

Love from My Dominant Boss

Chapter 31

After being busted for pretending to run into him, I pursed my lips in embarrassment. Picking up his phone, I saved my number in his contact list in double-quick time.

“I’ll get someone to send your dad to the best hospital in Avenport tomorrow for his surgery. Don’t worry about it.”

Just as I started feeling disappointed in him, his words made my heart leap. The distaste for him within me was replaced by gratitude. Now I know that Michael’s actually a compassionate man. He isn’t as heartless as he appears to be.

“Thank you...”

Looking down, I mumbled with my hands interlaced.

Although the man had made an outrageous request, he gave me the two hundred thousand to save my father. That was why I didn’t blame or hold a grudge. After all, there was no such thing as a free lunch.

Soon, the car pulled over at Natalie’s place. Breathing a sigh of relief, I opened the door to get out of the car. Just then, he grabbed my wrist.

“Remember to show up whenever I call you. Don’t look for me if there’s nothing important.”

His aloof voice sounded like a command, and his high-handed attitude made me feel uneasy, but I remained silent.

“Sure, I’ll bear that in mind. Don’t worry; I won’t cause you any trouble.”

I’m not a fool. I can easily read between the lines and grasp the implicit meaning of his words. In his eyes, I’m nothing more than his secret lover. If this matter ever gets out, his reputation will be in tatters. Is everyone from the upper echelons of society so hypocritical? That doesn’t surprise me, though. In fact, I’m glad he said this. I don’t want anyone to know about our scandalous relationship either.

After Michael’s car drove away, I heaved a long sigh of relief before heading upstairs. Though there were some hiccups in the process of

getting the two hundred thousand, a sense of delight welled up in my heart.

I'm ecstatic that there's hope for my dad now. As long as he can live through this safely, I'm willing to pay the price, whatever it is.

Back at Natalie's place, I realized that she was still running around, trying to borrow some money for my sake. A wave of warm, fuzzy feeling washed over me. She was the only one who encouraged and gave me a helping hand when I was at rock bottom.

I called her right away, asking her to come home since I had already had the money.

Half an hour later, Natalie was huffing and puffing when she finally reached home. Before I could utter a word, she rushed over to the fridge straight away. Taking out a bottle, she guzzled the mineral water.

"Natalie, what happened to you? Why do you look so thirsty?"

Trotting toward her, I gazed at her with a worried look.

The woman gulped down a few more mouthfuls of water before answering me with a furious face. "I've gone to a few friends' houses to borrow some money, but all of them gave me various reasons to reject me. Ugh! How annoying!"

I felt deeply moved by her words. She must have been helping me scrape together some money.

"Natalie, don't worry about the money. I've got enough money already."

My voice was choked with emotion. I strolled over to Natalie, wrapping my arms around her. I'm so touched to have a friend who helps me unconditionally during the darkest times of my life.

Hearing my reply, she glanced at me in surprise and asked promptly, "Really? Where did you get it from?"

I knew she would question me. I didn't know how to answer her because I refused to let her know about my relationship with Michael.

"You don't need to worry about that. Since I have the money now, my dad can undergo the surgery tomorrow."

Unwilling to talk about the source of the money, I changed the subject.

"I'll go to the hospital with you tomorrow."

Natalie sized me up speculatively. This woman knew me best. Knowing that I had my reasons for not telling her the truth, she didn't pursue the matter further.

"I can't thank you enough, Natalie."

Staring into her eyes, I thanked her from the bottom of my heart.

"There's no need to say thanks between us. Anna, your problems are mine."

Draping her hand around my shoulders, she plastered on a nonchalant expression. However, I could tell that she was trying to cover up her bashfulness after hearing my words.

After grabbing a quick bite, I went to bed earlier than usual. I had to stay attentive and robust tomorrow; I needed to look after my dad, who would be in frail health after the surgery. Hence, I had to take good care of myself first.

The next day, just when I was about to head back to my hometown to pick my dad up for his surgery, my mom called and told me that they were already at the best hospital in Avenport.

When I rushed over, my dad had been admitted to a VIP ward, being taken care of by a few dedicated nurses.

Glancing at the man on the hospital bed, I turned to look at my mom and mumbled, "Mom, how did you come here?"

A smile broke across her face at my question. "Didn't you ask your friend to bring us here? This friend of yours is really thoughtful. He sent a minivan to pick us up, just so the long journey wouldn't be too exhausting for your father."

Hearing her words, I furrowed my brows in bewilderment. Since when did I ask my friend to bring my parents here? Besides, I don't have such a generous friend, to begin with. In Avenport, the only person I know is Natalie, and I'm sure she hasn't done such a thing. Oh, wait... Could it be Michael's doing?

At that thought, I was certain that he had arranged for all this. Last night, he said he would get someone to send my dad to the best hospital. Thinking that he was paying me lip service, I hadn't taken it to heart. It

turned out that the man was being serious about it. He was really efficient.

It was nine in the morning now. It took almost six to seven hours from my hometown to the hospital. Did Michael send someone to my parents' place at midnight yesterday?

A wave of indecipherable emotion shot through me. Other than thankfulness, a strange feeling grew within me.

As I was engrossed in my contemplation, my mom patted my shoulder, staring at me with a puzzled face. "Anna, what are you thinking about? You seem lost in your thoughts."

Her voice snapped me out of my trance. Glancing at her caring gaze, I panicked and averted my eyes right away. "Nothing. I'm just thinking about work."

I didn't have the guts to mention Michael in front of my parents. If they ever found out that I had made a deal with the man, it would drive my dad up the wall.

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"Hey, don't keep thinking about work. As a woman, you can't focus solely on your career."

My mom knew I took my career seriously. Therefore, my excuse didn't raise her suspicion, but she gazed at me with much concern.

"I got it, Mom. Don't worry about me. I'll take good care of myself."

Flashing her a faint smile, I couldn't help feeling a pang of guilt within my heart.

The surgery was scheduled in the afternoon, so I kept my dad company, chattering with him in the ward the entire morning. A lump formed in my throat at the sight of his grey hair.

A long while later, my mom pulled me aside and questioned, "Anna, what happened between you and Justin? Why did you cancel the wedding out of the blue?"

Previously, I had only informed my parents over the phone that the wedding had been canceled. I hadn't bothered explaining the reason behind the cancellation as I didn't want to worry them.

"Nothing much. It's just that we're not compatible with one another, so we canceled the wedding."

At the mention of Justin's name, my heart skipped a beat, and I couldn't bring myself to meet her gaze.

My relationship with Justin was over, so I didn't want my parents to get edgy because of me and that scumbag.

"I know you're lying to me. You're my daughter. I know you from the inside out. Over the years, you've been head over heels in love with Justin. How could you suddenly realize that the two of you are incompatible with one another? Are you hiding anything from me?"

Undoubtedly, she understood my personality, that I had always been one who suffered in silence. That was why she didn't believe in a single word I said.

The woman clearly knew how smitten I was with Justin, and how I used to yearn to tie the knot with him. With that, anyone would suspect the abrupt cancellation of the wedding, let alone my parents.

Under her interrogation, I spilled the beans that Justin had an affair with Mabel. I also told her that they even had a child now.

Infuriated, she jumped to her feet in a flash. "He's too much! How could he do that to you? Anna, you must have been blind to have fallen for a jerk like him!"

"Mom, calm down. Let bygones be bygones. It's pointless to get all worked up for such a man." I took her hand and comforted her.

The mere thought of Justin filled me with repugnance. The man could no longer affect me emotionally. Perhaps I had truly gotten over him.

"I'm not angry. I'm just worried that you might be upset. After all, you've been together with him for so long, and I can tell you love him deeply. How could he do such a horrible thing to you!" My mom sighed in distress.

"Mom, it's all in the past now. Let's not dwell on the matter. I'll ask the doctor about Dad's condition." I patted her shoulder and dropped the subject.

Striding out of the ward, I breathed a long sigh before heading toward the office of my dad's attending doctor.

My heart was set at rest once I found out from the doctor that my dad's condition was ideal for surgery, and the risk was rather low.

Later, I bought lunch near the hospital. On my way back, I bumped into Natalie at the entrance.

Initially, she was supposed to come together with me in the morning. However, her supervisor didn't allow her to take a day off, so she could only pay us a quick visit at noon.

As the two of us sauntered toward the ward, Mabel's voice sounded behind us unexpectedly.

"Anna Garcia!"

Natalie and I stopped in our tracks in unison, turning around to look at the woman, who was strutting toward us arm in arm with Justin.

It had been a long time since I last met the couple. Knowing that Mabel was up to no good, I disregarded her, took Natalie's hand, and marched away.

Nevertheless, there was no way Mabel would let me off so easily. Sure enough, her sardonic voice echoed in the air right after we took two steps ahead.

"Anna, why are you avoiding Justin and I like the plague? Aren't you going to greet us? We're your long-time friends after all."

Despite my annoyance and her attempt to pick on me, I refused to deal with her now. My dad was going to undergo surgery later, so I wanted to steer clear of any trouble.

However, the short-tempered woman beside me grabbed my arm and turned around to glare at Mabel.

"Oh, it's you, homewrecker! Are you here to show off that you've climbed up the ladder?" Natalie snapped mercilessly with a contemptuous expression.

In a split second, Mabel's face contorted with fury, and she gave Natalie a death stare.

“Natalie, this is none of your business. Why must you meddle in our affairs every time?”

Displeased by Natalie’s protectiveness, the woman shot daggers at her.

“Anna’s business is mine too, and I’ll always have her back. I can’t stand your ugly, mean-looking face. Justin must be out of his mind to choose a woman like you!”

Though Mabel was malicious, Natalie wasn’t an easy target. With both hands on her hips, the latter stomped forward, pointing at the other woman’s nose with her index finger. Disdain was written all over her face, as though Mabel was the most despicable person she had ever encountered.

Without saying a word, my gaze riveted on Justin’s face. His expression turned awkward when he locked eyes with me.

Mabel’s irritated face turned as white as a sheet. Raising her hand, she aimed it at the face of the woman facing her. Aghast, I turned to glance at Natalie.

Thinking that she was going to be slapped, I was troubled, but it was too late for me to stop her now.

However, Natalie seemed to have anticipated her move. Fuming with anger, she caught and gripped Mabel’s hand in mid-air.

“Mabel, what the heck? Did you just try to slap me?” she questioned in a frigid voice.

Flinging Mabel’s hand away, Natalie lifted her hand and gave the woman a tight slap on the face.

Slap! A resounding smack reached our ears. Instantly, a red palm print appeared on Mabel’s fair cheek.

Other than Natalie, everyone present was nonplussed, and I was no exception. Never in my wildest dream had I expected Natalie to hit Mabel. All of us were in utter disbelief.

Mabel was stunned for a moment, but she soon recollected herself, and her face contorted with rage. “Natalie, who the hell do you think you are? How dare you slap me!”

She shot daggers at my friend. Her ear-piercing voice attracted the attention of many people around us, and they all turned to stare at us, who were causing a commotion.

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Natalie was not afraid of Mabel. Gazing coldly at the latter, she poured scorn on her, "This slap is for Anna. She has always treated you as her best friend, but you stole her fiancé! You even dare to show up after having done such a horrible thing. How could there be someone as shameless as you in this world?"

As soon as her words dropped, the onlookers shifted their gaze to Mabel and Justin. They soon started gossiping about the two.

Mabel was already on the losing end when they did so, so her anger was further aroused at the people's criticisms. Instantly, her face contorted with rage.

"Natalie, how dare you slap me! I'll kill you!" she roared.

The next moment, she dashed toward Natalie like a madwoman.

Justin, who had remained silent all the while, frowned upon seeing Mabel's shrewish manner. Casting his eyes over the crowd, the furrow between his brows deepened after noticing that he and Mabel had become the center of attention.

Being a man with a big ego, Justin felt embarrassed when his woman acted like a shrew in public. At that moment, he was deeply annoyed by Mabel.

Seeing Mabel's craziness, I worried that she might harm Natalie. Without any hesitation, I rushed up to the two, who were in a scuffle, and pushed Mabel away with all my might.

On the other hand, I was seizing this opportunity to take revenge on her. Ever since she hooked up with my fiancé behind my back, I had harbored intense hatred toward her.

Mabel fell to the ground, looking miserable after her messy hair had been yanked out by Natalie.

With his brows knotted, Justin went over to help her up.

“Are you alright?” he asked, looking unhappy.

Immediately, the woman plastered a pitiful expression. “Do I look alright to you? Anna and Natalie have ganged up to bully me. Justin, I’m your girlfriend! Are you just going to stand there and do nothing?”

No man could stand seeing a woman cry, especially someone like Justin — a man who liked to display his machismo.

His heart ached to see Mabel’s teary eyes. Pulling her into his arms, he comforted her, “I have nothing to do with Anna anymore. If you run into her in the future, look past her as if she’s invisible. Promise me, don’t look for trouble, alright?”

Finally, Justin was talking sense this time. He was unwilling to make a scene. After all, cheating in a relationship was not something to be proud of. However, the vengeful and unrelenting Mabel would never let things slide, especially when Natalie and I had hit her just now.

Hearing his words, she hit the roof and directed her anger at Justin.

“I’m looking for trouble? Justin Xenakis, how could you say something like that? Do you think I deserve to get slapped in the face? I am your girlfriend! Shouldn’t you help me out when I get bullied?”

“Mabel, quit it, will you? Don’t you see everyone is looking at us? Don’t make a scene! Or, do you really want things to get out of control?”

Justin cast his eyes over the crowd awkwardly before he pulled Mabel’s hand, wanting to leave the scene. Yet, the latter broke free from his grasp and once again stomped toward us.

Glaring at Mabel, I couldn’t help furrowing my brows. I’ve given her an inch, and now she wants to take a mile. Not only did she snatch my fiancé, but she is still trying to mess with me over and over again. Even though I’m good-tempered, I’ve had enough of her!

“Mabel Quintrell, what are you gonna do, huh? Do you want me to tell everyone here what you’ve done?”

Mabel’s attitude had pissed me off. Even though I had never wanted to blow things out of proportion, I was not afraid of doing so either.

“Hmph! Tell them for all I care. You are the one who couldn’t grip Justin’s heart, so why blame it on me?”

Mabel held a look of haughty disdain, undaunted by my words.

This woman's audacity is unparalleled! She doesn't give a damn about other's condemnation, and she even has the guts to seduce her friend's fiancé.

I glowered at Mabel while a flame of fury rose within me. Ugh! I must have been so blind to have treated this woman as my best friend in the past!

As for Natalie, she was already angry at Mabel for hooking up with Justin. Now that the latter was still trying to mess with me, she could stand that b*tchy woman no more.

Hence, she took up the cudgel on my behalf. "Mabel Quintrell, if you dare say something like that again, I'll rip your face off! You're really the most shameless woman I've ever seen. How could you still behave in such a self-righteous manner after stealing your best friend's fiancé? Aren't you ashamed at all?"

"Natalie, this is between Anna and me, so don't you interfere in it. After all, there is no bad blood between us. However, if you go against me, don't blame me for being harsh to you."

In fact, Mabel was more fearful of Natalie, for the latter had a daring and fearless nature. Perhaps that was the very reason for Natalie being the kryptonite to Mabel.

"What if I insist on helping Anna? What else could you possibly do to me? You can't bite me, can you?"

My friend gazed at Mabel with total contempt as she growled those words out.

Natalie had actually disliked Mabel way before I found out about the latter's affair with Justin. She had always told me that Mabel was a pretentious and dishonest woman, yet I was silly enough to tell her that it was only her prejudice against Mabel. In hindsight, Natalie was really better than me when it came to judging people.

"Natalie Xavier! You!"

Enraged, Mabel ran toward Natalie, fire burning in her eyes. Before she could charge forward to engage in a fight, however, Justin grabbed her arm and halted her in her tracks.

"Mabel! Stop it!" he scolded, scowling at her. It seemed like the man, too, had finally had enough of the woman's unreasonableness.

“Mabel Quintrell, don’t go too far! You’ve already had Justin now, isn’t that enough? What more do you want?”

I really didn’t understand the reason for Mabel to pick on me. She has already snatched my fiancé. What more does she want to take away from me?

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With a smug smile on her face, Mabel sneered, “I want to let you know that Justin is mine now! I am the one he loves!”

She was obviously saying that to rub salt in my wound. If this was before, my heart would wrench in pain at her words. Yet, I was now unperturbed — those spiteful words could no longer hurt me.

“That has nothing to do with me. Oh, by the way, I need to thank you for showing me his true colors. If it weren’t for you, I would’ve married this jerk and lived a miserable life. Thank you for stopping me from ruining my own future.”

I feigned a grateful expression, the mockery in my eyes barely veiled.

Indeed, it broke my heart when Justin cheated on me with Mabel. Yet, looking on the bright side, it made me realize that the man was not someone worth marrying.

Although it was a hard decision to make, I never regretted leaving him. I knew I had made the right decision.

Mabel, on the other hand, could easily tell that I was dissing her. Hence, her long face twisted further in rage.

Standing beside her, Justin frowned slightly at my words. He stared at me disappointingly as if I was the one who had betrayed him.

Gazing at him, I curled my lips into a sarcastic smile. This man sure is a scumbag! He is the one who cheated on me. Not only that, he even has an illegitimate child! Now he’s looking at me like I’m the one who betrayed him? How ridiculous!

"Anna, actually, I've heard of your dad's condition. We've been together for seven years, after all. So, I'm actually here today to visit him."

Justin sounded gentle and sincere, yet his words made me feel sick to my stomach.

Before I could say anything, Natalie beat me to it. She snarled, "You're here to visit Mr. Garcia? I think his condition might become worse if he sees you. Justin Xenakis, you've betrayed Anna. How dare you show up in front of her dad? You're really shameless, just like that b*tch over there. The two of you are truly a match made in heaven."

Pulling a long face, Natalie then let out a sneer. She had seen me going through a hard time during the first few days of my break-up. Hence, she vented her anger on Justin by tearing him down.

Hearing her snide remarks, Justin scowled but said nothing. Usually, in the office, his subordinates would shower him with flatters and cozy him up. Hence, he was unhappy when Natalie suddenly derided him.

Nevertheless, he couldn't argue with her in public, for most people would take the woman's side. Besides, no one would side a cheater anyway.

Seeing a crowd started gathering, I was reluctant to make myself the butt of people's jokes.

I made my way to him and uttered coldly, "I appreciate your kindness, but I think my mom and dad would not want to see you. You better leave now. Also, we're done, so don't show up in front of me again!"

From the moment I saw him on the bed with Mabel, I had given up on him. We were over since that day.

Justin furrowed his brow while fixing his eyes on me. Hearing my words, a smidge of worry appeared on his face. "Anna, I'm simply concerned about you."

"I don't need your concern. Justin Xenakis, from now on, I hope you and your woman stay away from me. It disgusts me to see your faces," I spat out.

Disregarding the angry look on Justin's face, I left the scene with Natalie.

It was supposed to be a happy day since my dad was finally getting his surgery. In the end, however, my mood was ruined by Justin and Mabel's arrival.

Those two are really annoying bastards. Ugh! If only they could leave me alone.

I plastered a cold expression on my face and remained silent on our way back to the ward.

With her brows knitted, Natalie kept glancing at me. After some hesitation, she asked, "Anna, don't tell me you're still upset because of that scumbag?"

Flashing her a tight-lipped smile, I reassured her, "Of course not. I've gotten over it. It's not worthy of me to be upset because of him. Their arrival has just spoiled my good mood."

"You're right. Those two are really thick-skinned. They even dared show up in the hospital! I bet they are up to no good! They probably just want to make Mr. Garcia's condition worse."

"Alright, Natalie. Let's not talk about them anymore. Don't let them spoil our mood." I changed the topic, unwilling to think about them anymore.

When we almost reached the ward, my phone beeped. I fished it out to see that it was a message from Michael. Feeling panicked, I immediately put my phone back in my pocket.

"Who's sending you a message?" Natalie asked curiously while casting a doubtful gaze at me.

Avoiding her eyes, I came up with a reply, "It's just a junk text message."

"Oh, right! Natalie, take these into the ward. I suddenly recalled that I have something I need to take care of. I'll be back soon."

Before she could ask more questions, I shoved the food into her arms and hastily left.

My friend's voice rang out from behind, "Anna, where are you going?"

Reluctant to let Natalie know about the deal between Michael and I, I hurried to the underground car park without bothering to answer her. Michael had told me he was waiting for me there in his message. Though, I had no idea why he came to the hospital.

It took me quite a while to find his car. Ugh! Why couldn't he park at a more noticeable spot?

Soon, I got into the car to find Michael wearing a pair of sunglasses, which covered half of his face. The man's distinguished air was discernible.

Just as I was staring at his side profile, he asked in an impassive tone, "Are you done staring?"

His voice brought me back to my senses. Instantly, I looked away from his face. Oh no, was I staring at him just now?

I cleared my throat before asking, "Why are you looking for me?"

Meanwhile, I kept my eyes straight ahead and dared not look at him.

Michael turned to face me and questioned coldly, "You're still entangling with Justin Xenakis?"

His question threw me off balance. When I got my mind around what he meant, I looked at him with furrowed brows, feeling displeased.

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"What do you mean? When did I entangle with him?"

Earlier in the hospital, I was already in a bad mood because of Justin. Hence, I was infuriated when Michael accused me of entangling with that scumbag.

"Anna Garcia, I want an explanation from you today! I won't accept a woman who still has something to do with other men."

Michael's voice turned cold and stony as he spoke. Although he was wearing the sunglasses, I could still sense his icy gaze falling on me.

"Didn't you investigate my relationship with Justin already? He's my ex-fiancé, and we have broken up. I suppose you already knew about it, don't you? If you can't accept the fact that I was engaged before, then there's nothing I can do."

My attitude was harsh, but I couldn't help it. His unfounded accusation had very much annoyed me.

Hearing my words, Michael furrowed his brows and glowered at me.

I could sense his anger, yet I couldn't care less about it. Hmph! You're not the only one who is angry! Who are you to demand an explanation from me?

"Anna Garcia! Watch your tone!"

Michael took off his sunglasses and stared coldly at me. The anger in his eyes was evident.

Intimidated by the man's domineering aura, my eyes flickered with a hint of panic. Instantly, I made a valiant effort to hold my temper in check. Calm down, Anna. If you piss him off, he might take back the two hundred thousand he lent you.

Suppressing my anger, I forced a smile and softened my tone as I apologized, "I'm sorry. I forgot myself."

Although Michael was still exuding a cold aura, his expression had softened.

"So, tell me. Do you still have anything to do with Justin? I told you before, to be my woman, you must first be faithful."

Casting his questioning gaze at me, the man once again brought up the previous conversation.

Can't he stop dwelling on this matter? Did he even see me entangling with Justin? How could he accuse me like that?

Although I was infuriated, I suppressed my fury for the sake of that twenty thousand. Anna, you need that money to save Dad. You can't risk Dad's life because of your temper.

"Justin and I, we're done from the moment he cheated on me with my best friend. Are you satisfied now? When you investigated my background, didn't you find out that my wedding was canceled?"

I've tried my best to control my emotions, but my words still sounded caustic. After all, it was humiliating for a woman to be suspected of entangling with her ex by another man.

"Then, what was happening earlier? I saw you together with Justin."

Michael pinned me with a steely gaze. He wasn't mad at my hostility, neither did he trust my words.

“His current girlfriend brought him here to show off in front of me. They were here to laugh at my miserableness and mock me because no man loves me. Are you happy with my answer now?”

As I spoke, I recalled Mabel’s cutting remarks. Those words had hit me hard, but I was more vexed with Michael instead of feeling upset over her remarks.

I was already deeply frustrated when both Justin and Mabel betrayed me. Now, Mabel was still constantly trying to mess with me. Even Michael was suspecting me of entangling with my ex-fiancé!

Justin Xenokis was nothing but a cheater. I wouldn’t tolerate any unfaithfulness in a relationship. Hence, I would never get involved with him again.

Whether he had loved me or not, that was all water under the bridge. We could never be together again. Although I was a woman who wished to experience passionate love, I wouldn’t degrade myself for a man.

Gazing at Michael, I let out a bitter smile that carried with it a hint of sarcasm. Unbeknownst to anyone, my heart wrenched in pain upon recalling everything that I had gone through recently.

“Are you telling the truth?”

The frosty look on the man’s face soon disappeared. Although there was still suspicion in his eyes, he had started to believe in my explanation.

“Believe it or not, that’s my explanation to you.” Then, I said in a solemn voice, “I can promise you that Justin and I are over, so you don’t need to worry about it.”

Facing me, Michael said nonchalantly, “If you ever confront Justin, you can tell him you’re now my woman.”

Hearing that, I turned to look at him with my eyes full of surprise.

Didn’t he ask me to keep our relationship a secret? So, why is he telling me this? Is he going back on his words now?

“But, you said we couldn’t let anyone know about our relationship. Why did you suddenly change your mind?” I asked tentatively.

Is he that capricious? He just asked me last night to keep our relationship on the down-low. But now, he has changed his mind. What’s going on in that head of his?

“I mean, you can tell Justin but not everyone.” Michael cast a glance at me while frowning slightly. He seemed unhappy with my lack of perception.

I pouted and decided to let it go. After all, I had already told him everything he wanted to know. In the end, it was up to him to decide whether he believed it or not.

When I opened the car door, Michael suddenly grabbed hold of my wrist. Confused, I turned around and asked, “What else do you...”

Before I could even finish my words, the man pulled me into his arms and mashed his lips against mine. His body had a faint mint scent, which smelled nice.

Overwhelmed by his scent, my heart began thumping hard within my chest. Never had I ever experienced such a feeling before in my entire life.

His kiss soon became passionate when his tongue found its way into my mouth. At that instant, I could taste him and his breath in my mouth.

As we kissed, my eyes scanned the man’s face. At such proximity, his features still appeared nearly perfect to me; especially those eyes that revealed his smart and wise character.

The thirty-year-old man had a seemingly innate aura with him.

I wanted to push him away, but I seemed to have lost control over my body. Eventually, I closed my eyes and submitted myself to the pleasure I was feeling from his kiss.

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He kissed me so skilfully that my brain went blank and I unwittingly responded to his every move. For a while, the atmosphere in the car was filled with sexual tension.

He released me after a long time and I opened my eyes only to be lost in his deep and intense gaze.

Even at such a short distance, he looked so perfect in every way that it was impossible to find any flaws. Justin could not even begin to compare to him.

I had thought that Justin was near perfect, but after meeting Michael, I realized that the former was far from it.

Nevertheless, no matter how great Michael was, it had nothing to do with me. We were just partners in bed and that kind of relationship wasn't something to be proud of. The notion that we could be something more sounded preposterous. Besides, he was wealthy and way out of my league. As such, I had never dared to hope for someone like him, for he did not belong to my class.

"Please, do continue to ogle at me until you're satisfied."

Michael's low and sexy voice sounded in my ears as he smirked and teased me.

His voice brought me back to my senses and I realized that this was the second time I had lost myself staring at him. I felt so embarrassed that I wished the ground would just open up and swallow me whole.

"If there's nothing else, I'll take my leave now."

Avoiding his eyes, I mumbled a few words and opened the car door to get off.

Even after leaving the parking lot, my heart was still beating erratically. Michael's kiss had stirred up ripples in the stillness of my heart.

The surgery in the afternoon went smoothly without any mishaps and the weight in my heart was finally lifted.

In the following days, Dad's health recovered quickly. Nevertheless, he did have an operation, so it was only natural that he would need more time to recuperate.

I would come to the hospital to take care of Dad at night after coming off from work. For some reason, Michael seemed to have vanished into thin air ever since we met at the parking lot. He never contacted me again.

Every time I thought back to the kiss we shared, there would always be an indescribable feeling surging in my heart.

There has been no recent contact from him and our relationship seems to be non-existent. For some reason, I feel saddened about that. But on the other hand, I should be happy. After all, we were just partners in bed, albeit not willingly on my part. If he forgets me then this will be the end of our transaction.

My life resumed to the way it was. A week later, Dad's recovery was well on the way and he was discharged from the hospital. I had wanted to rent a house for Dad and Mom to stay but they were used to village life and insisted on returning there. I could only compromise as I could not convince them.

The head of the department in my company was a forty-year-old man named Conrad Skeete. He had a beer belly and a balding head. From the first day I entered the company, I felt his lustful gaze constantly lingering on me.

I had always hated being stared at by men, especially by a middle-aged man with a pudgy face. But since he did not do anything to me, I could not find fault with him.

After all, one could lose a job by offending one's superiors, so I had to tolerate his gaze.

However, on one particular day, he crossed the line and infuriated me.

I was sitting at my desk, carefully sorting through the documents when Conrad knocked on my desk and looked at me with a smile. "Anna, bring the shampoo advertisement design to my office."

With his puffy face, Conrad's triangular eyes were zeroed in on my breasts with a lecherous gaze that irritated me. Feeling uneasy, I adjusted my dress and replied faintly, "Sure, I'll deliver it to your office right away."

This was how it went in the workplace. We had to tolerate what we could. It was not easy to find a job suited to us. As such, I cherished the opportunity to work in Joyful Success after trying so hard to get the job.

I had seen through Conrad's motives being impure since long ago but I thought that as long as he did nothing too brazen, I could endure it. After all, he merely looked at my breasts without doing anything to me.

Seeing Conrad walking into the office, I frowned in annoyance as I was very reluctant. Nevertheless, work came first even if I did not like him.

I retrieved the draft for the shampoo advertisement I recently planned and walked to Conrad's office.

I knocked on the door and went in after he answered.

"This is the design information you want. Please see if there is anything that needs to be modified."

I handed the file to Conrad but when he received the documents, he deliberately held my hand.

“Anna, I’m sure I won’t need to check your design. After all, your talents speak for themselves. You’ve only been here for a month but your advertising creativity is many times better than others. I have high hopes for you.”

While saying this, Conrad touched the back of my hand with his and started stroking it.

Feeling disgusted, I withdrew my hand immediately. At the same time, my expression darkened.

“Please have some respect.”

My impression of Conrad had always been one of repulsion. Before, he had just looked at me lustfully without doing anything. However, what he did just now had truly angered me.

“Anna, I’ll be frank with you. From the first day you arrived, I thought you were beautiful and talented. If I’d given you a few more opportunities, you’d have no problem getting a raise or a promotion.

When Conrad said this, he sounded rather proud and arrogant. His tone was as if he owned Joyful Success.

However, in reality, he was just a small department head so there was no way he would have so much authority. At most, he could decide the bonuses for the staff in his department. It was most certainly not in his power to promote or increase the salary of staff members. Obviously, he thought that I was ignorant of such rules and that he could fool me.

If I was a newcomer to the workplace, I might have been fooled by him, but since I had been with an advertising agency for a few years before, I was quite familiar with this area.

“Mr. Skeete, thank you for your kindness. I will try my best. But please take a look at this document first. If there is something wrong, I can modify it.”

I pretended not to understand the underlying meaning of Conrad’s words and simply looked at him indifferently while speaking in a neutral tone.

“Don’t you understand what I mean? I didn’t ask you to come in here to talk about design ideas. I want you to be my woman. If you serve me well,

there would be no need for you to work so hard in the future. I'll give the work to others and you can have all the credit.

Love from My Dominant Boss

Chapter 37

Conrad stalked around the desk and came to a stop right in front of me, staring at my bosom with lusty eyes.

Since my physique was voluptuous in nature, my figure was further boosted due to me wearing a tight-fitting working suit. This was probably the reason why Conrad was constantly ogling at me.

Fury surged within me and I had the urge to slap him for his lecherous gaze on me. However, because he was my superior, I had no choice but to bear with it.

"Mr. Skeete, I'm grateful for your offer but I would much rather depend on my own capabilities."

I spoke matter-of-factly, with neither humility nor arrogance. On the surface, I did not say anything that offended Conrad but I had expressed my meaning clearly.

"It's a good thing for young people to have ambitions but when better choices are available, you must learn to grasp it. Don't you agree?"

Conrad stretched out his big, chubby hand and grasped my shoulder whilst wearing a disgusting smile on his face.

A wave of nausea hit me. Immediately, I pushed him away and stepped as far away as I could. At this point, I was utterly enraged.

"Please have some self-respect, Mr. Skeete. If other staffs come to know about this, it wouldn't be good for your reputation."

My tone was icy as I stared at Conrad with disdain.

I had thought that with these words, Conrad would understand that I do not want his attention and back off. Unfortunately, I seemed to have overestimated him. As soon as he heard my piece, Conrad's expression changed and he looked at me with fury in his eyes.

"Anna, don't be stupid. It is your honor that I am interested in you. How dare you reject me!"

"If there is nothing else, I'll be taking my leave then."

Even though I was angry, I knew that if I stayed in his office any longer, nothing good would come out of this. As such, the wisest choice was for me to get out of this situation quickly.

Alas, Conrad was not going to let me off so easily even though I had rejected his advances. I had barely walked a couple of steps when he hugged me from behind by force. "Anna, don't you be foolish. You should thank the heavens that I am choosing you to be my woman. You have no right to refuse me!"

Being my superior and all, I did not want to offend him because of this. After all, it would not be beneficial to me if I were to offend him.

"I'm not letting you go. Spend a night with me."

At that, Conrad moved to face me and he once again held me in a tight embrace before moving his pudgy lips closer to mine.

Feeling repulsed, I slapped him hard. My gosh! Conrad is really a scumbag. I had already politely told him off but he kept forcing me. How is it possible that the higher-ups would hire such an animal to work in Joyful Success? Not to mention as a department head at that?

I smacked Conrad in the face so forcefully that a loud slapping sound could be heard resounding in the office. After I realized what I had done, I was stunned. I just hit my boss! Well d*mn... I'm doomed now...

Sure enough, Conrad immediately glared at me with fury in his eyes.

"Anna, how dare you slap me?"

Conrad was glaring daggers at me as he pointed a finger and roared.

"I... I'm sorry. I did not do it on purpose."

Panicked, I apologized but I was still feeling angry.

"Sorry? What use is it to apologize to me now, Anna? You just slapped me. Do you believe that with just one word from me and I could have you sacked?"

Conrad did not let me off even when my attitude toward him had softened. He glared at me fiercely and his words were full of threats.

“You’re the one who touched me first. I was only defending myself!”

His threats had angered me. Even though I really valued this job, I decided not to compromise further. Even if I were forced to leave Joyful Success, I would never have a relationship with an ugly old man who was always staring at me lustfully.

“Anna, I’d advise you to obey me and surrender, or else, I’ll make sure you won’t be able to keep your job in Joyful Success!”

As Conrad spoke, he came close to me again before enfolding me in his embrace. This time, he had learned something. Pining my hands with his, he used his free hand to hold me against his body.

Although being so close to this disgusting man made me nauseous, I was actually feeling more flustered. We’re in the workplace now! Don’t tell me that Conrad would actually dare to do something to me in his office?

“Let go of me! If you touch me again, I’m going to have to scream for help. This is the workplace. If the staff outside see you doing this to me, what will they think of you?”

Although I was panicking, I forced out a calm front. As I watched Conrad approach me with a sly grin on his face, showing his big yellow teeth, I could only say threatening words to scare him off.

“My office is soundproof. No one can hear you if you scream.”

Hearing that, I was in full-blown panic mode. Am I going to get rape by this man here in the office?

I struggled hard but being a man, Conrad was inevitably stronger than me. Just when he was about to kiss me, the office door was suddenly opened.

“Mr. Skeete, here is a document that you need to sign...”

Seeing Conrad holding me, the person who entered was stunned and stopped talking. Conrad was shocked too. Taking the opportunity, I pulled myself away from him the moment he was distracted.

I then glared at Conrad before rushing out of his office without saying a word.

When I returned to my seat, my emotions were going through a rollercoaster ride. I was both angry and scared.

I knew that Conrad would not let me off easily and I would definitely have a hard time in the future. But what I was worried about more was the fact that this could happen again in the future.

I could not focus on any work as I was panicking. Meanwhile, the female colleague who had just gone into Conrad's office earlier was now looking at me with contempt after she came out.

I looked at her in puzzlement. I did not understand why she would look at me with such disdain. It stood to reason that since she saw Conrad doing such a thing to me earlier, she should have sympathized with me. But what I got instead was a gaze filled with scorn.

I frowned and looked away as I tried to calm down by keep telling myself to stay away from Conrad and be more cautious in the future.

However, it seemed that I had yet again underestimated the severity of the situation. At lunchtime in the afternoon, I overheard conversations from several colleagues in the bathroom.

"Do you know that when I took the documents to Mr. Skeete's office to sign today, I saw Anna hugging him? One look was all it took for me to be certain that she was trying to seduce him."

Love from My Dominant Boss

Chapter 38

"Really? But Anna seems like a serious and hard-working person. Besides, she always looks so innocent. Why would she do such a thing?"

"Ah well, people nowadays are willing to do anything to succeed and climb up the social ladder. I just knew that she's no decent person ever since she joined the company. She pretends to be a diligent person, but in reality, she's actually seducing an old man like our supervisor. What a slut!"

"Hear, hear. Mr. Skeete is already in his forties. Not to mention he's old and unsightly. Anna is really going all out if she can put up with such a man."

My colleagues' gossip drifted into my ears loud and clear. Hearing that, I felt utterly aggrieved.

When did I ever seduce Conrad Skeete? Did they see me doing it with their own eyes? Ugh! People nowadays are truly good at making up stories and jumping to conclusions! It was him who wanted to force himself on me first! So why are they saying that it was me who seduced him now? They're simply lying through their teeth!

At that moment, I was gripped by the urge to rush out and counter their accusations by telling them the truth. However, I suppressed that urge, knowing that they wouldn't believe me even if I explained things. Instead, they would despise me all the more.

Ah, forget it! It's enough that I know what kind of person I am. There's no need to explain anything to others. I gave myself a pep talk.

Nonetheless, tears coursed down my face uncontrollably. I kept telling myself not to be bothered, but the feeling of being accused wrongly was truly awful.

It wasn't until they had left that I walked out of the toilet stall. As I gazed at my red-rimmed eyes in the mirror, distress swamped me.

I've been working wholeheartedly ever since I joined the company, but never had I thought that I'd be "rewarded" by the reputation of seducing my superior. Argh! This world is truly unfair!

In the afternoon, I could clearly sense that all my colleagues were looking at me differently. I tried my best to feign ignorance and simply kept my head buried in work, believing that they would one day understand the kind of person I was as long as I worked hard enough.

In the next few days, no one said a single word to me. Even when my colleagues bumped into me, they pointedly ignored me. On the other hand, Conrad deliberately made life difficult for me so that I would leave Joyful Success.

He heaped so much work on me that I had to work overtime until ten o'clock every day before I could get off work. I knew that he was purposely dumping work on me to goad me into resigning.

However, I had long since resolved that I would never resign no matter how he picked fault with me.

On that particular day, I was still working overtime. It was ten o'clock at night when I finally finished going through all the documents on my table.

Stretching, I then lumbered to my feet wearily. After packing up, I made to leave the office.

But at that precise moment, my cell phone rang with a call from Justin. My brows creased as a wave of irritation surged within me. Without even thinking about it, I declined the call.

Alas, he seemed determined, for my cell phone kept ringing incessantly. In the end, I answered the call when I couldn't take it any longer.

"Have you lost your mind, Justin Xenakis? Why are you calling me nonstop?"

I couldn't be bothered to be civil with him, and my voice was cold without a hint of emotion.

"I'd like to talk to you, Anna. I'm waiting below your office. I know you've been working overtime in the past few days."

On the other end of the phone, Justin sounded much gentler than usual. In the past, I would've been jumping with joy if he wanted to see me, but there wasn't the tiniest spark of delight within me now as I no longer loved him.

"There's nothing to talk about between us. I don't want to see you," I declined without an ounce of hesitation.

It's over between the two of us, so there's no need for us to contact each other anymore.

After saying that, I hung up on him without giving him an opportunity to speak.

When I was done straightening the documents on my table, I turned off the lights and left.

It was already ten o'clock, so there wasn't a single soul left in the company besides the guard at the entrance.

As the cold breeze blew past, I tightened my jacket around me. Then, I stopped by the side of the road to hail a taxi.

There were few taxis since it was late at night. Standing by the road, I waited anxiously.

"Anna."

Someone nearby called out my name just when I saw a taxi approaching in the near distance. I looked over my shoulder, and when I saw that it was Justin, my hackles instantly rose.

Ignoring him, I stretched out a hand and hailed the taxi. When the taxi came to a stop in front of me, I opened the car door to get in, but Justin blocked me.

"I've got something to say to you, Anna," he asserted urgently as he grabbed my arm.

Upon seeing his face inches from mine, fury welled within me, or to be more precise, it was sheer revulsion.

Shaking off his hand forcefully, I put some distance between us and stared at him coldly. "Why do you keep hounding me when there's nothing to be said between us?"

In the past, my heart would start racing every time I saw him. That had never changed even after having been together for seven years. But now, I felt nothing for him save repulsion and disgust.

"Anna, I know you hate me, but I don't want us to be enemies. Would you please give me a chance to say a few words to you?"

With a hand on the door of the taxi, Justin regarded me anxiously, his gaze frantic.

My wrath blazed hotter upon hearing that. Good grief! He actually has the temerity to utter such a remark when our relationship is now in shambles? Hah! I never knew that he's actually such a shameless man!

"I don't hate you. I'm just sickened by you because I no longer have any feelings for you!"

I eyed him coldly, my voice coated with frost.

Indeed, I admit that I hated him in the beginning for betraying me, forsaking the relationship that we had for all these years, and most importantly, hooking up with my best friend. However, that was just when it all started to go downhill. Now that I no longer love him, there's no need for me to hate him anymore. In fact, I find it troublesome to even hate him.

"Hey! Are you getting in or what? Stop wasting my time if you're not!"

The taxi driver's impatient voice split the air just when Justin was about to say something else.

"I'm sorry, mister, but she doesn't need your services anymore."

After saying that to the taxi driver, Justin yanked me to his side and slammed the door of the taxi shut.

"Mister, wait..."

Love from My Dominant Boss

Chapter 39

I called out to stop the taxi driver, but he paid me no mind. Flooring the gas pedal, he sped off in a flash.

Seeing the taxi speeding away, I furiously whirled around and glowered at Justin. Argh! I'd finally gotten a taxi at this hour, yet it left because of him! Is he trying to make me walk home in the middle of the night?

"What the hell is your problem, Justin Xenakis? Why did you stop me from getting into the taxi?" I demanded in a near shout.

I glared at him, my gaze blazing with fire.

"I'll drive you home, Anna. We can talk during the drive."

Surprisingly, Justin wasn't pissed off by my outburst. He reached out and took my hand, his gaze tender as he looked at me.

"No, thanks. I don't need you to drive me home, I would much rather walk. Besides, I've already made it clear that there's nothing to be said between us!" I bellowed, still enraged that he stopped me from getting into the taxi earlier.

"When did you become so stubborn, Anna? You used to be very gentle in the past."

As my attitude became progressively worse, Justin frowned slightly as he regarded me, his voice colored with a hint of displeasure.

"As you said, it was in the past. Besides, I'm only gentle with my man. You're no longer that anymore, so why should I still be gentle with you? What right do you have to demand that?" I blurted in a single breath.

At that moment, I found him truly ridiculous. What a f*cking joke! What right does he have to demand gentleness from me when we already broke up?

The instance my words fell, Justin's expression darkened, and the look in his eyes turned increasingly irate. In truth, I could clearly sense that he was suppressing his rage.

"I know you must hate me right now, so it's okay. Go ahead if you feel better saying all those things. We'll talk when you've calmed down," he murmured placidly after a long silence, still keeping his anger in check.

Argh! Why the hell is he still pestering me at this time? We have nothing to do with each other anymore! I've set him free to be with Mabel, so why is he still hounding me?

"I don't hate you, nor do I have anything to say to you. I'm going home."

Not wanting to have further contact with him, I made to leave by circumventing him. However, he seemed determined to keep me there, for he grabbed my arm from behind just after I had taken two steps forward.

"Anna Garcia, why can't you talk to me nicely? We were once lovers, after all. Are you planning to talk to me in such an indifferent manner for the rest of our lives?"

Justin's temper flared when he saw how I continued being cold and hostile no matter how nicely he talked to me. In the past, I was always the one who compromised in everything. Now, however, he was no longer my boyfriend or fiancé, so there was no reason I should consider his feelings.

"As you said, that was once upon a time. We're strangers now, so please don't appear before me anymore, okay? Right now, you're the person I loathe to see most!"

Irritated, I frowned deeply. By then, I was already on the verge of cursing him out. My God, when did he become so annoying?

When I said that, I clearly saw the change in his expression. His face darkened considerably. After all, any man would likely be fuming at my attitude, much less Justin, whom I had always pandered to.

"Anna..."

Just when he was about to speak, my cell phone rang. Fishing out my cell phone, I saw that it was a call from Michael. At once, shock engulfed me. Huh? Why is he suddenly calling me tonight? I thought he'd long since forgotten about me.

In all honesty, I could surmise the reason he was calling me at this hour. I was actually reluctant to pick up the call, but the moment I glimpsed Justin staring at me coldly, I answered it without any hesitation.

"Hello."

Justin saw that it was a call from Michael, so his gaze was now stained with fury. Meanwhile, I deliberately sweetened my voice when I spoke to Michael.

"Why is your voice different? Are you having a sore throat?"

Michael's low and alluring voice drifted out of the phone, but his words had me choking up.

Damn him! I was clearly trying to use a sweet voice to talk to him, but he actually thought that I was having a sore throat? Don't men love coquettish voices? Yet, he asked me such an idiotic question! Seems like his brain is indeed wired differently from other men.

"Ahem... Ah, yes, I was having a bit of a sore throat just now. So, what's up? Is something the matter?"

I pretended to clear my throat before speaking in my usual voice.

"Have you forgotten the relationship between us? Why else would I be calling you?"

Michael's sexy voice drifted out of the phone once again. In the blink of an eye, my face flushed bright red. How could I possibly forget the deal I made with him? He must be in need of having his physiological needs sated since he's calling me at this hour!

I glanced at Justin before averting my gaze when I noticed the outrage written all over his face.

"Um... I'm not home yet, so I might not be able to make it tonight. Is tomorrow night okay?" I negotiated softly with Michael on the other end of the phone.

Good God, I don't even know how I'm going home now that Justin is still badgering me! Ugh! Why is everything coming at me simultaneously?

The person on the other end of the phone went silent though I could vaguely still hear his soft breathing. Just when I thought that he was irked and wanted to explain myself, his voice rang out again.

“Where are you now? I’ll come and pick you up.”

Upon hearing that he wanted to come over, my heart jolted. I opened my mouth to decline, but then, I bit the bullet and gave him my location when I noticed that Justin didn’t seem inclined to let me leave.

After hanging up the phone, I threw Justin a frosty look over my shoulder before I strode away.

“What exactly is your relationship with Michael Shaw? How did you get acquainted with him?”

Justin’s questioning voice rang out behind me, his tone filled with fury. He marched right up before me and blocked my path, glaring at me hotly.

“I’ve already told you the previous time that Michael is the man who likes me. Didn’t you and Mabel think that no man will like me in this lifetime back at the mall then? Well? Is Michael not a thousand times better than you? He’s more handsome, richer, and has a far brighter future than you! I really ought to thank my lucky stars that you hooked up with Mable. Otherwise, I wouldn’t have found such a perfect man!”

Love from My Dominant Boss

Chapter 40

Regarding Justin with derision etched on my face, I deliberately said all that to hit him where it hurt. After all, he was an arrogant person who felt that he was very capable. As expected, his expression instantly darkened when I compared him with Michael.

Men were creatures with fragile egos, especially when they were compared to someone else. In comparison with Michael, Justin was far beneath him in terms of both looks and financial capabilities. He was merely an insignificant department manager in one of Michael’s many companies, so he didn’t even hold a candle to Michael.

“Anna, I know you’re only saying this because you’re angry at me. It’s okay. But do you know what kind of person Michael Shaw is? Do you know how many women he has? A man with his identity and status will never promise you forever. So wake up, won’t you?” Justin urged with feigned sincerity.

Conversely, his concerned expression amused me. With a derisive sneer on my face, I couldn't help retorting coldly, "No matter what kind of person Michael is, he is still better than you. Even if he has countless women, I believe that he'll never make a move against my best friend. He still has that much decency, unlike someone who's really shameless to no end!"

There was an underlying meaning to my words. Naturally, Justin could tell that I was snubbing him and with such harsh words at that.

His expression stiffened, and rage burned within his eyes. Evidently, my words had thoroughly inflamed him.

"You've gone too far, Anna Garcia! Yes, I was at fault for having betrayed our relationship, but you don't need to keep harping on that!"

Justin's voice went up several decibels. There were only a few pedestrians since it was nighttime, so he wasn't particularly worried about others overhearing our conversation.

"Since you've betrayed me, stop pestering me, then. Didn't you tell me that you and Mabel love each other? So why are you still harassing me?"

Hah! I still remember vividly how he thanked me when I called off the wedding and set him free to be with Mabel. My heart was completely shattered then. It's already incredibly kind of me to put things so tactfully right now. What right does he have to criticize me for harping on the issue when he didn't experience the excruciating pain I felt back then?

Justin hesitated as he stared at me. The wrath on his face promptly faded, but a long time passed before he lifted his head. Looking right into my eyes, he sincerely said, "Anna, I know I was at fault in that matter, and I know I hurt you. But while we were apart, I realized that it's you I love, not Mabel. I was just blinded for some reason back then, and I'm really sorry..."

His tone was exceedingly solemn, and his apology sounded very sincere. However, I couldn't help sneering at his words.

Pfft... Why didn't he realize that it was me he loved when he hooked up with Mabel back then? They'd been having an affair behind my back for so many years, after all. Even their child is already a toddler, yet I'd always been kept in the dark, assuming that Reese is Mabel's illegitimate child with another man. I thought it was an open wound of hers, so I never dared mention anything about the child's father before her.

Lo and behold, the child's father turned out to be Justin, my ex-fiancé. Ah, how ridiculous! When I learned of the truth, I felt that I was the most hilarious and pathetic woman in the world!

"It's too late for apologies now, for it's no use even if you say sorry. I'm leaving, so please stop badgering me!"

Unfortunately, his apology had no effect on me. I didn't feel moved to forgive him. Instead, I found it utterly hilarious.

I spun around to leave, but Justin hugged me tightly from behind, his arms banding around me like steel chains.

Sensing his touch, panic struck me. On the heels of that, rage and repulsion inundated me. Oh my God, he actually dares to hug me!

I struggled wildly, but my puny strength was negligible compared to a man's brute strength. No matter how I struggled, I simply couldn't break free, leaving me livid and frustrated. How I wished to slap him hard across the face, yet I couldn't even break away from his hold.

"Let go of me, Justin Xenakis! I'm going to shout for help if you continue restraining me!"

I struggled desperately as fury blazed within me. I hated him, and his touch repulsed me.

"Why won't you talk to me nicely, Anna? Was your love for me in the past all a lie? You won't even speak to me properly now! Must you talk to me with such coldness and hostility?"

Justin was also seething as he hugged me tightly, his voice no longer as gentle but colored with a trace of impatience.

"Why should I talk to you nicely? What right do you have to demand that of me? It's over between us. It's over! Do you hear me? Whatever you've got to say, just say it to Mabel. Stop pestering me!" I roared as I struggled with all my might.

Despite the aggravation within me, I was still helpless as I simply couldn't break his grip on me.

"Anna..." Justin showed no signs of letting me go anytime soon. I was just about to lambaste him again when twin beams of glaring light shone at us a near distance away.

We both lifted our hands to shield our eyes in concert. Seizing the opportunity, I swiftly put some distance between us and took off since I didn't want to continue getting entangled with him anymore. To me, he was the most revolting man in the entire world.

As I sprinted, I glanced over my shoulder in fear that he would chase after me. But before I had gone far, I ran smack into a man.

"I'm sorry, excuse me..." I frantically apologized.

Moving around the man I had bumped into, I wanted to continue running, but the man grabbed my arm.

"Why are you running, Anna?"

Upon hearing the voice above my head, I jerked my head up, only to be greeted by Michael's handsome profile. All at once, trepidation struck me. For some reason, I felt a touch aggrieved right then.

I threw myself into his embrace, my nose stinging inexplicably. "Why are you here?"

My action stunned Michael slightly, but he hugged me tightly in the next second. "Didn't I say I was coming to pick you up earlier? Why are you still here at this hour?" He engulfed me in his embrace.

I didn't know whether I was reading too much into things, but I actually sensed concern in his voice.

"Well, there was a scumbag pestering me."

While saying that, I shot Justin a glare. Recalling that it was because of him that I missed the taxi, I instantly saw red.