

Love from My Dominant Boss Chapter 481

Chapter 481 No More Mercy

She wants me to take Steven's place in prison? Am I not their child? Do they not feel worried if I get locked up in prison? I stared at Mom with a look of disappointment on my face and tears in my eyes. It was the first time her words had hurt me so much.

"Mom, are you mad at me for not taking Steven's place in prison?" Although Mom had made herself very clear, I still refused to believe that she wanted me to get locked up in prison.

"Yes, that's exactly what I mean! You could've just agreed to take your brother's place in prison, but what did you do? You betrayed him just so you could get back into the Shaw family!" Mom yelled furiously while pointing a finger at me.

My heart felt like it was bleeding all over after hearing that. I never expected for her to feel that way about me.

If getting back with Michael was the only thing I wanted, then I wouldn't have told the Shaw family that I injured Josephine. I kept the truth to myself even when I was detained at the police station.

I had always put up with my parents playing favorites, but I didn't think Mom would say such a heartless thing to me.

It hurt so much that I even started questioning if I was actually her daughter.

"Mrs. Garcia, you've gone too far! Anna may be Steven's sister, but he is a grown adult now! He has the obligation to take responsibility for his own actions!"

Ronan glared at Mom angrily as he stepped forward to defend me.

"She's my daughter! I raised her and paid for her school fees so she can repay us when she grows up! If she can't even do something this simple, then why should we even keep her around?"

Mom was completely unfazed by Ronan's words and maintained her unreasonable attitude. Little did she know, every word she said hit me in the heart like a sledgehammer.

Did she raise me with the sole purpose of having me repay the favor? Shouldn't they be loving me more because I'm their daughter? Why should parental love be such a luxury for me? Why would they be so cruel toward me?

Ronan probably wasn't expecting such a response from Mom at all. He froze in shock for a bit before his eyes lit up with anger. "This is emotional blackmail!"

"She's my daughter, so she has to do whatever I want her to do!" Mom then ignored Ronan and shifted her gaze toward me as she continued, "You must save your brother, Anna! He cannot afford to go to prison! If you don't save him, then you are nothing but an unfilial daughter who doesn't appreciate everything we've done to raise you!"

Instead of making a request, she was practically giving me an order at that point.

I stared at her in shock for a while before breaking into a wry smile. I used to think that they were simply biased toward us, but I came to realize that they never even loved me at all.

Michael, who had been silent the whole time, shouted coldly all of a sudden, "That's enough!"

He then glared coldly at my parents as he continued, "I'm the one who decides whether Steven goes to prison! Anna is my wife, so I'm the only one who has the right to talk to her like this! Do you two want to get Steven out of prison? Well, guess what? That's impossible! Now, if you two don't leave Anna alone, I will make sure Steven stays in prison for another ten years!"

Michael's threat was as cold as the look in his eyes.

He was a very protective person, to begin with, especially toward the people that he cared for. He refused to let anyone hurt me, including my own family members. As such, Mom's words had angered him to the core.

The domineering aura that he exuded was so intense that even the defiant look in my parents' eyes began to waver.

Mom was the first to regain her composure.

She shot Michael a disapproving look as she shouted angrily, "We're your parents-in-law, Michael! How could you say that to us? Steven is your brother-in-law, you know? You can't do this to him!"

"All of you are nothing compared to my woman! Had you guys treated Anna nicely, I would've been nice to you all as well! However, you three don't even treat her like a human being! Not only have you all not given her any love, but you've all been using her like a tool the whole time!"

The anger in Michael's eyes burned even stronger as he hurled those accusations at my mom.

Everything he said was exactly what I had wanted to say for so many years. For some strange reason, I found myself able to keep my emotions in check even when my mom said those hurtful things to me. However, I felt like I was breaking down after hearing Michael speak my heart.

Michael's words hit my parents so hard that their eyes were darting about slightly out of guilty conscience.

"Nonsense! She's our daughter, and we've raised her into the adult she is today! How could we have not given her any love?"

Mom had clearly lost her confidence as she turned to look at me when she said that. I didn't know why, but I saw no truth in her statement at all.

"If you love her, then why would you ask her to take your son's place in prison?"

Unable to stand it any longer, Ronan spoke up once again. Although it wasn't his place to interfere with my family's matters, he took Michael's side in rebuking my mom that day.

Mom was rendered speechless once again, and I could see the panic in her eyes.

It was clear as day what my mom felt about the whole situation. I let out a wry chuckle and took a deep breath before turning to face her.

"Mom, I told you a year ago that it would be my last time helping you guys out. This time, I will not do anything no matter what you say. I am thankful for you raising me, and I will repay you in some other way. Please refrain from making any more unreasonable requests like this because I will not agree to them," I said coldly while staring straight into her eyes.

Everything my mom said earlier had eliminated whatever reasons I had to show mercy on them.

They saw me as nothing more than a tool, and that was something I refused to put up with as a human being. I couldn't bring myself to help someone unconditionally if I knew they were just using me, even if they were my family.

Some people may think of me as being selfish, but I have Michael and a child now. All I want is to stay by their side, and I won't let anyone nor anything separate us.

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Chapter 482 Steel Yourself

“You...” Mom stared daggers at me as she trembled all over, but there was nothing she could say in response. I could tell that she was incredibly furious, but I didn’t want to care because they never gave a damn about my feelings anyway.

For so many years, I had foolishly assumed that they would appreciate what I had done for the family. I kept telling myself that they were just playing favorites and that they loved me equally deep down inside.

As it turned out, I had been lying to myself the whole time. Mom’s words had proven me wrong, and I finally acknowledged the fact that they never loved me at all.

The tension in the ward was at its maximum. Not wanting to stay here any longer, I turned around and quickly left the ward.

I was practically sprinting as I made my way out of the hospital.

I have no idea how I should face my parents at all! It feels like they have become complete strangers all of a sudden! I don’t understand how they are capable of being so cruel to their own daughter! Shouldn’t parents value their children more than anything in the world? Why do my parents only care about my brother? Why aren’t they concerned about my well-being at all?

Michael had been following behind me ever since I ran out of the ward. I eventually stopped running when I grew tired, and Michael grabbed my arm from behind.

Having no other choice, I turned around to face him.

“Feel free to cry your heart out if you want to. In a way, it’s actually a good thing for you to feel this pain. The sooner you see the truth for what it is, the sooner you will be able to steel yourself and do what is right,” he whispered softly as he pulled me into his arms.

Although his voice sounded a little cold, I could hear a hint of heartache in his tone.

I wrapped my arms tightly around his waist when I heard that, and my pent-up emotions just exploded instantly.

“Why? Why would they do this to me? I understand that they’re worried about Steven, but why have they never shown me such love before?”

I was really indignant at the way they were treating me, especially since I never did anything to deserve this. Ever since I was a child, they never gave me any love nor affection. I had always been treated like an outsider in that household.

"I'm afraid they are the only ones with the answers to those questions. Make sure that this is the last time you will feel upset and cry over them."

Michael's deep voice sounded really reassuring and gave me a strong sense of security.

I chose not to say anything in response as I didn't know how long I would remain upset about this.

He wasn't me, so he would never be able to truly understand my feelings.

As we were standing outside the hospital, there were plenty of people passing us by. They all gave us weird looks when they walked past us, but we didn't care about that at all.

I was so focused on crying my heart out in Michael's embrace that I didn't even notice the attention we were receiving. Ronan had a pained look in his eyes when he watched me from a distance.

He too, had come running after me when I left the ward earlier. However, he knew full well that it wasn't his place to come comfort me as Michael was my husband.

After crying for what seemed like forever, I felt as if my tears were about to run dry. I thought my heart had hardened over the course of a year, but I ended up crying like a baby instead.

After taking a few deep breaths to calm myself down, I slowly looked up at Michael and said, "I won't let their matters upset me anymore. You were right, Michael. I should've steeled myself long ago. I'm going to head back to the ward now. Will you come with me?"

After a brief moment of silence, he flashed me a gentle smile as he replied, "Sure."

Feeling a lot better from his acts of love and affection, the two of us held hands as we made our way back to the ward.

Standing before the door, I took another few deep breaths to calm myself down further before opening the door.

Mom was helping Dad peel an apple when we came in. A confused look flashed past her eyes upon seeing us, and she quickly leaped to her feet.

"I'm sorry for being so mean to you earlier, Anna! I was just overwhelmed with desperation, that's all!" she explained anxiously.

I would've forgiven her on the spot if this conversation took place in the past, but my heart was already dead.

I showed no emotion as I believed she didn't mean a word of what she was saying at all.

She was only apologizing and explaining because she feared I would actually refuse to help Steven. Mom was clinging to the hope that I would soften up and help Steven out.

"You can save your explanations, Mom. Your actions today have helped me understand that I mean nothing to you and Dad," I replied with a sarcastic smile on my face.

Although it hurt me to say such things, my mind was finally clear, and I knew what had to be done.

Mom grew increasingly anxious when she saw how cold my attitude was. She then grabbed me by the hand as she pleaded desperately, "I know I haven't been kind to you, Anna. I feel really guilty about it too, but you can't let your hatred for me stop you from saving your brother! He's still so young, Anna! His future would be ruined if he goes to prison! It'll leave a permanent stain on his reputation even after he gets released!"

"Save it, Mom. I've made myself very clear just now. I will not get involved in this matter any further," I said coldly while pulling my hand back.

After that, I pulled out a credit card and placed it on Dad's bed as I continued, "Here's a hundred thousand for the medical bills. Give me a call if it isn't enough, and I'll send you more money."

That was all I could do for them right now. I couldn't possibly sit by and do nothing if they lacked the money to pay for the medical bills. I would do everything I could to look after them if needed, but I would no longer agree to any of their unreasonable requests.

Mom froze and stared blankly at the credit card on the bed.

A few seconds later, she realized what was going on and grew even more anxious than before.

"What's the meaning of this, Anna? Are you seriously going to just sit by and do nothing while your brother gets locked up in prison?"

Mom was practically begging me at that point.

I took a deep breath to help myself appear calm as I replied, "As I said before, there is nothing I can do to help him out."

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Chapter 483 Relieved

At the sight of my resoluteness, my mother's frown deepened. I had a hunch it never occurred to her that I would be so relentless this round.

Undeniably, I used to fulfill their requests by all means regardless of how absurd they were. Hence, it never came to their mind that I would stand my ground that round.

"I've got to get going as I still have something on. You can give me a call at any time if you need any help. If it's too tiring for you to take care of Dad alone here, I can hire a nurse for you," I added placidly.

No doubt, I was still looking for a job and tended to have spare time at home. If my father was hospitalized years ago, I would surely volunteer to look after him in the hospital. Nevertheless, I did not feel like facing my parents at the moment.

After realizing that they had been making use of me without treating me as their daughter, I did not know how I should face them. Finally, I talked myself out of swallowing my pride and continuing to fulfill their request. I had sacrificed a lot for them like a fool throughout those years.

Dumbstruck, my mother gaped at me for a long time. I bet they could not believe that I would have treated them in such a nonchalant way one day.

I turned and left the ward right away, giving no hoots to them. Meanwhile, Michael followed behind me without uttering any words.

I was thankful to have him by my side at the moment. Otherwise, I doubted if I had the courage to face all these.

Deep down, I knew he would be by my side despite what I had been through. That was why I could get a grip of myself this round.

I was very much relieved by the time I stepped out of the hospital again. Apart from that, I could not resist giving a silent sigh that I should have made such a decision long ago.

"Amaury's birthday is just around the corner." Holding my hand, Michael changed the topic abruptly. Wearing a look of sheer gentleness, he gazed at me with smiling eyes. I bet he must be thinking of cheering me up so I would not dwell on the disgruntling moments related to my parents.

Right that instant, I finally remembered that Amaury's birthday would be a few days later. If he did not mention it, I would have forgotten about it for sure.

As Steven's matter had been bugging my mind recently, I only realized that I had almost forgotten about such an important date!

Snippets of the moments when I gave birth to Amaury a year ago suddenly flashed across my mind. I could easily break out in cold sweat when I recalled the excruciating pain that I had gone through.

Nevertheless, I felt all my endurance at that time was paid off by the inexplicable contentment with Amaury gradually growing up by my side.

"They will hold a birthday party for him, won't they?" I asked curiously.

In our village, the villagers usually held a feast and invited many guests whenever a baby turned one.

"Yeah! I foresee many will attend the birthday party on that day," Michael replied casually and turned to look at me.

"Is there anything you like, or anywhere you feel like going? I should thank you for bearing me such an adorable and intelligent son," he asked me with sheer affection in his eyes.

A surge of satisfaction welled up from within me in an instant. I actually did not need anything else. To me, it would be the best gift to have him love me from the bottom of his heart.

"Nothing. I'd be happy as long as the three of us can spend the rest of our lives happily together. In fact, it's my biggest wish at the moment," I mumbled.

Ever since my reunion with Michael and our son after parting with them for one whole year, I cherished every second spent with them.

All the other expensive gifts meant nothing to me. The others might be thinking that I was being pretentious by saying so, but that was exactly what I was thinking at the moment.

"I'm sure we'll be together forever." Holding my hand tightly, Michael reassured me as if he could read my mind.

When we were back at the Shaw residence, everyone from the Shaw family was seated on the couch in the living room. I presumed they could not sleep well when my own father fainted at the doorstep the night before.

The moment we stepped into the living room, they advanced toward us and asked apprehensively, “Anna, how’s your father doing?”

“His condition has stabilized. Don’t worry. He’ll be fine after taking proper rest,” I assured.

Even though my family was not on good terms with the Shaw family, we were still in-laws. Thus, I knew they were being sincere with their words of concern.

“Ah! We’re relieved to hear that. What happened last night was worrying indeed. Anyway, we are at fault too. If we didn’t instruct the security guard to block them at the doorstep, he wouldn’t end up in that state.” Lincoln looked at me guiltily, thinking that they had to be responsible for what had transpired the previous night.

“Dad, you don’t have to blame yourself. It has nothing to do with you. You didn’t do anything wrong.” I reassured him.

Even though my father was hospitalized, the Shaw family did not do anything wrong. After all, they only paid Steven back in his coin for what he had committed.

Lincoln let out a deep sigh. “Anna, I hope you won’t blame us for being steel-hearted. We never intended to be on a bad term with your family. But sorry to say that your brother should pay the price for what he had done. If not because of him, Michael’s mom wouldn’t end up unconscious in bed for one whole year.”

I could still remember vividly how he had treated me when he claimed that I was the culprit.

Josephine was important to him, just like how much I meant to Michael. Thus, I could understand his persistence in settling the score with Steven. If I turned out to be the one lying in the hospital because of him, I guessed Michael would not think twice about doing so too.

After all, Steven should have a taste of his own medicine for what he had done. It was impossible for him to turn over a new leaf without any punishment. If he escaped this round, I was afraid that he might commit other ruthless deeds again.

“Dad, you don’t have to explain to me. I understand why you’re doing all these, and I don’t blame you at all.” I flashed him a faint smile, hoping that it would ease his guilt.

“Enough of that. Let’s drop the subject. Anna is exhausted after a sleepless night. Let her go back to the room to rest,” Michael said nonchalantly with knitted brows, as though he knew that I did not feel like talking much about the topic.

After going through so much within such a short span, I was physically and mentally exhausted. For the time being, I was looking forward to lying on the bed and having a good night's sleep.

No doubt, Michael was still quite influential in his family. Lincoln zipped his mouth upon hearing Michael's words.

After we were back in the room, I flung myself onto the bed and closed my eyes right away.

Soon, I fell into a deep slumber after relieving myself from the tension accumulated over the previous night.

I had had a good night's sleep. When I woke up, night had fallen.

I was surprised that Michael had been staying by my side, reading all the time while I was sleeping soundly earlier. He did not step out of the room at all.

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Chapter 484 Birthday Party

In the following days, my mother did not contact me again and mention a single word about the matter, probably because I had made my stance clear in the hospital. The sudden change in her demeanor had gradually put me at ease.

Soon, it was the red-lettered day of Amaury's birthday party. Since I was clueless about whom I should invite, I was more than willing to let the Shaw family be fully in charge of the occasion.

Gazing at my son in my arms, I could not resist wondering how fast time had flown by. It was as though he had turned one in the twinkling of an eye!

Many were invited to attend the birthday party, and most of them were the Shaw family's collaborators in the business industry. In other words, there were hardly any relatives among the guests.

Needless to say, it was an exceptionally grand birthday celebration that reflected the prominence of the Shaw family.

Nevertheless, I was not very particular about how grand the birthday celebration was, as long as I had all of my beloved family alongside me.

I thought I would never cross paths with Nicholas again after leaving Nifty Group. However, it never came to my mind that he would show up during Amaury's birthday party.

At the same time, I was aware of the competition between him and Michael that became more intense after I left the group. In fact, I heard he had poached a few of Michael's clients. On the other hand, Michael had seized a piece of land from him in an auction.

The moment the clients heard about the land falling into Michael's hands, they made up their minds to collaborate with him again. Technically, it seemed like Michael was taking the lead then.

Nevertheless, I was not happy. After all, I still treated Nicholas as a friend. Not to mention, I regretted acting impulsively one year ago before getting to the bottom of the matter.

If only I had waited patiently for two more days at that time for Michael to return, I would not have followed Nicholas overseas. Thus, I could not help but blame myself for causing the two of them to be what they are today because of my impulsiveness.

My gut instinct told me that they were not solely competing with each other in the business industry. Nicholas was actually venting his wrath mainly because I had chosen Michael as my life partner. That explained why the former kept on stirring up troubles for Michael.

Undoubtedly, a strong-willed man like Michael would not easily raise the white flag in the face of his opponents. Prevailed by his possessiveness over me, he could not stand it after sensing that Nicholas had feelings toward me. Even if the latter did not get on his nerves by challenging him, I bet he would not easily let him off the hook too.

When the latter came into view at the birthday party, Michael's face turned into a scowl in an instant.

At the sight of the sheer hostility when they looked intently into each other's eyes, I felt a prickle of anxiousness. I could not fathom why Nicholas suddenly showed up. He had given me a few calls after I left the company. Nonetheless, I did not pick up any of his calls so Michael would not misunderstand.

In the meantime, Michael headed toward him and uttered coldly, "Why are you here? I don't think I've sent you an invitation!"

"Well, Anna and I are friends. Since she's celebrating her son's birthday, why can't I drop by and join in the fun?" Nicholas replied placidly. He only shot Michael a glance before fixing his gaze on me.

Sensing his subtle gaze, I was overcome by a sense of uneasiness. At the same time, Michael shot me a cold glare that sent an instant chill down my spine!

“Ah! Welcome to my son’s birthday party. Initially, I thought of inviting you, but I’d changed my mind later, assuming that you might be occupied with work. What a surprise to see you here!” I forced a bright smile to welcome Nicholas cordially.

Since he had expressed his intention of attending my son’s birthday party, it was inappropriate for me to chase him away despite Michael’s hostile attitude. Not only that, I had no choice but to put on a friendly facade in the face of all the other guests.

I expected Michael would comprehend my point of doing so after seeing the bigger picture. However, he glared at me with such wrath in his eyes. If looks could kill, I’d be dead by now.

I knew too well that he was infuriated because of my hospitality toward Nicholas. Heaving a resigned sigh, I could not help but snort inwardly. Hmph! I can’t believe he’s so petty! Why can’t he understand that I was just being polite?

If I tended to be swayed by emotions and treated Nicholas coldly, all the other guests would be perplexed. By then, I would attract unintentional attention and bring shame to the Shaw family!

A quick-witted Nicholas knew at once I was only being polite. Nonetheless, his lips contorted into a smirk when he caught a glimpse of the simmering rage in Michael’s eyes.

The next moment, Nicholas turned to gaze at me again. Flashing me a faint smile, he handed me a nicely wrapped present. “This is the birthday present I’ve chosen for your son. To be frank, I was racking my brain about what I should choose for him. I hope you don’t mind if it doesn’t suit him.”

“I’m more than happy that you can attend my son’s birthday party today. How could I look a gift horse in the mouth?” I responded earnestly.

Since Nicholas had turned up with a birthday present, I had no choice but to entertain him, although I knew I should avoid being closely acquainted with him. After all, he had helped me a lot throughout the year when we were overseas.

I accepted his gift and unwrapped the box right away. It turned out to be a pendant. Even though it was not an expensive item, it was an ideal present for my son. He had seemingly put effort into choosing it for Amaury.

“What a beautiful pendant! Thank you so much on behalf of my son. Why don’t you get a seat first? Please excuse me. I’ve to entertain other guests.” Sensing Michael’s penetrative gaze when Nicholas kept his eyes glued to my face, I had to give an

excuse. I dared not talk much to the latter again, fearing that Michael would unleash his wrath on me at his peak of fury.

“Okay!” Nicholas replied blissfully. Even though the bright smile on his face never faded away, there was an unmissable hint of disappointment flashed across his eyes. No doubt, he was bottling up his emotions.

After Nicholas had left, Michael advanced toward me and hovered over me with a flicker of intense displeasure in his eyes. “It’s only a few days since you last met him and you’re all warm and fuzzy around him! Do you really miss him so much?” he questioned with a hint of jealousy in his tone. Apparently, he got all worked up when Nicholas showed up uninvited.

“Michael, could you please stop being so childish? Good gracious! How could you be green with envy over such a trivial matter at this age? He’s here to attend Amaury’s birthday party. How could I chase him out?” I rolled my eyes and was utterly speechless at his reaction. Nonetheless, I had to admit that I was tickled pink at his jealousy.

“Childish? Did you say that I’m childish? So Nicholas is a lot more mature than me in your eyes, huh?” he spat with burning rage in his eyes. I thought my words would be able to appease him, but I seemed to have added fuel to fire indirectly.

“Michael, are you not done yet? You intend to make a scene, don’t you?” I stopped in my tracks and glared at him furiously. My goodness! What’s playing on his mind? Nicholas is here to attend Amaury’s birthday party. Why is he acting up now?

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Chapter 485 A Jealous Michael

“Anna, I didn’t realize before, that you’re so considerate of Nicholas. Now, you are speaking up for him.” Michael continued pursuing the matter, keeping up with my footsteps and speaking in a jealous tone.

I halted my steps and frowned at him with displeasure. “Michael, today is our child’s birthday. Are you trying to pick a fight with me?” From the moment Nicholas showed up, Michael started acting weird spewing words filled with jealousy.

Although I could feel that he cared about me, to be honest, I found his persistence rather annoying. The reason was that we had so many guests and I had much to attend to.

“You are the one trying to pick a fight with me over Nicholas. Just now when you saw him arriving, you were so enthusiastic.”

Michael towered over me as he glared into my eyes. There was annoyance burning in his eyes and I could see that he was really angry.

He was apparently a very possessive man. I sighed, not knowing how to explain it to him. I was only being polite to Nicholas, so there was no reason for him to get so upset. There was nothing going on between us.

“I’ve already explained to you that I was just being polite. I had not expected him to come. Will you please stop harping on that? If you go on being so unreasonable, I’m really going to get angry.”

With displeasure, I gazed at Michael as I noticed many of the guests looking in our direction. Even Nicholas was giving us a strange look.

I believe Nicholas had already guessed that his showing up today would annoy Michael and he had come intentionally to upset him.

I wanted to give Michael a severe ticking-off but not in public. It would not be nice if rumors went around that we were having marital problems. Furthermore, Nicholas had his own agenda for turning up today, so it was necessary for Michael and I to appear lovey-dovey.

“Just watch out! I’ll take care of you tonight!”

Michael was smarter than me. He would have known whatever I know. He glared at me and then secretly pinched me on the waist.

By all appearances, our mannerisms were those of a very loving couple. I saw clearly, a look of disappointment flash across Nicholas’ face while Michael threw at him a triumphant glance.

I knew that Michael was deliberately showing off in front of Nicholas and I was dumbfounded. He always presented himself as a mature and stable man, so that childish behavior was quite a surprise to me. Nevertheless, I liked it when he acted so jealous.

The birthday party was very grand, but it was also very boring. Most of the guests were partners in the business world who wanted to get along well with the Shaw family. Although I did not want my child’s birthday party to be a business venture, among the wealthy, an event like that was considered normal, so I had no complaints.

The banquet lasted for a long time, and when it was over, my face was numb from all the smiles. All the time, I had to deal with all kinds of people as well.

As most of the guests had left, I stood at the entrance of the banquet hall, preparing to leave. Just then, a Mercedes-Benz stopped right in front of me and the windscreen lowered slowly, revealing Nicholas' handsome face.

"Anna, the party ended. Let's talk." Nicholas' gaze rested on my face and he spoke plainly.

Our relationship was something that I felt uncomfortable about, so I felt rather resentful and did not like to have too much to do with him. Besides, we were no longer colleagues, one taking orders from the other.

The most important reason was that Michael was a suspicious character and if he knew that Nicholas and I were together, he would feel jealous.

"I'm exhausted. Besides, I don't think we have anything to talk about. After all, I'm just a stay-at-home housewife."

The only topic that I could discuss with Nicholas was business. Now that I was jobless, naturally, there was nothing to talk about. Moreover, he and Michael were in a competitive relationship in the business arena. If he wanted to get some useful information from me to have a competitive edge, I would not help him.

By right, since Michael was my husband, I should be taking his side. At that point, by not taking sides, I was already being kind to Nicholas.

"We have known each other for a long time. Can't we talk about something else other than work? Don't you consider me as a friend?"

When he heard what I had to say, a look of sadness crept across Nicholas' handsome face and he gazed at me with disappointment in his eyes.

I did not know why but I felt sad for him. To be truthful, throughout this whole year, he had been very kind to me. He was a fine man but there was no chemistry between us, and so I did not contact him much.

My eyes met with his and for a moment, I was at a loss for words. At that instant, I felt a hand on my waist. Michael was right behind me.

"Mr. Cadman, after attending my son's birthday gathering, you still want to spend time alone with my woman. Don't you think you should ask for my opinion?"

Nicholas was gazing at me with hope in his eyes but when he saw Michael, his countenance fell.

Every time they encountered one another, inadvertently their hackles were raised. I had, by now, become accustomed to their present condition. What they say about rivals was indeed true.

Today was Amaury's birthday so I didn't want anything unpleasant to happen. On days like that, I really want to feel happier than usual.

"Mr. Shaw, Anna and I are friends, to say the least. Is it wrong for friends to catch up? Don't you think you are being unreasonable?"

Nicholas responded stiffly to Michael's remark. He glared back at Michael without backing down.

"I have always been unreasonable and my woman does not need to have a friend like you. I am man enough for her needs!"

Michael snorted and put his arms around me a little tighter. His body was stiff, and I could feel his anger.

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Chapter 486 Torture

Michael sounded so arrogant that Nicholas frowned and became more aloof. "Mr. Shaw, you are now acting with such unyielding tenacity like the forces of nature, which is more suited to doing business in the corporate arena."

Nicholas looked at Michael with a dark expression as he spoke those words. "Doing business in the corporate world requires one's own competence and ability. If anyone tries to achieve something by using a woman, it only shows incompetence."

Although Michael did not say it directly, he was implying that Nicholas wanted to see me in order to get some information that would give him some advantage.

Unsure if that was the case, I turned toward Nicholas. From the expression in his eyes which he could not hold back, I realized that Michael was right. Initially, I had felt guilty when Nicholas told me he only wished to talk like old friends. Now that Michael had exposed his intentions of trying to use me to get information, immediately what little fondness I had for him was gone.

"Let's go, Michael. I'm tired and I need to rest."

After knowing what Nicholas' intentions were, I did not want to waste any more time. Holding Michael's arm, I just wanted to leave.

That was just the way I was. I hated to be used. I never thought Nicholas would use me but I had overestimated myself.

“Yeah, go home and sleep well.”

Upon hearing my words, Michael turned around and looked at me with a tender and adoring gaze.

Michael's love for me had always been unconditional. Perhaps we had come together motivated by the same objectives which were mutually beneficial. However, I discovered later that he treated me well without expecting anything in return.

Perhaps, Nicholas really liked me but his fondness was not as deep as Michael's. His kindness to me was associated with getting something in return which was the reason why I did not want any entanglement with him.

Without glancing at Nicholas again, I left with Michael holding me by the waist.

Once home, I checked on Amaury. Seeing that he was already asleep, I went to the bathroom to shower.

Even though it was just a birthday party, I felt really exhausted. After coming out of the bathroom, I got into bed straightaway just wanting to lie still.

Michael stood up and looked down at me. Then, without a word, he went into the bathroom.

Perhaps I was too tired, I drifted off to sleep quickly. I did not know when Michael came out of the bathroom but I was awakened by his caresses. His huge hand was exploring my back amorously.

I was already exhausted and so I was quite irritable when he provoked me that way. Slapping his hand away, I tried to go back to sleep.

However, he had no intention of letting me off. After being quiet for a few seconds, his hand was on my back, exploring again.

“Michael, that's enough! Go to sleep!”

Having been abroad for the past year, I had learned quite a few skills in the corporate arena. To me, the most important skill I learned was to control my temper. At the instant when I was most exhausted, I really wanted to kick him out of the bed.

“Isn't it a bit early to sleep? Don't you remember that at the party, I said I would settle scores with you tonight? You would be getting off too easily if I let you sleep now.”

His voice came from behind me, sexy and low. Then he bent close to my ear, sounding amorous.

My neck felt ticklish and I certainly knew what his intentions were. I was quite awed by his libido. We have been busy the whole day and I'm so tired but he was still in the mood for that. In fact, I am amazed by his stamina in bed.

"I'm really tired today. Can we do it tomorrow?"

My voice had become a little hoarse as I was so sleepy that I could not even open my eyes. I just wanted to sleep, but I could not refuse him too curtly, otherwise, the man would definitely not agree. So, I had to use a gentler tone.

"No way. I have tolerated too much today. I need to release myself or else I won't be able to sleep tonight."

Without any hesitation, he insisted on getting what he wanted, with no room for negotiation. As he spoke, his huge hand uncovered my sleeping gown and ventured inside.

What he meant by having tolerated much was the appearance of Nicholas at the party. The man's possessiveness was simply indescribable.

I sighed helplessly and decided to ignore him. I had thought that he would be put off by my attitude and lose interest soon. Unfortunately, I had underestimated the level of his desire.

Even though I did not speak or move, his desire was not quenched. He placed his hands on my breasts and held them tightly. Under his provocation, my exhaustion seemingly vanished.

Resignedly, I sighed and turned myself to face him. As I stretched out my hands to wrap around his neck, I brought my red lips up to him.

After it was over, Michael got off me, and then hugged me tightly. Then, his domineering voice came from behind, "Anna, stay away from Nicholas. In the future, I don't want to see the two of you together. I don't want to see you talking to him!"

When Michael spoke these words, his attitude was completely domineering and arrogant. I frowned without a word. This man was still jealous of the Nicholas incident.

I had explained countless times that there was absolutely nothing between Nicholas and me. Furthermore, in the presence of so many guests today, nothing could happen. That man's possessiveness was just too strong.

Love from My Dominant Boss Chapter 487

Chapter 487 A Car Accident

“Michael, can you stop being so possessive? I already told you that there’s nothing going on between Nicholas and me. How many times do you want me to explain myself?” I let out a helpless sigh.

With regards to my relationship with Nicholas, I had given up trying to explain. No matter how many times I did, there was nothing I could do if he just refused to believe me.

“No, I have always been extremely possessive, and you’re well aware of it. Anna, I just can’t bear to see you talk to any other man because you are mine and mine alone!”

All this while, I was well aware of how frighteningly possessive Michael could be. It was just that he demonstrated it more blatantly now.

“I understand. Next time, I’ll keep my distance from him so that you won’t even get the opportunity to feel jealous.”

Closing my eyes, I felt a sudden bout of sleepiness strike me. Not wanting to continue the topic any further, I closed my eyes to ignore him.

Satisfied with my answer, Michael stopped putting me in a difficult position. After he hugged me from behind, I heard steady breathing come from him. In truth, he was already exhausted. It was just that he needed to vent the anger he felt out of his system.

When the subsequent few days turned out to be quiet, I enjoyed the simplicity of the life I shared with Michael. That was how I wanted to live out the rest of my days with him.

As I didn’t want to be a housewife who did nothing at home, I continued to look for a job. Nevertheless, an ordinary job no longer interested me. Furthermore, other than the companies that belonged to Michael or Nicholas, no other company provided benefits as good as theirs.

Over the last few days, I had the feeling that I was being watched, causing me to wonder if it was just my imagination. Every time I was walking in the street, that niggling feeling would creep up on me. However, whenever I turned around, I would not see anyone there.

Am I overthinking things?

That day, I drove out of the parking lot of an office building. When I arrived at a traffic light junction, I accidentally hit a BMW. Luckily, I wasn’t traveling fast but was still shaken by the impact.

Given how expensive the car looked, I began to worry as I got out of the car to check.

When what looked like a driver alighted from the vehicle, I figured the passenger inside must be someone important.

When the driver saw me getting out of the car, he berated me with a scowl on his face, "Miss, do you even know how to drive? Why didn't you bother to look at the lights?"

"I'm sorry. I lost my concentration briefly and didn't see you. Why don't you check the damage on your car, and I'll compensate you for it?"

Although the driver was rude, I was still in the wrong for running into his vehicle. Considering that I was at fault, I had to discuss the matter in a cordial manner.

"Given how bad the damage is, it will cost at least fifty to sixty thousand to fix it. All right then, you'll have to pay fifty thousand," the driver casually remarked after checking the damage.

"What? Fifty thousand? Just for a broken light?"

I looked at the driver in shock, not because I couldn't afford it but because it seemed a lot to ask for just for a tail lamp. Evidently, he was trying to take advantage of me.

"Miss, can you take a good look at what car this is? It costs three million. Therefore, how can a tail lamp be considered expensive at fifty thousand?"

When he saw my dumbstruck expression, the driver looked at me with disdain and didn't seem interested to continue the conversation.

I knitted my brows in response. Even though I could tell that it was an expensive car, I still felt that the tail lamp didn't cost fifty thousand at all.

I didn't like taking advantage of people, but neither do I like the same to be done to me. Hence, I replied, "I think what you're asking is too steep. Why don't we just give the insurance company a call instead."

Although fifty thousand wasn't a lot of money, I didn't like the driver's attitude and how he was looking down on me.

"Miss, can you stop wasting my time? Do you know who is in the car?"

As the driver stared impatiently at me, he was obviously upset that I wanted to call the insurance company.

"You left me with no choice, as fifty thousand is too much. Since I can't afford it, I have no other solution than to call the insurance company."

As I wasn't going to pay the fifty thousand and had nothing urgent to do, I decided to drag the matter out.

"Jim, hasn't the matter been resolved?"

Just when the driver wanted to say something, the MPV's window wound down to reveal a middle-aged woman's face. Despite being in her fifties, she looked as if she was in her thirties due to how well she took care of her complexion. With her glowing skin, it was obvious that she was someone who came from a prominent family.

When I heard the lady's voice, I turned my gaze at her and walked up to the window.

"Hello, Madam, I'm sorry to have bumped into your vehicle and given you a scare."

Even though the negotiations for compensation were still ongoing, it was proper that I apologize for knocking into someone else's car.

When the lady, Alicia, heard my words, she looked in my direction. The moment she saw me, she was briefly stunned before her eyes lit up in delight.

"Y-You're Ms. Garcia?"

Her question caught me by surprise, as I had no impression of who she was. Suddenly, her eyes were filled with warmth. The over-friendly manner in which she was looking at me made me feel uneasy.

"My name is Anna Garcia. I'm sorry, but I don't remember who you are."

As I racked my brains, I just couldn't recall who she was. Considering that I have a good memory, there was no way I would have zero impression of someone I knew.

Consequently, I was certain that I didn't know who Alicia was. Nevertheless, I felt a strange feeling within me when I stared into her eyes.

Upon my reply, I caught a glimpse of hesitancy in Alicia's eyes. After that, she replied with a smile on her face, "Erm, you might not know me because I'm not from around here. Since I was feeling bored at home, I decided to go out shopping."

Despite her warmth, I was unsettled by the fact that two strangers could feel so familiar the first time we met.

Furthermore, I had run into her car and given her a fright. Thus, I was actually expecting her to be angry instead.

"Mrs. Campbell, about the compensation for the vehicle..."

As Alicia looked like someone easygoing, I decided to discuss the compensation with her so as to not appear difficult.

“Don’t worry about the minor damage. I don’t think it will cost much to repair.”

Alicia’s reply wasn’t what I had expected at all. I had assumed that she would reduce the compensation amount but was utterly surprised when she waived it instead.

Love from My Dominant Boss Chapter 488

Chapter 488 Reuniting With Alicia

“I must compensate you, for it’s my fault for damaging your car. Furthermore, as long as the amount is fair, I don’t want to cause you any more trouble.”

Although I had proposed to the driver that we resolve it with the insurance company, I didn’t feel like going through all that hassle. After all, I simply felt that he was asking for too much. Now that Alicia appeared to be very polite, I decided not to make things any more difficult.

“There’s really no need to. Meeting you today is the happiest thing to have occurred to me.”

At that moment, Alicia alighted from her vehicle and smiled ear to ear at me.

Knitting my brows curiously, I didn’t understand why she was reacting that way. After all, we didn’t know each other at all. Also, I wondered what she meant when she said that meeting me was the happiest thing to have happened to her.

“Mrs. Campbell, how do you know me?”

I cleared my throat awkwardly due to the uneasiness I felt from her words. The way she looked at me was so affectionate that I didn’t know what to feel.

“I have known you since a long time ago and thought that I would never see you again. But today, I didn’t expect fate to be kind enough to have reunited us.”

Just as Alicia was speaking, she held my hands and looked at me with tears welling up in her eyes.

When I saw how emotional she was, I anxiously wanted to console her but didn’t know what to say. The way she looked at me felt so intensely familial that she could’ve been mistaken for my mother.

As she held my hands tightly, I felt a little uncomfortable. After all, I wasn't used to making physical contact with strangers.

"Mrs. Campbell, in that case, why don't I call the insurance company? it will be fairer that way."

After I awkwardly retracted my hands, I didn't feel like talking to her for some inexplicable reason. Hence, I brought out my phone and gave the insurance company a call.

Given how efficient they were, the insurance company's men arrived after ten minutes. Subsequently, they took pictures of our cars and recorded all the details.

After they were gone, I bid Alicia goodbye and attempted to leave quickly. Before I did so, she gave me a look so intense that it made me feel ill at ease.

With that, I dropped my car at the closest mechanic before calling for a taxi. Along the journey home, my mind was constantly thinking about who Alicia was and why was she so friendly to me.

However, those thoughts had disappeared by the time I reached home. When I arrived, I saw Josephine happily playing with Amaury in her arms.

Ever since she woke up, she felt like a different person and treated me like her daughter. It went without saying that she treated Amaury even better.

"Mom, I'm home," I greeted plainly before walking up to her.

Josephine turned around and asked, "Welcome back. How was your job search? Did you find anything suitable?"

"Mmm-hmm, I met with one company today. Although it's different from what I imagined, it's still acceptable to me."

To be honest, the companies that I had recently interviewed with didn't seem to offer great career prospects. Therefore, I wasn't really keen on them. Nevertheless, I didn't have much of a choice, for there weren't that many companies available in Avenport anyway.

"If you can't find anything suitable, just get Michael to appoint you as a manager at Joyful Success. After all, our family doesn't really need the money," Catherine suggested when she saw the frown on my face.

Even though I didn't agree with what she said, her words still warmed my heart.

“Mom, I don’t want to rely on my relationships to get a job. Now that everyone knows that I’m Michael’s wife, people will gossip if I’m appointed as a manager.”

Although I was more than capable of taking over the role, the employees at Joyful Success wouldn’t share my sentiments. They would feel that I got the job due to my relationship with Michael and consequently doubt my abilities. Naturally, I wouldn’t feel good being in such a situation.

“So what if they think that way? As the daughter-in-law of the Shaw family, we can appoint you as the CEO if we wanted to. Thus, what’s the big deal about being a manager?” Josephine remarked nonchalantly, as she felt that my worries were unfounded.

“Mom, thank you.”

Cognizant that Josephine was showing her concern, I was grateful to her for it. Despite our differences in the past, she now treated me better than Michael. I was naturally moved by her change of heart.

“I just ordered the kitchen to prepare some nutritious soup. Hence, you should have some advance. After all, a girl needs to constantly take care of herself, do you understand?”

When Josephine read my emotions, she pinched my face and gave me an affectionate look.

“All right, thank you, Mom.”

At that moment, I was filled with bliss, for Josephine had treated me better than my mom ever did.

Over the next few days, I stayed at home since I couldn’t find a suitable job. Even since I reconciled with Michael, the Shaw family cherished me like the apple of their eyes. Andy in particular would always chat with me and get me to play chess with him.

As I never felt the warmth of a family when I was a child, I enjoyed how they treated me very much.

When they heard about the car accident I was involved in, they became so anxious about it that they forced Michael to take me to the hospital for a checkup. I felt nonplussed, as I barely had a scratch on me. Nonetheless, the concern they showed warmed my heart.

Finally, Saturday arrived. Michael and I slept in, for it was the weekend and he didn’t need to go to the office. Moreover, he promised the night before that he would take me shopping.

After I washed up and headed downstairs, the sight of a familiar figure greeted me. It was Alicia.

Caught off guard by her sudden appearance, I wondered why she was there to see me. After all, the insurance company had taken over the paperwork for the accident.

Holding that thought, I hurried downstairs.

“Mrs. Campbell, why are you here?” I asked softly upon entering the living room.

“Oh, you’re home! I thought you were out. Mrs. Shaw and I were just talking about you.”

The moment Alicia saw me, her eyes seemed to sparkle. She smiled at me so vibrantly that it made me feel out of place.

“Mrs. Campbell, are you here to see me?” I broke into an awkward smile as I returned her gaze.

For some reason, I felt as if she was being too friendly to me.

“Yes... No, I’m here to chat with your mom and mentioned you in passing. If you have time, do come and join us.”

Alicia walked up to me and settled me down on the seat next to hers.

Against her self-declared familiarity, I was simply helpless. After all, Alicia looked more like a reserved and distinguished lady instead of one that’s warm and affable.

Love from My Dominant Boss Chapter 489

Chapter 489 A Gift

When she held my hands tightly, I felt uneasy again. Turning around, I caught a glimpse of Michael’s curious frown. I guessed that he too was equally surprised at how Alicia had gone overboard with her warmth.

“Mrs. Campbell, since you’re here to chat with my mom, I won’t get in the way. Please carry on.”

For some inexplicable reason, Alicia filled me with complex emotions which I didn’t understand.

“Not at all, not at all. Anna, I like you very much the first time I saw you. Wouldn’t it be great if I had a daughter just like you?”

Maintaining her tight grip on my hand, Alicia's gaze was visibly different when she uttered the last sentence.

Already feeling awkward, I was stumped upon hearing her words. After all, I didn't know what to say when she made it sound like I was her daughter.

Meanwhile, Josephine knitted her brows as she was equally puzzled by how Alicia was treating me. Nevertheless, she hid her emotions well.

"Mrs. Campbell, you have an excellent sense of humor. Everyone knows that you have a beautiful daughter whom your husband puts on a pedestal. Compared to her, Anna is just an ordinary girl."

Sensing my awkwardness, Josephine came over to defuse the situation.

Realizing that she was being too overt with her emotions, Alicia let go of my hands. Even then, she still maintained her gaze on me.

As if something suddenly occurred to her, she quickly took off her bracelet and put it on my hand.

"Since this is our first meeting, I didn't manage to prepare anything for you. Hence, I hope you won't mind this bracelet as a gift."

Stunned by her words and actions, I had no idea what was going on.

By the time I regained my senses, I quickly took the bracelet off.

"Mrs. Campbell, what are you doing? Why are you giving me a gift? There's no way I can accept such an expensive bracelet."

At that moment, I was truly baffled by Alicia's warmth. Usually, such gifts would only be given by family. Therefore, her actions felt very strange to me.

After stuffing the bracelet back into her hand, I began to panic. At the same time, I could see that both Michael and Josephine were equally bewildered by the turn of events.

"It's just a bracelet and not expensive at all. Please, just put it on."

Even though I clearly declined the gift, Alicia was adamant that I accept it and tried to wear it for me again.

Although it would be impolite of me to refuse the well-intentioned gift, I still felt weird receiving it.

Consequently, I wondered if we were somehow related considering how generous she was to me.

“Mrs. Campbell, I can’t accept such an expensive gift.”

Considering her illustrious status, it was a given that the jewelry she wore would be extremely valuable. As a result, I just couldn’t accept the gift.

Finally, Josephine interceded in the matter. “Anna, since Mrs. Campbell is fond of you, go ahead and accept the bracelet.”

I was aware that to do otherwise would be disrespectful. Therefore, I had no choice but to accept the gift upon my mother-in-law’s advice in spite of my own conflicted emotions.

“Thank you, Mrs. Campbell.”

After thanking her, I averted my gaze to hide my awkwardness. Even then, Alicia continued to gleefully focus her attention on me.

Consequently, her incessant outpouring of affection continued to unsettle and puzzle me at the same time.

By then, Alicia’s unusual behavior had caused the atmosphere in the living hall to grow awkward. After I gave Michael a look, he responded at once, “Mom, Mrs. Campbell, I promised to take Anna shopping today. Hence, we’ll be taking our leave. See you both around.”

Just as he spoke, Michael walked in front of me and led me out of the living hall.

As we made our way out, I could still feel Alicia’s gaze locked on my silhouette.

After getting into Michael’s car, I heaved a long sigh of relief before turning to face him.

“Don’t you think that Mrs. Campbell is being excessively familiar with me?”

After voicing my concerns, I felt agitated as I stared at the bracelet on my wrist.

“Anyone who isn’t blind can see that. We just don’t know the reason why. Mrs. Campbell is a famous socialite. Although she doesn’t hail from Avenport, she is one of our business partners and used to be close to my mom.”

When I saw Michael frown at my question, it was obvious to me that he was just as confused as I was.

“By the way, I forgot to tell you two days ago that Mrs. Campbell’s car was the one I crashed into. Also, I didn’t expect to see her again at home.”

Considering how close both events were, I felt as if it was more than just a coincidence.

“You hit Mrs. Campbell’s car? This is really too much of a coincidence.”

A look of surprise flashed across Michael’s face before he chuckled wryly.

Not knowing what was going through Alicia’s mind made me feel uneasy. Considering that we barely knew each other, I was naturally suspicious of her motives.

Even during shopping, I hardly enjoyed myself as my mind was filled with Alicia’s image. On top of that, the bracelet she gave me served to distract me further.

As the one who understood me the most, Michael knew what was troubling me the moment he saw my knitted brows.

“Are you still thinking about Mrs. Campbell? Don’t dwell on it too much, as you’ll never get your answer. As time goes by, the answer will naturally come to you,” Michael replied thoughtfully after giving me a glance.

All this while, he had seldom said anything thoughtful to me. Therefore, I could sense that something had dawned upon him, but he just wasn’t sure of it.

“Mmm-hmm, I’ll stop thinking about it. After all, there’s no point doing so since she has nothing to do with me.”

When we were done shopping, I hardly bought anything. After that, we had dinner at a restaurant before heading home.

Much to our surprise, Mrs. Campbell was still there when we returned. I had assumed that she would have left a long time ago after chatting.

Love from My Dominant Boss Chapter 490

Chapter 490 People Think I Am Her Daughter

The sight of her unsettled me again. Nevertheless, it would be bad manners not to greet her still. As a result, I braced myself and approached her.

“Mrs. Campbell, I’m surprised to see that you’re still here. I thought you would have already left,” I remarked cordially. “It’s been a long while since I last visited. Hence, we have a lot to catch up on. How was shopping?”

Alicia was all smiles the moment she saw me. The tone she used sounded as if she knew me very well.

“Erm, it was hot outside, so we didn’t want to stay out for too long and decided to come home instead,” I simply explained.

Deep down, I was reluctant to interact with her.

“After shopping for the entire morning, I’m feeling exhausted. Mrs. Campbell, please carry on chatting with Mom. I’ll be going upstairs to get some rest.”

Wanting to avoid her intense gaze, I decided not to linger in the living hall. After all, she was here to see Josephine. At that moment, Michael put his arm around my waist and planned to go upstairs together with me.

“By the way, Anna, can I invite you to visit my place when you’re free?”

Just when I was about to ascend the stairs, Alicia’s voice rang out as she looked at me with anticipation.

Stunned by her sudden invitation, I didn’t know how to react. Somehow, I felt something was amiss when she invited me to her home, but I just couldn’t pinpoint what it was.

Under normal circumstances, one would only invite someone over when one liked the person a lot or if that person was very close.

Considering that we have only met twice and barely talked to each other, her invitation couldn’t help but arouse my suspicion.

“Erm...” I hesitated.

In truth, I was in a dilemma. I really wanted to decline her invitation but was worried about disrespecting her.

When she sensed my reluctance, Alicia’s eyes flashed with disappointment. In spite of that, she continued to persuade me, “Anna, from the first time I saw you, I was very fond of you. I do hope that you won’t reject my invitation.”

Considering that she was an elder who had invited me over to her home, it would be terribly rude of me to refuse.

“All right then. Michael and I will visit you when we have the time,” I replied with an awkward smile.

As nothing of the sort happened before, Josephine knitted her brows, looking puzzled. Evidently, I wasn't the only one confused about the situation.

"Great. Let's exchange contact numbers. Whenever you decide to come, just give me a call in advance."

Alicia was ecstatic upon hearing my agreement. Coming up to my side with her phone, she exchanged numbers with me.

No one in this world would treat others well for no reason. Therefore, I strongly believed that Alicia had an agenda. Regardless of what it was, I didn't like it when she treated me as a fool.

After giving her my number, I exchanged further pleasantries before returning to my bedroom.

Lying on my bed, I couldn't help but feel perplexed.

Michael, who was behind me, hugged me from the back.

"Mrs. Campbell is obviously treating you differently. All this while, she has always been reserved and aloof. Never once did I ever hear her treat anyone so warmly."

After Michael's voice rang out from behind me, the uneasiness I felt further intensified.

"In that case, why is she being so nice to me? In fact, she seems to be overdoing it. To those not in the know, they might even think that I'm her daughter," I replied before letting out a helpless sigh.

"That's a possibility too," Michael commented thoughtfully. His voice was deep and didn't sound like he was joking at all.

As my body suddenly froze, my mind just went blank. When I finally regained my senses, I turned around and gave him a dumbfounded look.

"How is that possible? You have met my parents before. How can Mrs. Campbell be my mom? This joke isn't even funny at all!" I glared at Michael.

I didn't like it when he cracked such jokes with me.

I didn't mind if his jokes were about anything else, but joking about my parents was off-limits.

Ever since I was young, I was raised in a village. Thus, there was no way I could have such a wealthy mother.

Michael stared into my eyes for a long while before replying, "Nothing is impossible in this world."

Even though I felt that he was making strange remarks the entire day, I couldn't really explain why.

After giving him the side-eye, I closed my eyes to rest, as I no longer wanted to continue the discussion.

After all, I truly believed that Alicia and I were not related at all. Perhaps, fate had simply caused her to like me.

As I had not been working recently, I could feel that I was growing lazy. The moment I lay down, I quickly fell asleep. By the time I awoke, it was already the evening.

When I went downstairs and didn't see Alicia around, I couldn't resist heaving a sigh of relief.

This time, Josephine came up to me and shot me a glance.

After hesitating briefly, she asked, "Anna, Mrs. Campbell and you seem to know each other well. Have you known her for a long time?"

Alicia's strange behavior had likely aroused Josephine's curiosity, hence the question.

"No, both of us have only met twice so far. She was the owner of the car I ran into a few days ago," I replied frankly and looked at the puzzled Josephine.

"However, why do I get the feeling that both of you seem to have known each other a long time. Furthermore, the way she looked at you feels intensely familial, as if she was looking at her own daughter," Josephine remarked with a frown. As of then, a consensus seemed to be forming that Alicia seemed to see me as her own daughter.

"I have no idea what is going on either. Mrs. Campbell's behavior has indeed unsettled me."

I knitted my brows with an equally exasperated face.

"Forget it. Let's not dwell on this matter. The fact that she likes you is a favorable development for our family. As our contract with the Campbell Group will be ending soon, her fondness of you might help us with getting her to renew the contract."

Since no one had the answer to the problem, Josephine didn't want to waste any time on it. After all, not only was it not a big deal, but it was also beneficial to the Shaw family.

Having heard Josephine's response, I was no longer bothered with the matter.

Soon, I had forgotten about Alicia's invitation entirely, as I didn't make an effort to remember it.