

Love from My Dominant Boss

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On the other hand, I stared at him calmly. He was still glaring at me, demanding an answer, but I didn't say a word to him. Since I knew I would crumble if I stayed there any longer, I wanted to get out of bed.

"Explain yourself, Anna." He grabbed my hand. It was a surprise that he was holding himself back instead of yelling at me right away.

"Don't think too much about it. I need to get out of bed now." I stared at him calmly. There was no point telling him how I really felt since he only liked me as a f*ck buddy.

"Today's a Saturday!" He gritted his teeth, and his patience was already running thin.

Sh*t. I totally forgot that it was a weekend, so I didn't have to go to work, but still, I didn't want to see him. "I need to see Steven." I blurted out.

Then I changed into a new set of clothes. I had to leave no matter what, and Michael didn't stop me. However, he was still glaring at me coldly. I could feel his fury boiling, but I didn't have the time to care.

Once I left Birchwood, I felt like a heavy weight had been lifted off my shoulders. Taking in a deep breath, I calmed myself down and tried to come up with a plan for the day.

But nothing came to mind. If I went to see Steven, mom would just mock me again, but I couldn't go back to Michael's place either. So I just stood there blankly, until my phone started ringing.

I wondered who was calling me, so I whipped my phone out. Ronan? I was slightly annoyed, but I took the call anyway. "Hello." My voice was cracking up from all the crying.

"What's up?" Ronan sounded excited.

"Nothing. Just hanging around." I sniffled.

Ronan noticed that my voice was cracking. "You don't sound too good. Wait, are you crying?" he asked, concerned.

"I'm frustrated. Can we talk?" I had no idea how to face Michael or my parents. Ronan was the only person whom I could feel relaxed around. Besides, he was an optimist, so I thought talking with someone like him would cheer me up.

"Sure. Where are you anyway? I'll pick you up," he agreed readily, and I noticed a hint of worry in his voice.

"I'll be waiting at the bus stop. The one where you picked me up."

"Sure. Give me a minute." Then, he hung up. Ten minutes later, I saw Ronan's red Ferrari in the distance.

He stopped his car in front of me and came to open the passenger seat's door. I was feeling gloomy before he came, but his smile melted my sorrow away. One would never go wrong hanging out with an optimist.

Ronan went back to the driver's seat and revved up the car. "Why are you frustrated anyway?" He looked at me with concern. "Did something happen?"

I was touched by the fact that he was so gentle and caring about me. It hadn't been long since we met, but he felt like family to me. Every time I was with him, I felt warm and fuzzy. "Yeah, a lot. Got involved in some family problems, and my love life isn't looking good either."

I didn't hide anything from Ronan since I needed someone whom I could talk to.

"Yeah, I can see where you're coming from. You got dealt a bad hand, growing up in that kind of family." Ronan had seen how my mother acted around me back at the hospital, so he knew about my family even if I didn't tell him anything.

"What's wrong about your love life, though? You got a boyfriend?" Ronan started getting nervous after asking that question, and he stared at me unblinkingly.

I was feeling weird getting stared at, so I turned away stiffly. "No. I'm not getting a boyfriend for now."

Michael could never be my boyfriend, and we might end our relationship at this rate. Given my circumstances, it might be a long time before I would be ready for the dating scene again.

Ronan heaved a sigh. "So what's the problem, then? I thought you don't have a boyfriend." He slowed down and turned to me with doubt.

"I have someone I like, but I know it's never gonna work between us." The thought of Michael alone was torturous for me. I didn't want to lose myself to him, but I couldn't, and I cursed myself for my weakness.

Ronan looked crestfallen after hearing that. It took him a while before he could look me in the eye. "If you like him, why can't you date him then?"

"Because there's a big gap between our status. Plus, he doesn't like me, and he has a girlfriend." I knew I must sound like a broken record at this point, but the fact that Michael might be having sex with Emma the night before was still annoying me.

Ronan was giving me a look of doubt, sadness, and confusion, but he didn't say anything. I wondered what he was thinking, but I was also surprised that he didn't console me.

The conversation went dead for a while since we seemed to have run out of topics.

A long, long while later, Ronan said, "If it's impossible to date him, then let him go. Don't get too into it, or you'll end up hurting yourself." He sounded a lot more serious than he usually was.

I sighed. I knew that better than anyone, but it was true love, so I couldn't just let it go that easily. I would have totally done it if I could since it would have freed me from the pain I was feeling.

"I know."

I muttered lightly as I stared down at the seat.

"I'll take you to the beach. Some fresh air ought to do you good. Maybe you'll start feeling better." Ronan shifted the topic and beamed at me, then he turned around.

"But the beach is quite far away, isn't it?"

"I'm a pro driver, so we'll be there in a jiffy. Anyway, you can sleep if you want to. I'll wake you up when we get there."

I had never gone to the beach even though I had been working at Avenport for years, so I was looking forward to it.

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I didn't sleep, though. Look, I wanted to, but I wasn't feeling comfortable without my pajamas, so all I could do was look outside the window.

Ronan finally stopped his car an hour later since we had already arrived at the beach. I went out of the car silently and headed for the beach.

The ocean was as vast as the eye could see, and it gleamed a brilliant blue under the sun. It was simply glorious; the sight of the ocean alone washed away my frustration.

"So, how is it? Gorgeous, eh?" Ronan came up behind me, admiring the ocean, just like how I was doing. As usual, he was smiling.

"It is." I smiled. I could feel my mind calming down once I saw the deep blue sea. Then, Ronan and I had a little stroll along the beach. I could feel the morning breeze softly brushing across my cheeks, and it felt great.

Ronan was trying his best to make me laugh, and he managed to do it. Anyone would laugh at his jokes since he was naturally funny.

We spent quite a while at the beach before going back exhausted. It was getting late, and the sun was setting. As it would take us more than an hour to get back, it would be nighttime when I got home.

The exhaustion finally caught up to me when we were on the way back. I didn't sleep a wink the night before, and I spent most of the day on the beach, so eventually, I drifted to sleep.

I woke up groggily a long while later, but the first thing I saw was a face inches away from me. Oh, sh*t! Who the heck... Oh, it's Ronan. He was almost kissing me, much to my shock. I opened my eyes, and Ronan did the same.

We stayed in this pose for a while, then I shoved him away a moment later. I was angry because I knew what he was trying to do. Ronan was just like a little brother to me, so I never expected him to steal a kiss when I was sleeping. "What were you doing, Ronan?"

I glared at him furiously, and he shrank away in fear. "I-I didn't mean it. I just couldn't help myself," he looked me in the eye while explaining seriously.

But since I was enraged, I wasn't going to accept any explanation. I thought he was just a goofy guy on the surface, but I never expected him to sexually harass me. "That's unacceptable, Ronan. I thought we're friends! What am I to you, just a girl you're flirting with?"

I thought he saw me as a friend, but I never knew he would try and take advantage of me. Honestly, I was disappointed.

"It's not what you think, Anna. We're friends, and I really like you. You can feel it too, right?" Ronan started panicking after that, and he tried to explain himself.

"You wouldn't have done that if you saw me as a friend. Don't you think that's disgusting?" Even though he said he saw me as his friend, that did nothing to douse my fury. I had hung out with him a few times, so I thought he was just a goofy guy on the surface but a good guy in reality. However, what he did earlier had totally destroyed that image.

"I know I was rude, Anna, but I couldn't help myself. You have to believe me!" He held my hand, and he was starting to panic.

I swatted his hand away the moment he touched me, as I was too angry to listen to any explanation. "I don't think we should be friends anymore, Ronan. I don't want to see you anymore, so leave."

I only became friends with him because he was always full of warmth. But after all that had happened, I felt like our friendship had come to an end.

It was a pity, but I would never be friends with someone who would harass me, so I got out of the car without a word. And then Ronan quickly got out as well and blocked my way.

"I'm really, really sorry, Anna. Please forgive me just this once. I won't do it anymore, I promise!" Ronan gazed at me and pleaded.

I really wanted to be his friend, but I couldn't accept what he was trying to do in the car. Since I had fallen for someone, I didn't like it when another man was trying to approach me. But even so, I didn't want to turn him down when he was pleading like a child.

"I really, really like you, Anna. Can you be my girlfriend?"

Just when I was about to forgive him, he hit me with another shocker of a confession. I gawked at him and wondered if I was hearing things. Did he just confess to me?

It took a long time for me to process it, then I refused him without thinking, "I'll never be your girlfriend. It's impossible."

There were two reasons for my refusal. One, because I loved someone else, and two, I prefer men who were more mature. Ronan was just a kid, so I couldn't see myself falling for him.

“Why?”

To be frank, Ronan was actually quite charismatic. He was the perfect boyfriend in terms of looks and background, but he was younger than me, so I only ever saw him as my brother. Thus, having him as my boyfriend would look weird.

“Because we wouldn’t make a good couple. You’re like a brother to me.” I couldn’t believe he was trying to woo me. Didn’t he know I was older than him? And shouldn’t he try to woo the younger ladies first? Why did he even fall for me anyway?

Ronan frowned the moment I said I saw him as my brother. “But I don’t want to be your brother. I want to be your boyfriend!” he retorted.

“Get a grip, Ronan! I’m a few years older than you, so we can’t be a couple.” I gave him a look of resignation. How persistent can he be? I’ve already said no, so get a clue.

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“So what? Plenty of women date men who are younger than them, and it’s great having an older wife.” Ronan didn’t think that our age gap was a problem, contrary to me. He didn’t mind it, and he even made a case for it.

I could see the resolve in his eyes, and whenever Ronan was serious, he was a different person entirely. Damn, he just made it three times harder for me to say no.

“I told you it’s impossible, Ronan. You’re just like a brother to me, and I have someone I like, so I will never say yes,” I stared him in the eye, refusing adamantly.

Ronan froze up when I told him I had someone I liked. Then, much to my disbelief, I saw a hint of sorrow in his eyes. If I hadn’t seen that, I would have thought he was joking with me.

Ronan had always been the goofy kid, but the sadness in his eyes made me waver. Did he really fall for me? But we’ve only hung out a couple of times. We don’t really know each other well. It’s insane that he’d fall for me so easily.

“But you can never date the guy you like, right? So I’ll make you forget all about him. I wouldn’t have confessed today if you hadn’t told me about

that. I'll make you happy, Anna. I swear," he said solemnly. It was the first time he was acting so serious, and it had to be during a confession.

I was both happy and troubled. It was great that he didn't see me as a frivolous woman, but on the other hand, if he was persistent about this, I might end up losing a friend.

"Ronan, I told you I only see you as a friend. If you're still not giving up, then I think it's best that we never meet again." I didn't want to hurt him, but I had no choice. I could never see a future where I was dating him, so I had to make sure that he would give up on me.

Ronan froze up again, and he looked at me in agony. He never expected me to be so cruel, but he still didn't give up, though his sadness was already overflowing. "So... we can only just be friends?"

"Yes," I answered adamantly, crushing all his hope.

Upon that, Ronan stared at me in silence, and I said nothing too. A moment later, he smiled again. "I see. Then, we'll just be friends," he said softly.

I heaved a sigh of relief. Good thing he's not persistent. But then he said something that almost made me bang my head against a wall.

"But give me a call when you want to be my girlfriend, okay? I'm always here."

Great. He was still holding on to a sliver of hope even though I had rejected him. "That day will never come, so don't hold your breath."

I couldn't believe he was still holding on to hope even though I said no. For some reason, I felt like he wouldn't give up until I said yes. Damn, he's just like Michael.

Michael. And depression came crashing back again, but I shook my head, forcing myself to forget about all that had happened. Since I couldn't change the past, there was no point moping over it.

"I'll be leaving now, so you get some rest. But don't shy away just because of what happened tonight. We're still friends, okay?" Ronan was still smiling, but I could see that he wasn't as upbeat anymore.

Oh, he's smart. He knew I would avoid seeing him again. Yes, that was my plan, but since he stopped me from doing it, I couldn't stay away anymore.

“Don’t worry. You’re my brother and my friend. I won’t avoid you, but please don’t confess to me anymore.” I gave him a smile and calmed him down. As long as he stopped confessing to me, we could still be friends.

“Sure. Bye then.” He waved goodbye and left.

I heaved a sigh of relief after Ronan was no longer in sight. I was surprised that he confessed to me, but I was also worried. What if we could no longer be purely friends after this?

But that was a problem for another day. It was already night, and I had nowhere else to go but home. However, I still had no idea how to face Michael.

Unlike the night before, Michael was in the house when I came back. The moment I came in, he shot me a sharp look, and a chill ran down my spine.

“Where were you? You were out all day long.” He gazed at me quizzically.

I averted my gaze, for it was too hard to face him. For some reason, I couldn’t bring myself to look him in the eye. “I went out to get some fresh air,” I answered as calmly as I could, then I went toward the bedroom.

Annoyed by my attitude, Michael barked, “Hold it right there!” I could see that he was angrier than before, but I didn’t turn back, though I stopped in my tracks. Right then, I knew I had angered him, but I didn’t want to explain myself.

“Where were you, and who were you with?” Michael shot two more questions at me, then he came toward me. If looks could kill, the fury in his eyes would have burned me to a crisp.

“I went to the beach with a friend.” I looked at him and answered calmly, then I tried to go around him, but Michael wouldn’t let me go easily.

He grabbed my arm, glaring at me with unbridled fury. “A friend? What kind of friend?”

I was wincing from the pain on my wrist, but my pain was burned down by my fury because I could see the doubt in his eyes—he thought I was cheating.

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I met Michael's furious gaze with my own as I shouted angrily, "Mr. Shaw, I believe I shouldn't have to report to you that I'm hanging out with my friends!"

That look of suspicion in his eyes is making me so uncomfortable! Why should I have to tell him everything in such great detail?

"How dare you take that tone with me when you've been out the whole day with your phone switched off?"

I was usually quiet and obedient in front of Michael, but I refused to let him have his unjust way with me that day.

"I'm a human being, not some pet or object! I have the right to meet up with my friends whenever I want to!"

He was questioning me like I was his girlfriend, and that I had been caught cheating on him, both of which were not the case here.

I felt my eyes tear up a little, but I refused to cry in front of him and forced myself to hold my tears in.

Michael froze for a brief moment before his expression turned terrifyingly grim, and he tightened his grip on my wrist even further. I grimaced in response but made sure not to cry out from the pain.

"Did you hit yourself in the head, Anna? Have you forgotten that you're my woman now? Don't you think you should explain to me who you were with today?" Michael growled at me through clenched teeth.

Usually, seeing him like this would've filled me to the brim with fear. This time, however, I felt a lot more upset than I was afraid.

"If I'm your woman, does that make you my man in return? If you're going to question my whereabouts today, then you should also explain why you didn't come home last night! Why did you spend the night with Emma, huh? Answer me!"

I lost control of my emotions, and my tears rolled down my cheeks as I raised my voice at him.

It was the first time I told him how I really felt, and in a questioning tone too.

He was with another woman till this morning, and he has the audacity to question me like this? Why should things be so unfair between us? What

right does he have to stop me from being intimate with other guys when he spends an entire night with another woman? Does he seriously think I'm okay with that? How could he be so selfish? He never cares about my feelings at all!

Michael went wide-eyed with shock from my sudden outburst and loosened his grip on my arm significantly.

"You're mad at me because I was with Emma last night?"

Michael asked calmly with an eyebrow arched, making it impossible to tell what he was actually feeling.

"Yeah, that's right! I'm mad at you for sleeping with another woman! You don't care about my feelings, and you're always suspecting me of having inappropriate relationships with other men!"

I couldn't care less about what he felt and poured my heart out to release all my pent-up emotions from last night.

I tried to keep them suppressed and acted like I didn't care about it, but I couldn't stand it any longer. Seeing him reminded me of how he had slept with Emma last night, and the mere thought of it caused my heart to ache tremendously.

Michael was taken aback by my response once again. It wasn't the first time I had lashed out at him, but I had never been honest about my feelings each time.

"Anna!" he shouted with a frown.

"I know I don't have the right to ask anything of you, but please let me have some freedom! I'm really stressed out lately!"

Pouring my heart out helped calm me down a lot, so my tone wasn't as agitated as before.

"Who told you I was sleeping with Emma last night? You really have an overactive imagination, Anna!"

Instead of getting angry with me, Michael simply arched an eyebrow at me gleefully as he said that.

"She's a very pretty woman, and you spent the night with her. I think it makes perfect sense to assume that you two had sex."

They must've had sex! There's no way a brute like Michael would be able to contain himself with a beauty sleeping next to him!

"Do you really think I would just f*ck any woman in sight? You think I don't have any self-control at all?" Michael asked with a deep frown, clearly unhappy about what I said.

"Am I wrong? Emma's a pretty woman, and she's your girlfriend right now, so she wouldn't have any reason to refuse your advances anyway..." I mumbled softly.

Michael kept insisting that he didn't sleep with her, but I still found it a little hard to believe.

Heck, I would've f*cked her right then and there if I were a guy in his position! There's no way he could've held himself back, especially with how pretty Emma is!

"Anna! Why won't you believe me?"

Michael's eyes lit up with anger and frustration when I refused to believe him.

I really wanted to take his word for it and accept the fact that they didn't have sex last night, yet I just couldn't help doubting him at the same time.

"I..."

"Emma was sick last night, and my mom insisted that I go look after her. Because she kept clinging to me, I ended up spending the night on the couch instead!"

Despite being on the verge of exploding with anger, Michael clenched his teeth and explained himself anyway.

It was the first time he had actually made an effort to explain himself seriously, and I shuddered a little when I realized he was most likely telling the truth.

"So... You really didn't have sex with Emma?"

I asked him once again just to make sure and would choose to believe him if he could answer me firmly.

"Anna, how dare you doubt my words? Do I even have a reason to lie to you?"

I figured no one had ever doubted his word before, as he got really mad at me for it. However, I was surprised that he didn't lash out at me this time, and that made me feel a little happy inside.

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"I believe you now... I thought you didn't come home last night because..."

I was going to say he had gotten sick of me and wanted to do it with Emma instead but found myself unable to finish my sentence.

"I'm not really interested in Emma, so I won't lay a hand on her any time soon."

The frown on Michael's face eased up a bit when he saw that I had believed him.

Wait... Did he just say he isn't interested in Emma? But, she's his girlfriend! How could he possibly not be interested in her?

"But Emma is your girlfriend, isn't she? How could you not like her?" I asked after a long pause.

"What makes you think I like her?" Michael asked while staring down at me.

Although he had made it clear that he wasn't into Emma, him not answering my question directly made me even more curious.

"If you don't like her, then why is she your girlfriend?"

I didn't understand why he would date Emma if he didn't have any feelings for her.

"It's an arrangement made by my family," Michael said indifferently.

"Why didn't you object if you don't like it?"

I had my own selfish reasons for asking him that question. Regardless of whether we ended up being together in the future, I didn't want Michael getting intimate with any other women until it was over between us.

"That's not something you should concern yourself with."

Michael narrowed his eyes in annoyance and avoided my question once again.

I was a little upset that he didn't like telling me about his personal life, but I knew better than to push him any further.

While I wasn't sure of what he actually felt, I was still glad to know he didn't actually like Emma.

"I'm a little tired, so I'm going to bed after a shower."

I was on the verge of collapsing from exhaustion after going an entire day without sleep.

Meanwhile, Michael made no attempt to stop me, so I went to take a quick shower before going to bed.

Although he was still unhappy about me spending the entire day outside, he didn't say anything about it and simply lay down silently next to me.

I was able to fall asleep fairly quickly that night after knowing that he didn't have sex with Emma while we were still together.

I didn't know if it had anything to do with what I said to him, but Michael had been coming home on time every night throughout the next couple of days. Even on the days where he had to attend social events, he would still try his best to make it home as early as possible.

One day, Michael was reading his books on finance while I was preparing dinner, and his phone rang all of a sudden.

He closed his book and furrowed his brows when he saw the name on the caller ID.

As I was inside the kitchen at the time, I had no idea who it was until he answered the phone.

"Hello, Emma," he said coldly.

I was chopping up some vegetables and shuddered when I heard him mention her name, nearly cutting myself on the finger as a result. Even if Michael didn't have feelings for her, I was still uncomfortable with the fact that she was his girlfriend.

I couldn't quite hear what Emma said as I was too far away, but Michael's words made me feel a lot better.

"I'm busy, so there's no point in calling me. Just go to the hospital if you're not feeling well!"

His tone was as cold as usual, and it didn't take a genius to figure out that Emma was using her sickness as an excuse to spend time with him.

I bet she wasn't expecting Michael to refuse her request, huh? I know it's mean of me to feel happy about it, but I really didn't want him going over to see her, especially this late at night. Sure, nothing happened between them last time, but there's no way to guarantee it'll be the same this time! It might be selfish of me to say this, but I don't want him to hurt my feelings while we're still together.

Despite that, Emma continued talking to him, and the look on Michael's face grew increasingly impatient with each passing second.

"I'm very busy, Emma! Stop calling me unless it's an emergency!"

Michael shouted coldly into the phone and hung up right after that.

I didn't know what Emma said, but seeing him get annoyed at her set my heart at ease. Looks like he really doesn't like her... Wait, does that mean he won't fall for any woman at all? Well, regardless of what Michael truly feels, at least he's by my side right now!

I thought to myself as I stared at him silently from behind and went back to preparing dinner.

"Dinner's ready!" I called out to Michael after serving up all the dishes.

He then got up from his chair and walked over to the dining table without saying a word.

I stole glances at him during dinner to observe his facial expressions and saw that he had a completely indifferent look the whole time. It was as if the phone call with Emma didn't happen at all.

I wasn't really sure what to say to him, and things got a little awkward for the both of us.

"You seem to be treating her rather coldly," I mumbled and quickly lowered my gaze as I continued eating.

Michael stared right at me and asked, "What? Do you want me to shower her with affection instead?"

Of course not!

But of course, I didn't dare show my real emotions in front of him.

"Unless I like someone, I won't show them any affection nor waste my time on them."

Michael spoke up once again, and I shuddered a little when I heard what he said.

If he doesn't want to waste his time on Emma because he doesn't like her, then... What about me? He's coming over to be with me every night! Does that mean he likes me?

"I've just realized how heartless of a man you are," I said after a long pause.

Michael arched an eyebrow slightly in response. "Is that so?"

As much as I hated Emma, I couldn't help but feel sorry for her as I knew she truly liked Michael even though he didn't feel the same.