

Love from My Dominant Boss

Chapter 154

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Every single word out of my mother's mouth cut deep. I stared at her in stark despair. I knew that she was still irked at me, but never had I thought that she would think that of me.

I'm also her daughter at the end of the day, so how could she think that I don't love Steven?

"Mom, if that's truly what you think of me, then I have nothing else to say. I know you don't want to see me, so I'm leaving."

While I was worried about her and wanted her forgiveness, I didn't want to beg for it. Instead, I wanted genuine concern and forgiveness from her.

After saying that, I whirled around and hastened toward the door. In all honesty, she had truly hurt me greatly.

"How impudent..."

My mother had more to say, but I didn't halt, and simply left in huge strides.

By the time I reached the hospital lobby, the frustration within me had mushroomed.

Arggh! What exactly do I have to do before she'd forgive me? She's well aware that Steven's incident had nothing to do with me, so why is she heaping the blame on me? Was it me who made him gamble and owe loan sharks money?

When I reached the hospital entrance, someone kept honking behind me. Frowning in consternation, I moved to the side to make way for the car behind me.

Despite that, the car behind me persisted in honking at me. I glanced back over my shoulder, only to glimpse a familiar Ferrari.

Isn't that Ronan's car?

While I was still bewildered, Ronan poked his head out of the car window. "We meet again, Ms. Garcia," he greeted.

As always, he wore a bright smile on his face, making me feel particularly relaxed.

“Weren’t you here to visit someone? Why are you done so quickly?”

I regarded him in surprise since a visit probably took much longer.

“The same can be said of you, isn’t that right, Ms. Garcia?” Ronan countered placidly without answering my question.

An amused smile blossomed on his face.

Looking into his eyes, I was rendered speechless for a moment. Well, I’m a special case. I had no choice but to leave since my entire family abhorred my presence.

“It’s getting late, so I’ve got to hurry home.”

Not wanting to dwell on those wearisome matters anymore, I made to leave after saying that.

“Where do you stay? I’ll drive you home.”

Once again, Ronan offered to drive me home.

“It’s okay. I’ll just hail a taxi home since it’s a long way from here.”

Ronan and I were strangers who had only met twice, so we weren’t that close that I would accept his offer to drive me home. Besides, my relationship with Michael was of a clandestine nature.

While Michael wasn’t a celebrity or anything of the sort, there was much mention of him in magazines. Thus, it would be bad if he were recognized.

“You’re really firm in your demurral, Ms. Garcia, not giving me the slightest opportunity to give a beautiful lady a lift.”

Feigning an expression of regret, Ronan spread his hands as though he was utterly disappointed.

That antic of his seemed frivolous to me, turning me off. Instinctually, I wanted to keep a distance from him. After all, there was no shortage of men wanting to pick up beautiful girls for hookups nowadays.

Indeed, his striking and charming countenance was even comparable to that of Michael’s, but I didn’t just go to bed with anyone. After all, AIDS was no joke.

“Well then, please excuse me.”

Lacking the patience to continue yakking with him, I pivoted and quickly left after saying that.

Meanwhile, Ronan remained sitting in the car and stared at me without saying anything. Throughout it all, a smirk hovered on his lips.

By the time I returned to Birchwood, Michael had been home ages ago. Right then, he was reading a book in the living room. Ever since I agreed to be his lover, he came here every single night to the point that I wondered whether he was going to take up permanent residence.

Hmm? He has a huge mansion, so why isn't he going there but staying here every day? Aren't men supposed to be visiting their lover occasionally? I've never heard of anyone who lives with his lover.

“Where did you go that you only came back at this hour?” Michael queried mildly.

He closed the book in his hand and shifted his gaze to me.

“I had coffee with Natalie before making a visit to the hospital,” I explained after putting my handbag on the couch.

I automatically omitted any mention of Ronan since Michael was an extremely possessive man. While there was nothing between the handsome young man and me, he might misunderstand if he learned about him.

“Didn't I tell you not to go to the hospital? Why are you so stubborn?”

Hearing that I went to the hospital, Michael's brows furrowed deeply, and his gaze radiated displeasure.

“The person lying in the hospital is my brother, so how am I supposed to abandon him? I'm not as cold-blooded as you.”

To Michael, it was a piece of cake to suppress the urge to go to the hospital because he was inherently a cold-blooded man. However, I couldn't do that. Every time I thought of my brother's broken legs, anxiety gripped me. While I didn't stay at the hospital to look after him, not a minute went past without me worrying.

“Cold-blooded? You think I'm a cold-blooded person?” Michael demanded coldly.

He fixed his long and tapered eyes that had narrowed into slits on me, his gaze glinting dangerously.

“Are you not? I’m not as rational as you. I’m a woman driven by emotions, so I can’t obey your orders of not going to the hospital!”

Despite knowing that Michael only wanted the best for me, I simply couldn’t help the urge to go to the hospital and mend my relationship with my parents. He had never been in my shoes, so he couldn’t comprehend the anguish of being misunderstood and resented by one’s own family.

“So, do you think your visit accomplished anything?” Michael questioned coldly.

Surprisingly, he didn’t go ballistic but merely stared into my eyes.

“It’s better than doing nothing at all. At least, I’ve done my best.”

I naturally knew that my mother currently despised me to the bone. No matter how many visits I make to the hospital, it wouldn’t make a difference since she would never forgive me so easily.

Michael continued looking me squarely in the eye. After a long time had passed, he finally murmured, “I’ll help you with it.”

At that, I gaped at him incredulously as I wondered whether I had misheard him. Did he actually say that he’ll help me? I must be hallucinating!

My eyes on him were wide as saucers, and I had no idea what to say for a moment. Gratitude welled within me, but I couldn’t utter any words of thanks before him.

“Why are you still standing there in a daze? Go on and cook dinner! Or do you want me to starve?”

Michael’s sharp brows knitted together again when I remained silent for an eternity, his voice tinged with disgruntlement.

Snapping out of my stupor, I hastily rushed to the kitchen. Since he promised to help me, he’ll definitely keep his word!

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I bustled around in the kitchen. Although it was really exhausting to cook dinner for Michael after working for the entire day, I found it absolutely worthwhile at that very moment.

In all honesty, he had truly helped me too much in matters pertaining to my family. Regardless of whether he had any ulterior motives, the fact remained that he had lent me a hand at my lowest.

As I stood before the stove, stirring the soup, a smile unwittingly broke out across my face.

At some time, a pair of massive hands suddenly clamped around my waist. Michael's warm breaths tickled my neck as he rested his chin against my shoulder.

"What are you doing, Michael? I'm cooking here."

However, Michael merely hugged me wordlessly without taking things further. It was the first time he was affectionate with me without any sexual intent. All at once, an inexplicable feeling spread through me.

"It suddenly occurred to me that we've never done it in the kitchen despite having been acquainted for such a long time. How about we try it tonight?"

All of a sudden, Michael's voice turned roguish after I had spoken. His gaze was sensual, while his words were depraved and shameless. Ugh! Is sex all he thinks about every second of every day? Doesn't he have better things to dwell upon?

I was truly flabbergasted at his train of thoughts. Nonetheless, I didn't dare comment on it to his face as the memory of how he tormented me until the wee hours when he was pissed off last night was still vivid in my mind.

"Stop messing around, Michael! The soup is going to boil over!"

His words just now caused panic to strike me, and I couldn't help musing, Is he for real? Don't tell me he really wants to do the deed in the kitchen? His imagination is really boundless...

Michael merely ignored me, his gigantic hands roaming up and down my body. At that turn of events, my heart skipped a beat. Good heavens! He's serious...

Bubble, bubble... As the sound of the soup boiling rang out, I glanced at the pot of soup that had started bubbling. "Stop it, Michael! It's very dangerous here in the kitchen!" I chastised urgently.

"What a spoilsport!"

Dropping his hands from me in a huff, Michael spun around and strode toward the dining table. His handsome countenance darkened as though he was offended by my suggestion.

Unfortunately, I couldn't be bothered about that right then. My only concern at the moment was to escape the imminent torture. I was still feeling the aftereffects of his frenzy last night, so I wasn't in the mood to play any more sensual games with him tonight. Instead, I merely wanted to have a good night's sleep.

Later, I carried four simple dishes and a soup to the dining room. Michael buried his head in the food without sparing me a single glance as though it was an entirely different man who flirted with me in the kitchen earlier.

Hah! So what if he doesn't want to talk to me? That's even better since I don't feel like talking to him either. Anyhow, he'll only speak of sex!

When I cleared the dining table after dinner, he had already retreated to the bedroom for a shower.

Wearily massaging my shoulder, I made my way to the bedroom as well. I was planning to go to bed after taking a shower.

The instant Michael stepped out of the bathroom, I glimpsed a shirt in his hand. It was the shirt he wore when he was hammered that night.

As soon as I spotted the white shirt, my expression stiffened. I again recalled the lipstick stain on the collar.

"I haven't had the time to send the shirt for dry cleaning, but I'll do it tomorrow."

At present, I wasn't just his lover in this house, for I had also taken up the duties of a housekeeper. Doing laundry and cooking were all my responsibilities now that I was even in awe of myself.

"Wear a lipstick of a different color next time. This color looks awful," Michael noted evenly, pointing at the lipstick stain on the collar.

"Mr. Shaw, I don't have a lipstick in that color," I retorted indifferently as I lifted my head and met his gaze head-on.

Frankly speaking, the distinct rose-colored lipstick stain stung my eyes.

Don't tell me he thinks that it was me who left the lipstick stain on his collar? When did he ever see me wearing lipstick of that color?

"It wasn't you?" Michael regarded me in surprise upon hearing that, his gaze skeptical. "Who could it be if not you?"

I found his expression at the moment rather ludicrous.

Pfft... He doesn't know who left the lipstick stain on him, and he's asking me that? Isn't that absolutely ridiculous? Or are there a boatload of women around him that he can't even remember who left it?

"You should know the answer best, Mr. Shaw, so it's not me you should be asking."

I stared at him with a cold expression on my face, my voice stained with displeasure.

"What's your problem, Anna?"

Michael eyed me with a frown, his gaze radiating irritation and his voice colored with rage.

"Nothing at all. I'm going to take a shower and go to bed. If you want to know who left the lipstick stain, just gather all your women and kiss them one by one."

Looking at him derisively, I stifled the aggravation within me and stalked into the bathroom after moving around him.

"Anna Garcia!"

When Michael roared my name, I had already slammed the bathroom door shut.

As I showered, the lipstick stain on his collar flashed across my mind once more, putting me in an even fouler mood. While he wanted to know who left that, I was actually even more curious than him.

I took a long time in the bathroom before I finally went out. When I stepped out, Michael was already sprawled on the bed. After blow-drying my hair, I walked over to the other side of the bed and lay down.

"Are you jealous, Anna?"

I thought Michael was asleep since his eyes were closed, but his voice then drifted into my ears. He sounded calm and bereft of all emotion.

Hearing that, my heart lurched, and my gaze snapped to him in a panic. I didn't expect him to have discerned my feelings so easily.

"You're reading too much into things. Do I even have the right to be jealous, considering the nature of our relationship?"

Nevertheless, I would never admit it to him. His cardinal rule was for me to never harbor any feelings for him, so he would definitely know that I had fallen for him and suspect me if I ever admitted to being jealous.

"What was with the furious expression just now if you're not jealous?"

He turned to look at me. A hint of disappointment showed in his gaze, but his voice remained impassionate.

"Well, I just think that you could've told me if you have another woman out there and have lost interest in me. Let's not waste each other's youth."

If he really had another woman out there, my only thought right then was to end my relationship with him. I couldn't accept him taking the time to do the deed with another woman while being intimate with me.

"Do you think that I, Michael Shaw, am such a libertine that any woman would do for me?"

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Michael's ebony eyes were fixated on me, his gaze glinting with barely banked fury. Seeing that, I knew that he was on the verge of blowing his top.

"You're the only one who knows whether you're a libertine, and that has nothing to do with me."

Hastily averting my gaze, I screwed my eyes shut after saying that and feigned sleep because I didn't want to debate that matter with him anymore.

Despite my closed eyes, I could sense that Michael's gaze remained pinned on me. Nonetheless, I didn't dare open my eyes and could only pray that he would go to sleep quickly.

A long time passed before he finally shifted his gaze away and closed his eyes to sleep. Perhaps it was because I had angered him earlier that he slept with his back to me without touching me.

While a sliver of distress slithered into me, I felt that it was a good thing at the end of the day. After all, it was far better than being thoroughly ravished by the man.

In the next few days, Michael was rather cold to me. To top it off, he hadn't been to Birchwood in two consecutive days, making me wonder whether he had gone to the other woman's place.

It was presently late at night, and it was the third day he had been absent. I was at sixes and sevens, held captive by the dread that he had truly gone to seek other the other woman.

I wanted to phone him, yet I dared not do so. Instead, I agonized over the matter all alone.

Argh! This is so frustrating!

Just when I had finally snapped and started pacing in the living room, my cell phone rang out of the blue. I swiftly snagged it up in hopes that it was a call from Michael.

But when I glimpsed the caller ID, dejection settled in because it was a call from my mother. On second thought, thrill flooded me.

"Mom, you're finally giving me a call!"

Ever since Steven's incident, she had never once phoned me. And every time I did so, she always rejected the call. Hence, I was over the moon when she suddenly rang me up right then.

"Are you free now? If you're not tired, come over and help to take care of your brother. Your father and I are both up in years, so we can't overtax ourselves."

On the other end of the phone, my mother's voice was still a touch frosty, but it was already a great improvement from before. Elated, I promptly replied, "Sure! I'll go over right away!"

Even after hanging up the phone, I was still feeling very much excited. Striding to the hallway, I grabbed my jacket and left in a hurry.

I hailed a taxi to the hospital. It was very late by the time I arrived at the hospital, so a deathly silence hung in the corridors. My mother was sitting at the head of the hospital bed when I reached Steven's ward, wiping his face with a towel.

"I'm here, Mom," I greeted cautiously after walking over to my mother.

Trepidation gripped me that she would again treat me to a frigid expression as she did a few days ago.

Upon hearing my voice, my parents' eyes alighted on me in concert. After Steven's incident, uneasiness consumed me whenever I was confronted with their gazes.

After casting me a placid glance, my mother expressionlessly handed the towel to me and ordered, "Since you're here, come and wipe your brother's face."

Her reaction surprised me, but I was inwardly glad. While she was apathetic toward me, she no longer flew into a rage the moment she saw me.

Taking the towel from her, I sat down in front of Steven and carefully wiped his face.

"Aren't you tired to come over to the hospital at this hour after having worked the entire day?" Steven queried.

The look in his eyes as he stared at me was detached, but his animosity of the past was gone.

"Nope. My weariness doesn't matter as long as you recover speedily."

It was the first time my family was ever so amiable to me. To that end, I actually felt a tad perturbed and uneasy. Their drastic change of attitude was so sudden that I couldn't shake off the feeling that something was amiss.

"Just visiting Stevie today is sufficient. You should go back earlier to rest. During the weekend, you can come over and help to take care of him."

My mother then came up behind me. It was the first time she ever showed concern for me.

Surprised, I jerked my head back to gape at her as I wondered whether I had misheard her. Is she really showing concern for me? And is she really not going to push all the blame on me anymore?

All these years, I had only ever heard grumbles and reprisals from her. For that reason, I was both jubilant and incredulous upon hearing such regard all of a sudden.

"I'm not tired. You must be tired after taking care of Stevie in the hospital for so many days. How about you find a place and rest for a bit? I'll take care of him tonight."

My mother had begun showing regard for me, so it was good news to me. As I clocked her haggard face of late, my heart clenched.

Just when she was about to reply, the door to the ward was abruptly pushed open. I thought it would surely be a nurse who was here making her rounds considering the late hour, but my expression instantly froze upon glimpsing the person who came in.

Michael? Why is he here? And why would he come to Steven's ward?

"Mr. Shaw."

The instant Michael appeared, my mother immediately greeted him with a smile, hurrying over to him with a fawning expression on her face.

Shock besieged me when I saw that she was acquainted with Michael. It was his secretary who came on his behalf back when he gave my family money then, so I couldn't figure out how she would know him. As such, I grew all the more bewildered.

"How do you know Michael, Mom?" I stared at my mother and asked in puzzlement, snapping back to my senses after a long moment.

"Anna, I didn't know that you're acquainted with such an affluent friend like Mr. Shaw. He came to the hospital today and told me that he'll bear your brother's hospital bill and also help him find the best physiotherapist."

While saying that, my mother's eyes shone as her smile grew even wider.

It wasn't until after I had heard that did the puzzle slot together. I finally realized that my family's radical change of attitude toward me was all because of Michael.

At the end of the day, it was because Michael was my friend and only offered to help my brother financially for my sake. Ultimately, my parents only cared about Steven and were amiable to me to secure the funding for his subsequent treatment.

My eyes turned red, and my heart twisted in agony. If that's truly the reason, then I'd rather that she'd never changed her attitude toward me!

"Mom, is that why you changed your attitude toward me?"

I regarded my mother with tears shimmering in my eyes. Inwardly, I still harbored a glimmer of hope, hoping against hope that she truly cared about me instead of it all because of my brother.

"Well, you wanted me to treat you better, no? Why are you so fixated on the reason when you've now gotten your wish?"

Confronted by my scrutiny, my mother's gaze became shifty. She didn't answer my question directly, but the meaning of her words was plain as day.