional creature. My mom was pushing me to a corner, and I had no way out. I honestly didn't know how to deal with her anymore.

I staggered into the living room when I returned to Birchwood. Michael was sitting on the couch, and I didn't know what to say when I saw him there.

I thought about how my mom kept pestering him earlier, and that got me so embarrassed that I couldn't even bring myself to look at him.

"You're home," commented Michael.

He could tell that I was at a loss for words, so he broke the silence. When he turned to me, his tone was calm.

"Yeah."

I had my head down and didn't dare to look him in the eye.

"Come here."

He saw how I was acting like a child who had been caught making a mistake, and that got him to frown a little. Still, he wasn't actually angry.

I walked to his side and sat with him. I didn't even know how to begin apologizing. He must hate what my mom did earlier.

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“How do you plan on dealing with your mom’s issue?”

At first, I didn’t want to talk about the issue at all, but Michael spoke up. His voice carried no emotions when he asked that question.

“I don’t know.”

I shook my head. It’s true. I hadn’t thought about how to deal with the matter because my mom would not be satisfied, anyway. Moreover, even if I settled the accommodation issue, there would still be other issues in the future. I couldn’t even imagine how far my mom would push me.

I frowned in frustration. It felt like my family was actually trying to get me to commit suicide.

“I said that I can help with the housing—”

“No, there’s no need for that. I don’t want to get you involved in the matter.”

I knew what Michael wanted to say. Truth was, renting a place, or even buying the property, meant nothing to him. However, I knew that I couldn’t ask more from him. I couldn’t depend on him for everything.

“Do you think you have what it takes to solve the issue?”

Michael was frowning in frustration as well.

He was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, so he couldn’t possibly understand how I felt at that moment. I understood that he was trying to help me, but him helping out repeatedly would just make my family greedier.

What’s next after the accommodation issue is solved? Was he supposed to pay for their groceries too?

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There was nothing between Michael and me. Our deal was that he only needed to borrow me some money. He had no obligations to deal with a bottomless pit like my family.

“I want to get to the root of the problem. First, I will rent a small place for them with the money I have on me. All it needs is to be clean. When Steven recovers, I will have him get a proper job and work hard.”

I knew that solving the problem of the family must begin with dealing with Steven. My parents wouldn't keep asking me for money as long as he worked hard and could make ends meet on his own.

Most of the money I gave my mom would end up with Steve because he never worked. All he ever did was gamble everything away, and that was why their expenses were that high.

“You have overestimated your brother.”

Michael scoffed in distaste after hearing my words.

I was already frustrated, and Michael's words truly hit me hard.

I knew that it would be difficult for Steven to change his ways, but I had no other choice. The only way to solve the issue was for him to change.

He would keep asking the family for money so long as he didn't have a job, and my parents would surely ask me for it if they didn't have any money. I can't afford to support them that way.

“I must try even if my chances of success are low. The pressure will truly crush me if I don't.”

I tilted my head down. I was exhausted, but that was my only way out.

“If you want things in your family to change, you must stay strong and ignore them. Anna Garcia, you are too kind for your own good.”

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Michael shot a look at me and tossed me those words before he got up and retired to the bedroom.

I sat on the sofa on my own. Frustration filled me. At that moment, I truly wanted to just ignore them and let them deal with their own problems, but I couldn't. I knew that my parents never loved me, but they raised me, and it would be unfilial of me to ignore them completely.

Love from My Dominant Boss Chapter 199

I sat on the sofa for quite some time. Michael was already asleep by the time I went into the bedroom.

I laid down beside him, and while on the bed, I tossed and turned. I simply couldn't sleep. Everything at home was draining me.

I was distracted at work on the following day, so I didn't accomplish much. When it was time to clock off, I went to look for a house to rent. The most urgent matter at hand was to find a decent place to rent, or Steven would be homeless after he got discharged.

I searched high and low in the region near the hospital. It took some time before I finally found a place I could afford. The place was rather small, but it was clean and relatively convenient.

It cost about two thousand a month, and I paid one month's deposit to rent the place.

Staring at the cash notes in my wallet, I sighed in exasperation. It would take some time before I received my next salary. How am I going to survive in the coming days?

I had been working for years. Yet, I had fallen to that extent.

With absolutely no other options available, I called Natalie to loan some money from her. It's not like I could actually starve myself until I receive my salary.

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I never enjoyed loaning money from others, but at that moment, the most crucial thing at hand was to survive.

Natalie had always been generous with me. I asked for one thousand, but she transferred two thousand over to my account. With a friend like that, it made me feel warm and fuzzy.

The accommodation issue was solved, so I was relaxed. I wasn't as gloomy as I was earlier either, so I made a few of Michael's favorite dishes after I returned to Birchwood.

I was busying away in the kitchen while Michael was reading a finance magazine on the sofa.

"Your mood seems better. Did you find a place to rent?" asked Michael as he flipped the magazine. He never even looked up when he asked that question.

"Yeah, I rented a small place. The interior was decent, and it was quite convenient."

Hearing Michael's voice prompted me to turn around and look at him. I was a little excited when I shared the good news.

I was truly relieved to have solved the housing issue, but Michael didn't share that relief. He simply warned, "Don't celebrate just yet. This is just the beginning."

He took one look at me and said those words before he stopped talking again.

It was rare of me to have a good day, but Michael's words instantly turned my mood around. I glared over in displeasure. Darn it, why can't he just let me be happy for a while? I've just solved a huge issue. Isn't that something worth celebrating?

"It's fine if you don't want to say anything to make me happier, but you didn't need to attack me like that either," I mumbled while glaring at his back.

"I was just reminding you because I worried that you'd go unprepared and upset yourself in the end. Things won't progress that smoothly tomorrow," replied Michael.

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He had put the magazine away, and his eyes shone with exasperation when he looked at me.

“I’ll deal with it tomorrow. The important thing is that I have done all I can.”

I understood that my mom would not be happy with the place I found them, and she would definitely behave passive-aggressively with me tomorrow. Still, I had already done my best, and there was nothing I could do even if she was upset.

After serving the food on the dining table, I called out to Michael, “Dinner’s ready!”

He remained quiet the entire meal, and his expression was blank, so I had no idea what he was thinking.

“I’ll have my secretary pick Steven up from the hospital tomorrow,” informed Michael when we were almost done eating. He only tilted his head up and looked at me at that moment.

“No, that’s not necessary. I’ll just get a taxi.”

I rejected his offer instinctively. The more Michael helped me, the more troubled I felt. I was worried that my debt to him would just keep snowballing.

“Must you repeatedly reject my offers like that, Anna? Have you forgotten that you are mine?”

My constant refusal ignited tiny flames of fury in him. I guess there aren’t many women who would refuse his kind gestures.

I tilted my head up and looked at him. My heart trembled when I saw his somewhat angry eyes. Still, I knew that he was just trying to help me despite the anger.

“T-Thank you.”

In the end, I accepted his help. I had always felt especially at ease when he helped me.

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After dinner, we retired to the bedroom. That was when Michael acted up again.

I had just closed my eyes and was getting groggy and sleepy when his misbehaving hands started caressing all over me.

I frowned in frustration and slapped his hands away. I wanted to ignore him, but his hands came at me again immediately after.

We didn't do anything the night before, so there was no way he'd let me go that night.

"Michael, I'm tired. You should get some rest, too."

I was rejecting him politely and nicely. I prayed that he was kind that night and would let me off just like that.

"If you're tired, then you can just lay there. I'll be quick and won't ask you to do anything else."

It seemed that my rejection did nothing to Michael. At that moment, I felt like he wouldn't let me go unless I was dying.

I sighed exasperatedly because I knew that there was nothing I could do. I simply closed my eyes and let him be.

He kept his word and didn't ask me to change position whatsoever. However, his promise of being quick was a total lie—it lasted over an hour! Why was that man such a lunatic on the bed?

I was so tired that I didn't want to budge at all. Michael returned to his side of the bed when he was finally satisfied. I got the after pill from the nightstand's drawer and swallowed it without water.

Michael's beautiful brows frowned when he saw me taking that pill. He seemed to have something to say, but he chose to remain silent in the end.

I didn't even look at Michael after I took the pill. I just went straight to bed.

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Steven was getting discharged on the following day, so I took the day off. When I reached the hospital room, I saw that my parents had already prepared everything.

My mom glared at me when she saw me there. Her face shone with blatant anger.

“I found a place to rent, mom. You guys can move in today.”

I knew that she was still angry about what happened the day before, and I was mad as well. Still, I was a little regretful about leaving her there in the underground parking.

“Then why are you still standing there? Go get the paperwork done. Your dad and I have been caring for your brother in the hospital all this while. It’s bad enough that you didn’t take any shifts, but are you really going to demand that I do every single little thing?”

It didn’t matter how well I behaved. My mom would remain upset with me. I felt like she would never want to see me again if she didn’t need me to get more money.

“I’ll go do that right away.”

I didn’t want to argue with my mom again in the hospital, so I was quick to leave after saying those words.

Michael’s secretary followed me over to the hospital because things were inconvenient for Steven and his broken leg. That was why they got a more spacious car over for him.

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After completing the paperwork, Michael’s secretary drove my parents and Steven to the new place I rented. The secretary left after dropping us off.

My mom circled around the house after Michael’s secretary was gone. She approached me with a horrible expression and complained, “What kind of a place did you get us? It’s so small. How are we going to live here?”

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I rented a two-bedroom accommodation. It wasn't spacious, but it was more than enough for staying temporarily. Despite that, my mom was still dissatisfied.

"Mom, I understand that it is a little cramped, but it is sufficient for all three of you to stay here. Please, just make-do, okay?"

I deliberately ignored my mom's dissatisfaction and stared at her with a troubled look.

"Make-do? That is not a problem for me, but what about Steven? He needs a good place to recuperate. This place is so small, and the furniture is right next to each other. What do we do if he bumps into them?" complained my mom as she pointed at the sofa and the coffee table. She stared at me in dissatisfaction, and her tone carried a hint of anger.

"If you're that unhappy with it, then you can go look for a place on your own. That is if you can afford it."

The place was more than enough for their daily needs, but my mom was still complaining endlessly. She never even considered how I felt, and like her, I was angry as well.

I already did my best to give them a good life, but they remained ungrateful and even complained about it. I am so done with them.

They might have raised me, but the way they treated me is too much. I have emotions, too. There is no way I can hold it in forever!

I didn't want to argue with my mom, so I turned around to leave as soon as I finished saying my piece. Truth was, I had already done my best to keep the family together. If they insisted on behaving that way, then I had no choice. I'd be selfish from then on and take care of myself.

"Wait!"

My mom's expression changed. She probably didn't expect my temper to be that terrible that day. So, she called out to me in the end.

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“What?”

I turned around and stared at my mom without wearing any expression. My tone was calm when I spoke to her.

“Give me two thousand. Your brother needs more nutrients and good food to recuperate,” said my mom while stretching her hand out towards me. It was obvious what she was requesting.

Money, again!

I frowned as anger filled my soul. At that moment, it felt like my mom had nothing else to say to me, except to ask for money.

However, I am not a cash withdrawal machine—I didn’t have the money for her.

I fished five hundred out of my wallet and handed it to my mom. My tone was chilly when I said, “I don’t have that much money on me. Here’s five hundred for now. Call me after you’ve used it up.”

I only had the two thousand Natalie loaned me earlier, and I would have to starve if I gave it all to my mom.

My mom held the money in her hand and frowned in dissatisfaction. “Your brother’s injury is serious. What can I do with just five hundred?”

My mom was probably feeling annoyed about the five hundred I gave her. There was a time when I would give her however much she asked. Yet, I was putting her on a budget at that moment, so naturally, she was upset.

“That is all I have with me now. If you don’t want it, I will take it back.”

I had a grouchy expression on and worked hard to suppress my anger. After saying my piece, I reached out to grab the money I just gave my mom.

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Naturally, I knew that my mom wouldn't let me have it. She might find the money lacking, but she was still quick to shove it into her pocket.

My mom was familiar with my temperament. She knew I was still angry and that I would take the money back.

"You and dad should rest up. There wasn't a place to rest in the hospital, and the two of you must be tired from staying there for so long."

I shot one look at the room that Steven was in before I turned around to say those words to my mom. After that, I walked out of the place.

I knew that I couldn't do what my mom asked when those matters involved Steven. I had to fight back, or she would never learn to be thankful for what she had.

I felt relieved after leaving the rented place. It was unlikely my mom would ask me for anything for the time being. Five hundred should feed them for over a week.

It was still early, and I didn't want to head home yet. Recalling that I hadn't met up with Natalie for a while, I drove toward her place.

When I reached her place, I saw a familiar car parked at the side. Yuval was standing right next to it.

I panicked. I didn't expect to see him there that day, so I didn't know what to say to him.

We didn't sleep together, but we were a couple back in the days, and I was the one who broke up with him. Bumping into him truly made things awkward.

I stood on the spot and wondered if I should just leave. If I went forward, he would definitely see me, and it didn't seem right to act like we didn't know each other.

"Anna?"

I was still struggling with my decision when Yuval saw me. His expression turned stiff when he saw me there.

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“Hey, what a coincidence. I didn’t think I’d bump into you here.”

Yuval had already seen me, so the only thing I could do was bite down and greet him back. Unfortunately, our past relationship made it so that I had no idea what to talk to him about.

“Yeah. It’s a small world. I’m here waiting for Natalie.”

Yuval approached me. A warm smile donned his serene face, as usual.

“You’re here for Natalie? Why are you looking for her?”

At first, I assumed that Yuval was there to ask about me, but it seemed that I was overthinking the situation. Huh, I didn’t expect him to be here for Natalie.

I secretly sighed a breath of relief, but suspicion arose in my heart. He’s actually here to look for Natalie? When did the two of them get so close?

“I-I...”

Yuval’s expression turned stiffer when he heard my question. He stammered endlessly without answering my question, and I could tell that he felt awkward.

I wasn’t an idiot. Realization hit me upon seeing Yuval’s expression. My eyes bulged in astonishment as I blurted, “You’re courting Natalie?”

I was pretty certain that was the case. Otherwise, Yuval wouldn’t have behaved so nervously.

He knew that I had already guessed the truth, so he took one look at me and grinned awkwardly, without saying anything.

“I can’t believe it’s real. When did you fall for Natalie?”

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