

Love from My Dominant Boss

Chapter 106

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Michael merely stared at the keys in my hand without saying anything. I had no inkling of his thoughts at that very moment.

When he didn't take the keys from me after a long time had passed, I placed them on the table. Then, I strode away while wheeling my suitcase behind me.

"Anna Garcia, mark my words, you'll willingly be my woman."

Michael's tepid voice sounded just when I had reached the door.

Stopping short, I whirled around and gaped at him though I could only see his back. I had no idea what he meant by that statement, and it wasn't my concern anymore.

Suppressing the butterflies fluttering in my stomach, I turned around and left.

Upon returning to Natalie's house, I was greeted by the sight of her cooking dinner. That was the first time she was preparing dinner after her breakup. Hence, I wasn't entirely certain whether she had truly gotten over her breakup or merely putting on a brave front so that I wouldn't worry.

After wheeling my suitcase to the room I previously occupied, I went to the kitchen.

"Anna, there aren't many groceries since I didn't go out in the past few days. So, we'll have to put up with an abysmal fare tonight," Natalie murmured with apology etched on her face while frying vegetables.

"It's okay. I'm not that hungry tonight anyway, so a simple fare is sufficient. I'll treat you to a feast tomorrow night!"

Knowing that Natalie was in a bad mood, I planned to treat her to a feast tomorrow and let her vent her negative emotions recently since she was an absolute foodie.

"A feast? What are you treating me to?"

The moment Natalie heard that she was going to have a feast, she instantly perked up. She stared at me with anticipation written all over her face, stilling with the spatula in her hand.

“What do you want to eat?”

My mood improved significantly when I saw her in such high spirits. It looks like she feels better when food is brought into the equation, no matter how heartbroken she is.

“I want to eat seafood! Lobster, especially!”

Natalie didn't hold back with me, answering right away without the slightest hesitation when I asked her what she wanted to eat.

“Okay, I'll treat you to whatever you want to eat tomorrow night!”

It was such a rare sight to see Natalie in a good mood that I was willing to go bankrupt even if she wanted a royal feast.

I breathed much easier now that her zest was back. After having a simple dinner that night, I went back to my room to sleep.

As I lay on the bed, my mind was filled with images of Michael.

What did he mean by his statement earlier tonight of making me his woman willingly sooner or later? Aren't things over between us? Or could it be that he still hasn't given up and is planning to do something?

As he played on a loop in my mind, I pulled the covers over my head in frustration. Ugh! I don't want to think about him! I have nothing whatsoever to do with him anymore, so whatever he wants to do is none of my business!

Despite my thoughts, I still turned and tossed before finally dozing off past midnight. When I woke up the next morning, dark circles were again prominent under my eyes.

Gazing at my reflection in the mirror with two dark circles plainly visible, I scoffed at myself. Michael doesn't even care about me, yet I'm thinking about him every day. How foolish!

Then, I slapped myself while staring into the mirror. Irately applying some light makeup, I concealed the dark circles under my eyes. Otherwise, others would know that I hadn't slept well last night at a single glance.

As soon as I arrived at the office, I conscientiously started preparing the design proposal. After a day's hard work, I felt that it was perfect. However, Michael again rejected it. This time, I was much smarter and didn't argue with him. I merely returned to my table with the rejected proposal in hand.

There was no use arguing with him since he was the kind of man who was amenable to persuasion but not coercion. Thus, it would do me no good regardless of how much I argued with him.

Even when the time to get off work came about, I had no new ideas. Honestly speaking, I truly loathed him at that moment, but my hands were tied as he was the boss. At times, the thought of resigning flashed across my mind.

But on second thought, the job didn't come easy. He would only be accomplishing his goal if I were to back down because of his puny attempts at making life difficult for me, and I wasn't that stupid.

Just when it was time to get off work, my cell phone rang. The moment I saw that it was a call from Yuval, I suddenly remembered that I asked him out on a date today in Michael's office yesterday. Alas, it slipped my mind entirely, and I even promised to treat Natalie to a feast.

Recalling my promise to him yesterday, I grew flustered. For a moment, I didn't know what to say when the call was connected.

"Hello, Yuval..."

I sounded rather awkward, my voice colored with guilt after I answered the phone.

"Anna, you're probably off work now, yes? I'm now on my way to your office. I'll arrive soon, but you might have to wait for a bit."

On the other end of the phone, Yuval sounded as though he was in high spirits. Upon hearing that he would be here soon, the anxiety within me doubled as I didn't quite know how I should tell him about the change in plans. If I were to say that I've changed my mind at this time, he'd definitely think that I'm a person who doesn't keep my word.

"Actually, Yuval, I've also promised Natalie to have dinner with her tonight. Would you mind if she were to join us?" I asked softly.

Then, I waited for his answer with a tinge of guilt.

After all, men despised having someone else being the third wheel during a date.

“Sure! Natalie is your best friend, so I should get to know her better if I truly intend to build a relationship with you.”

Yuval readily agreed without an ounce of hesitation. At that, relief suffused me. I felt particularly relaxed when I was with him because he was a gentleman who never demanded anything that would put me in a tight spot. That was what I loved most about him. I didn’t feel burdened when I was with him.

“Okay, I’ll give Natalie a call now. Later, we’ll go and pick her up together.”

After saying that with a mellow expression on my face, I then hung up the phone.

Aware that Yuval was intentionally considerate of me, I was all the more satisfied with him. Well, being with a man who will tolerate me for the rest of my life is probably true happiness in its simplest sense!

Subsequently, I gave Natalie a call and told her that Yuval would be joining us. Natalie seemed rather thrilled to hear that, perhaps feeling that I would probably get into a steady relationship with him.

When Yuval had picked me up, he then drove me to pick Natalie up. Although I promised to treat Natalie to a feast, she was well aware that I didn’t have much money, considering my current financial state. Thus, she chose a seafood stall.

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It was my first time asking Yuval out, so I was rather mortified that we ended up at such a cheap place. However, I truly couldn’t afford to go to high-end restaurants.

“I’m sorry that I’m treating you to a meal at such a place,” I murmured in embarrassment while looking at Yuval sheepishly.

“Don’t worry about it. I think this is quite a nice place. I used to eat at food stalls with my roommates back when I was in university, and it was particularly gratifying at that time.”

Yuval wore a gentle smile on his face, not at all irked that I was treating him to a meal at such a cheap place.

While I had no idea whether he truly felt that way, I could sense that he was considerate of me. Although we weren't all that close and could even be described as relatively unfamiliar with each other, his seriousness toward our relationship really touched me.

"Mr. Lambert, it's Anna's treat today, but shouldn't it be your turn next? The two of you have known each other for some time now, so shouldn't you bribe me a bit to get into my good books since I'm her best friend?"

Noticing that we were getting along well, Natalie regarded us with a bright smile on her face before shifting her gaze to Yuval.

"Natalie, how could you simply ask him to treat you to a meal? If you want a treat, I'll just treat you again next time."

I didn't want Yuval to invest too much into our relationship, for I wasn't yet certain that we would truly end up in marriage.

Besides, the expenses were supposed to be borne by both parties during a date, so I couldn't have him spending all the time. I was already feeling bad that he had footed the bill more often than not, so I didn't want Natalie to take the opportunity to get a free meal out of him.

"Hey, hey, are you now saving money on his behalf before the two of you have even gotten married, Anna?" Natalie teased.

She pinned me with a disgruntled look when I nixed her idea before Yuval had even said anything.

When her words fell, I was left without a retort. Oh God, that's not what I meant at all, okay? Gah! She doesn't understand my intentions at all! Can't she see that my relationship with Yuval isn't as intimate as she imagined?

"Sure, no problem. Feel free to order whatever you'd like to eat next time, Ms. Xavier," Yuval promptly chimed in to smooth things over upon seeing that I was so embarrassed that words eluded me.

Unexpectedly, he seemed to be on cloud nine because of Natalie's remark earlier. Perhaps he, too, thought that I was saving money on his behalf.

Nonetheless, I wasn't planning to clarify things when it would only make things awkward if I were to admit my true thoughts.

I handed the menu to Natalie. She truly went all out, ordering braised prawns and steamed crabs. Considering the fare, the meal would cost me at least a few hundred.

My heart bled for my wallet, but at the sight of her eating with relish, I didn't mind spending that much as long as she recovered from her heartbreak sooner rather than later.

Yuval seemed to have seen through me, for he threw me an amused look though he said nothing.

I wasn't fond of seafood, so I merely looked on as Natalie devoured the food. Beside me, Yuval didn't eat much either, but I wasn't certain whether he wasn't inclined toward the food or for some other reason.

"Anna, the food here isn't half bad, so let's patronize this place often in the future!" Natalie remarked while peeling a prawn.

"Sure! We'll come again next time since you like the food here."

Seeing the rare smile on her face, I now felt that the few hundred was truly worth spending.

Why are you not eating, Mr. Lambert? Do you not like the food?" Natalie asked with a puzzled frown when she looked over to Yuval and saw that he wasn't eating much.

I was also curious about that, but I was embarrassed to ask such a question.

"No, I'm just not that hungry. Eat more since you like the food so much."

Yuval always had a faint smile on his face at all times.

"If the food isn't to your liking, I'll treat you to a meal elsewhere next time."

After working for the entire day, one's appetite was at its peak at night. Thus, saying that he wasn't all that hungry was evidently an excuse. In my opinion, he was probably wasn't all that fond of seafood like me.

If I hadn't promised Natalie last night, I definitely wouldn't be treating him to a meal at such a place.

"It'll be my treat next time. How could I possibly let you foot the bill?"

Yuval didn't decline, but he seemed rather ill at ease about me paying. Perhaps he felt that it was only natural for the man to pay when eating out.

I was just about to say something else when his cell phone rang at that exact moment. Thus, I swallowed the words on the tip of my tongue.

Taking out the cell phone from his pocket, Yuval glanced at the caller ID. Then, he stood up and murmured, "I'm sorry, but I have to take this call."

I nodded, upon which he swiftly walked away to answer the call. We were at a food stall, after all, so it was quite noisy.

The moment he left to answer the call, Natalie leaned over with a nosy expression on her face.

"Anna, don't you think he's really a decent man? He's quite handsome, and his character is also impeccable. Most importantly, he has a mild temper!" she exclaimed, pleasantly surprised.

Following her gaze, I looked at Yuval, who was talking on the phone some distance away. Admittedly, he was indeed a good man.

"He's indeed a very nice and decent man. He's extremely understanding and considerate."

In the few months I had known Yuval, I never found any flaw in him. However, I seemed to have no feelings for him.

"So, you're saying that the two of you may very well end up at the altar?"

With her face a mask of surprise, Natalie leaned in close and eyed me nosily, probably because she seldom heard me complimenting a man so highly.

I wavered upon hearing that and was silent for a while before I finally spoke.

"I'm indeed planning to try dating him, but I'm not certain that we'll make it to the altar. I can't shake off the feeling that we're more suited to be friends. To be honest, I feel rather awkward about getting married and having children with him."

I can't quite imagine how it would be if I were to marry Yuval. Would we also be painfully courteous like how we are right now?

“What nonsense are you spouting? In my opinion, he’s perfect for you. Look, he’s more handsome than the scumbag, Justin Xenakis. Besides, he’s a lawyer, so his income must be pretty high. Usually, the lawyer’s fee for a relatively big case goes up to tens of thousands. So, don’t look down on him just because he’s a mere lawyer. His fees for a month might even be more than what you make in a year.”

Natalie started convincing me when she saw that I was still wavering.

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In her eyes, Yuval was the perfect man for me. I knew that Natalie wanted me to find happiness as soon as possible and that she was considering him for me, but I felt there was something missing between me and Yuval.

“Okay, I know what you mean. I am more anxious than you are to find a husband. I mean, can you blame me, though. At this rate, I’m going to be an old spinster in no time.”

Helplessly, I heaved a sigh, not wanting to carry with the topic. I knew too that my age was catching up and if I did not get married soon, I would end up as an old spinster.

Hearing my view, Natalie stopped talking and lowered her head to have her meal. At this moment, Yuval came over.

“Anna, I’m sorry. I’ve got a little issue with the case I’m handling now, and I have to discuss it with the people involved. I may need to leave now.”

Yuval came up to me looking apologetic.

“Don’t worry about it. I know how important your job is. Go ahead.”

Strangely, when I heard that he had to leave, I felt relieved.

“Great. In that case, I’ll take my leave now.” Yuval gave me an apologetic smile. “By the way, I’ve already settled your bill. You can both leave right after you finish eating.”

When I was chatting with Natalie just now, Yuval had already foot the bill. It made me feel as if I owed him something, because earlier on, I had promised that I would treat him tonight.

“Didn’t I say that I’m giving a treat tonight? How much did you pay just now? Let me return the money to you.”

From the first time we started dating, Yuval had always been footing the bills. Today we had agreed that I would pay, but he had settled the bill on his own. Thus, I felt bad after knowing that.

I took out my purse intending to return the money to him. After all, Yuval had spent too much money too often, and I should not keep on taking advantage of him.

“Anna, there’s no need to be so courteous with each other. If we really end up together as a married couple, everything I have is yours, let alone a few hundred for meals.

What Yuval continued to say would please any other woman, but at this moment, all that I could feel was pressure, and I was at a loss for words to reply him.

“But we haven’t reached that stage yet. Every time we eat together, you’re always the one who pays.”

I still wanted to return the money to Yuval, even though I was frugal when spending and tried to save whenever possible. However, I was determined not to take advantage of others as it had always been a principle that I firmly believed in.

“Let’s just let it be for this time. When it’s your treat the next time, I won’t argue with you when paying the bill. Will that do?”

Though Yuval looked very gentle in appearance and seemed friendly, his personality was quite stubborn. After he had made a decision, no one could easily change it.

“Alright, then. Let’s agree with this. Since you’ve some business to attend to, you should go ahead now.”

Since Yuval had made it so clear about his decision to pay this time, it would be quite unpleasant if I insisted on paying him back.

“Okay, then. I’m going off now.”

At that, Yuval bent down and planted a kiss on my forehead. Then, he turned around and left quickly.

I stared blankly at his retreating figure, lost in thought. As a matter of fact, I was quite reluctant, but it happened so fast that I didn't really know what was going on and had no time to react.

"Anna, what are you doing? Miss him already?" Seeing that I was lost in thought even after Yuval had driven off, Natalie said this jokingly whilst tugging at my arm.

I came back to my senses and glared at Natalie fiercely. I did not know what to say as I could not tell her that Yuval's loving affection did nothing for me, and in fact, repulsed me a little.

Natalie wanted Yuval to be with me so badly that if I told her, she would think of more ideas, and so, I decided not to.

"Anna, when Yuval kissed you just now, I noticed that he blushed. It is so rare to find an adult man who is so shy, and that's really surprising."

Despite remaining silent, it did not stop Natalie from gossiping. Tonight, she seemed really taken up with whatever was going on between Yuval and me.

"Hurry up and eat your lobster. Even food can't stop you from chattering, eh?"

Not wanting to continue debating on this topic with Natalie, I picked up a lobster and shoved it in her mouth.

Instantly, Natalie was silent again. Meanwhile, I was deep in thought. I should be more comfortable when I'm with Yuval since we might get married in the future. After all, we can't possibly stay this way when we're doing it as man and wife later on, right?

For a married couple, sex is a basic necessity. If I still feel repulsed by Yuval by then, that wouldn't be fair to him.

Natalie was still eating, whereas I was drinking some water. She nearly finished eating all the seafood on our table. I must admit – Natalie sure loves food.

Not far away, a young couple walked toward us while hugging each other tightly. Even while they were walking, the man kept teasing the girl beside him.

I glanced at them, but I could not make out the faces clearly as the lights were quite dim; I could only see their movement in general.

There were undoubtedly more and more couples getting bolder nowadays – kissing and hugging in public. To me, it was just an eyesore. Seriously though, get a room, guys! Why would anyone want to see that in public?

I looked away from them, returning my gaze to the table as I could not bear watching them any longer.

After that, I continued drinking water as I waited for Natalie to finish the lobsters.

As she ate, I noticed that she stopped moving, and her eyes were staring fixedly at some distant object.

I followed the direction of her gaze and found that she was looking at the young couple. As I looked clearly at their faces, I was filled with rage.

It turned out that the man was none other than John Young, that scoundrel. The woman in his arms must be his new girlfriend. Well, what a coincidence to bump into them here...

Instantly, Natalie looked glum, as her gaze remained fixated on John. Though she seemed to have gotten over the pain from this breakup, I knew that, deep down inside, she still could not let go. She was someone who very much valued her relationships, and it was not easy for someone like her to move on so easily.

Not far away, John held a woman tightly in his embrace, and his lips moved forward to kiss her while she giggled, trying to avoid his kisses coyly.

“Johnny, stop it. There is a crowd here. Aren’t you afraid of being seen?”

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From a closer distance, I could see the heavy makeup on that girl’s face. From her looks, I estimated that she must be in her thirties, and there seemed to be a huge age gap between John and her. From the way she dressed, she seemed to be wealthy.

“What is there to be afraid of? You’re my girlfriend, and there is nothing wrong with kissing you.”

At that, John continued trying to kiss her. And on his face was a despicable smile.

“Stop it...”

The woman pretended to resist verbally but voluntarily puckered up her red lips, welcoming the kiss.

As Natalie watched the interaction between them, there was a painful look in her beautiful eyes. She had just broken up with John, and here he was, with another woman. This must be so hard for her to bear.

“Natalie, have you finished eating? Let’s go if you’re done.”

I knew that Natalie must be feeling sad, so I wanted to take her away from the scene as soon as possible.

“No, I haven’t. Why should I go?”

Natalie’s voice was choked with emotions, but she kept them under control. I knew that besides feeling upset, she had hatred in her heart.

I understood because I had had the same experience. Thus, I could empathize with her.

Nonetheless, Natalie pretended not to mind at all as she continued eating. But of course, as her best friend, I knew that she was using that to hide her pain.

Heaving a heavy sigh, I looked at Natalie with a pained expression as my heart poured out for her. At that point, I really did not know how to console her.

At that moment, John and the woman were already walking toward us, but I turned away, pretending not to see them. They were really an eyesore.

Natalie and I did not want to cause trouble, but I was afraid they would be looking for trouble instead. As expected, after John sat down, he saw us and stared in disbelief. Then, he walked toward us.

“What a coincidence. I did not expect to see you both here.”

John stood in front of Natalie, gazing at her face. She was stuffing her face to distract herself from feeling miserable. Hence, her mouth was full, her cheeks puffed up, and her lips were oily. That was quite an embarrassing sight.

When Natalie heard John’s voice, she froze. I could see that she was trying to avoid looking at John as tears started to well up in her eyes.

"I don't think it's that coincidental, to be honest. I've been bumping into a lot of scoundrels and sluts wherever I go lately."

I knew that Natalie would be too depressed to say anything. After all, John, who had just betrayed her, was now showing off his new girlfriend. It was despicable, and I could not stand seeing my best friend being bullied.

"I'm sorry, Ms. Garcia, but I wasn't speaking to you. What happened between me and Natalie is none of your business!"

John turned his gaze upon me as he heard me speak. His eyes were filled with enmity.

Right from the start, I had discovered his infidelity, and my attitude toward him had been less than great. From that time onward, he had hated me.

At that time, he had wanted me to keep his unfaithfulness a secret from Natalie, and so he had not dared to offend me. Now that he was no longer with Natalie, of course, he need not be polite with me anymore.

"You broke up with Natalie, so there is no need for you to say anything. But if you are here to show off your new girlfriend, I'd advise you to go and get lost!"

I was usually polite. Even when Justin betrayed me, I was not as angry as I was now. After all, Justin was not as deranged as this man.

"Johnny, who's this? How rude of her!"

Just when I lost my patience and cursed John, the woman who was with him sashayed over, looking at me with hostility.

"My ex's best friend. Anyway, she's just a shrew; ignore her."

John cast me a disdainful glance.

A shrew? Are you freakin' kidding me? How dare you, you b*stard!

"Even if I am a shrew, I'm better than a scoundrel like you. You were unfaithful – cheating on Natalie with an old woman. You've got poor taste!"

I glanced at the woman that John had his arm around. Even though she wore heavy makeup, it was obvious that she was more than thirty-five

years of age. John was only about twenty-five, for goodness' sake. Who would've thought he'd cheat on Natalie for an older woman?

"Who are you calling an old woman?"

Hearing that, the woman lost her temper. Her expression became a little distorted, and her gaze was full of anger when she looked at me.

Nevertheless, I looked at them coldly and could not be bothered if this woman was angry. Even though I did not know her, she still ruined Natalie's relationship, so naturally, she didn't leave any good impression on me.

"John, I am sure your taste isn't that bad. The reason you choose such an old woman must be because she is wealthy, am I right? Or perhaps it's because she's good in bed?"

I had to admit that I was really venting right then. Natalie was already devastated, and John was here, making it worse. In any case, it was terribly wrong to do this to a girl who had loved him so much. He was really a scumbag.

I would not usually use any foul language, but today, I could no longer hold back. After all, John's new girlfriend was just an older woman, which, in my opinion, was nothing to boast about.

Hearing my insults, the woman got really angry. She rushed over to assault me, but John held her back. "Babe, there's no need to resort to violence. We don't have to stoop to their level."

Seeing John's response, I guessed he did not want too much trouble since we were still in public.

Despite that, the woman could not hold back her anger. Grabbing the pot of water beside Natalie, she splashed it in my face. Fortunately, the water had gone cold, otherwise, my face would be scalded.

Natalie, who had been quiet all along, jumped up suddenly when she saw the woman did that. Before I even realized it, she had shoved the woman onto the ground.

My temper rose as I wiped my face dry with a piece of tissue. This b*tch is really something, huh? Is she trying to mess with me?

"Natalie, just what do you think you're you doing?"

Seeing that Natalie had pushed the woman, John yelled at her. The ever-so gentle John was no longer to be found at that moment.

Smack!

A tight slap followed right across John's face as soon as he finished his sentence. Natalie's eyes were red-rimmed, and her gaze was full of disappointment when she looked at him. I knew that she was completely disappointed in him then.